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To: The Mayor and Each Member of Limerick City and County Council

Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2024-2028

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Act 2001 (as amended), is to set out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area. This is done by the Local Authority itself in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. The development of the plan was overseen by a Local Advisory Steering Group. The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) has responsibility for the Community Elements of the plan and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC is responsible for the Economic Elements of the plan. An extensive consultation process was undertaken with key stakeholders, including public consultation via workshops and online, meetings with marginalised groups, young people, migrants and people with disabilities and disability sector services. Key statutory and non-statutory agencies, including internal local authority Directorates were also consulted. Input from the Elected Members was sought at the four Municipal District Meetings.

The Draft LECP was submitted to the Southern Regional Assembly for input and review of consistency of the Limerick LECP with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region. The Southern Regional Assembly issued a statement of consistency of the Limerick LECP with the RSES for the Southern Region. This is an Appendix to the LECP.

The LECP was subject to Strategic Environment Assessment / Appropriate Assessment (SEA/AA). This was conducted by external contractors (Minogue Associates), contracted to undertake it, and a screening report was prepared. The Final SEA/AA Screening Report is attached as an Appendix to the LECP.

The plan sets out 4 high level goals and 38 sustainable development objectives. It includes a detailed socio-economic analysis of Limerick city and county across a number of themes based on Census 2022 data, the Pobal Deprivation index (2022) and other sources.

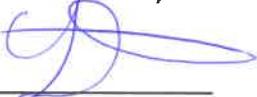
The High Level Goals are:

- People & Communities - *Well-being, inclusion, participation & placemaking*
- Environment & climate action – *Sustainability, adaptation & transition*
- Economic resilience, regeneration & development *including place-based*
- Innovation, technology & digitalisation

Two year implementation plans will be developed to ensure that the objectives in the plan are achieved.

The final draft of the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) has been considered by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and both committees recommend that the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2028 be considered for adoption by the Full Council.

Is mise le meas,



Stephane Duclot

Director of Services

Rural, Community and Culture Development Directorate



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

ATLANTIC EDGE
LIMERICK
EUROPEAN EMBRACE

LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN FOR LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY

2024 - 2028



DRAFT FRAMEWORK PLAN
(May 2024)

GLOSSARY

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AGS	An Garda Síochána
ASG	Advisory Steering Group
BCP	Broadband Connection Point
BER	Building Energy Rating
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office
CLLD	Community Led Local Development
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DCEDIY	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
DE	Department of Education
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DETE	Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment
DH	Department of Health
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development
DSP	Department of Social Protection
EC	European Commission
ECCCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ED	Electoral Division
EGD	European Green Deal
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIP	European Innovation Partnership
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDB	Green Digital Basin
GYDP	Garda Youth Diversion Programme
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HI	Healthy Ireland
HLG	High Level Goals (HLGs),
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICMSA	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Organisations
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDA	Industrial Development Agency
IFA	Irish Farmers Association
IPAS	International Protection Accommodation Services
IWG	Integration Working Group

JPC	Joint Policing Committee
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAWPRO	Local Authority Water Programme
LCCC	Limerick City and County Council
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LCETB	Limerick Clare Education and Training Board
LDC	Local Development Company
LECP	Local Economic Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LSP	Limerick Sports Partnership
LSSIF	Large-scale Sports Infrastructure Scheme
MD	Municipal District
MIC	Mary Immaculate College
MSME	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
NDP	National Development Plan
NPF	National Planning Framework
NPO	National Policy Objectives
NSO	National Strategic Outcomes
OPW	Office of Public Works
ORIS	Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme
PPN	Public Participation Network
R&DI	Research and Development and Innovation
REP	Regional Enterprise Plan
RRDF	Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme
SME	Small & Medium-sized Enterprise
SPA	Special Protected Area
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TCF	Town Centre First
TFI	Transport for Ireland
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
TUS	Technological University of the Shannon – Midlands Mid-West
TVRS	Town and Village Renewal Scheme
UL	University of Limerick
UN	United Nations
URDF	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund

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Executive Summary

The Local Economic and Community Plan 2024-2028 is the second such plan for Limerick. It was prepared in the context of significant changes in the local economy, society and local communities in urban and rural Limerick. It is also prepared against the backdrop of climate change and the need for urgent action at all levels to advance climate action and protect our environment for current and future generations.

The Socio-economic Context

Limerick City and County has a population of 209,536 in 2022, of which some 55% live in the Metropolitan Area. The population and numbers at work have grown since 2016: there are some 14,700 more people living in Limerick and 13,500 more people at work (2022). Our population is ageing, with 16% of the population (33,600 persons) now aged 65 years and over and, with people living longer, some 7,500 are aged 80 years and over. Similar to the situation in the state as a whole, Limerick is more culturally diverse. Some 11% of the population in 2022 have non-Irish citizenship while 17% were born outside of Ireland. With the upturn in the economy in recent years, the unemployment rate (based on the census measure) is 8.6% in 2022, just above the national average and down compared with 2016. Our population is more educated: 30% of the adult population have third level qualifications at Ordinary Bachelor's Degree or above (up from 2016). Limerick's business demography includes a number of large enterprises in advanced manufacturing, pharma/life sciences and other sectors, attracted as Foreign Direct Investment, and a significant indigenous base of small and medium-sized enterprises. Limerick is the location of three third level education institutions. These facilitate access of the population to higher education and contribute to creating a highly educated and skilled workforce. They also offer advanced R&D and Innovation capacity, contributing to the knowledge economy, and increasing our attractiveness to businesses and as a location for Foreign Direct Investment.

Limerick is impacted by social and economic inequalities with certain local areas, especially within the city, having higher unemployment rates (twice and above the Limerick average), lower levels of education, poorer health status and other social markers of disadvantage. While the situation in these areas has improved on some indicators since 2016 (such as unemployment levels), they have not improved at a rate to "catch up with" the mainstream. Relatively speaking, they remain significantly behind the averages for Limerick and more or less in the same position or worse since 2016. As well as local areas in social deprivation, certain groups in the population are in or at high risk of social exclusion. This is especially the case with Travellers, people with disabilities, certain sections of the migrant population and isolated elderly people. In addition to income poverty, these groups are more likely to be affected by digital exclusion, food and fuel/energy poverty and discrimination.

Priorities from the Consultations

Drawing on our analysis of local socio-economic conditions and findings from the public consultation process, good quality recreation infrastructure and amenities, having places and spaces for people to meet, being close to and able to access local services are most important factors of quality of life. There is greater awareness of climate change and climate action is taking on greater importance in local communities. The quality of the local environment, natural landscapes and bio-diversity are important assets that must be protected and enhanced. Community spirit and the contribution of local community and voluntary organisations to place-making and running activities in local communities are highly valued. While acknowledging the strength of the local economy and job opportunities, a wider spread in the location of jobs in Limerick would facilitate more people to live and work locally. Regeneration of Limerick City Centre is of particular importance for the future

success of Limerick as a whole and the Mid-West region. Reducing vacancy and dereliction to bring back commercial life and create civic, cultural and recreation space and residential development in the city centre and towns and villages, supported by better transport infrastructure and services, are high priorities.

Aims and High Level Goals

This Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) aims to create healthy resilient local communities with good infrastructure and services and a resilient local economy, consolidating successes in recent years, and promoting sustainable economic development. In the face of challenges of climate change, it aims to support adaptation to more sustainable ways of living. Equality and social inclusion are important aims, addressed to area-based deprivation in Limerick and specific groups most at risk of exclusion. Promoting integration and social and civic participation in a more diverse and multi-cultural society are important in order to achieve social cohesion. Innovation and creativity will continue to support a successful approach to local development in Limerick, now in more challenging times. Developing the profile and reputation of Limerick in the regional and national context and internationally are also part of our approach.

This LECP has four High Level Goals that are inter-connected:

1. People and Community: to promote well-being, inclusion, participation and place-making
2. Environment and Climate Action: to promote sustainability, adaptation and the “green” transition
3. Economy: to promote economic resilience and regeneration and development of the city centre and rural towns and villages
4. Innovation: to promote creativity, expand the application of technology and digitalisation to strengthen the economy and improve quality of life for all.

Sustainable Development Objectives

The Framework LECP presented in this document has an Economic Plan, a Community Plan and an Integrated Plan. In each of these Plans, specific objectives are stated. These are summarised below:

- **Economic Plan: Sustainable Economic Development Objectives.** There are eight objectives addressed to the following: labour market activation targeting long-term unemployed people and specific groups affected by high unemployment; promotion of entrepreneurship and support to micro and small and medium-sized enterprises; developing the business infrastructure for small businesses including workspace; economic diversification and responding to skills shortages and recruitment difficulties in certain sectors; supporting expansion of existing businesses in higher valued-added sectors; promotion and putting the infrastructure and services in place to attract Foreign Direct Investment to Limerick; developing and promoting Limerick as a tourism destination; and advancing the development of cultural and creative industries in Limerick.
- **Community Plan: Sustainable Community Development Objectives.** There are 10 objectives addressed to the following: education and learning focused on promoting lifelong learning and targeting those groups with low education; children, young people and families focused on facilities/amenities and services and “giving young people a voice”; health and well-being focused on healthy lifestyles for all and addressing health inequalities targeting disadvantaged areas; ageing well and supporting the age-friendly Limerick programme; social inclusion and personal empowerment; sport, recreation and community buildings focused on capital works and equipment; promoting societal and community awareness of climate action; promoting

participation in civic life and building social capital including volunteering; integration of migrants and diverse cultural and ethnic communities including improved representation/organisation and participation in decision-making; community safety and crime prevention in local communities.

- **Integrated Plan: Sustainable Integrated Objectives.** There are 10 objectives and these cross-cut economic and community elements. The first four objectives focus on types of areas and support for area-based development. They relate to: regeneration of Limerick City Centre; an integrated development approach in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city to lift them out of poverty and exclusion; connected city and sub-urban neighbourhoods including planning for the 10-minute neighbourhood and improved transport connectivity; town and village renewal, applying the Town Centre First approach, and supporting connected settlements in rural Limerick via improved transport and shared services, and promotion of rural development. The next three objectives are thematic and relate to: preservation and building pride in our culture, arts, heritage and sport and promoting participation in these activities; internationalisation, branding and promotion of Limerick as a place to live, to work, to study and for investment; and technology and promotion of SMART strategies (SMART city, towns and villages). The last three objectives focus on rolling out the “green” agenda and relate to: infrastructure, services and promotion of active travel and sustainable travel; climate action mitigation and adaptation and protection of natural resources; and developing green energy and adaptation to green energy systems.

The aims, High Level Goals and objectives of the LECP contribute locally to higher level policy frameworks at international, national and regional level. The LECP must be consistent with them. These include: the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*, *EU policy frameworks up to 2030*, the *National Planning Framework Ireland 2040* and the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region*. The LECP must take into account government policy priorities and programmes in many sectoral areas including social inclusion, enterprise development, rural development and climate action. In the local context, the Limerick LECP must be consistent with the core strategy and objectives in the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*.

Implementation Arrangements

In addition to the Framework LECP, presented in this document, the LECP involves the preparation of two-year Implementation Plans. Over the time period of this LECP, the first Implementation Plan is for the years 2024-2025 and the second for 2026-2028. The Implementation Plans identify specific actions, lead and supporting agencies, source of funding, KPIs and timelines for delivery of the actions. A monitoring and evaluation framework is developed for the LECP Framework Plan with Outcomes Indicators specified for each objective and an overall set of indicators presented in Section 8.

The LECP is distinguished from other plans by the local partnership that has overseen its preparation and will monitor delivery of the Plan over implementation. Preparation of the Framework LECP has been led by the multi-stakeholder Local Advisory Steering Group, whose membership is drawn from, or are nominees of, the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), the Economic and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC), the Public Participation Network (PPN) and other public agency and sectoral representatives with relevant expertise and experience. The Community Plan is adopted by the LCDC, the Economic Plan by the Economic and Enterprise SPC and the Integrated Plan by both committee structures. Objectives and actions in the LECP, while driven by local government, involve a collaborative and coordinated approach across local agencies. This is the added value of the LECP. Partnership and collaboration in delivery will be essential for effective implementation.

1. Introduction

The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for Limerick City and County supports the sustainable development of Limerick. The LECPs were first described in *Putting People First: Action Plan for Effective Local Government (2012)* and then formalised in the Local Government Reform Act 2014. The LECP is a statutory plan, led by the local authority. The preparation and implementation of the LECP are supported by collaborative working with other public agencies, community and voluntary bodies and sectoral interests in the local setting. A local-led, coordinated and collaborative approach are key characteristics of the LECP. The first LECP for Limerick City and County (2016-2021) has come to the end of its timespan. This is the second LECP to cover the six-year period 2024-2028.

1.1 Purpose of the LECP

The purpose of the LECP, as set out in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) Guidelines (2021) 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 overall aim is *“to promote well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities”* including all people living and working in the county, some of whom are not citizens.

The LECP provides the framework for local implementation of national and regional framework plans that set out the development path for the state and the region over the next 10 to 20 years. The key spatial plans at national and regional level are the *National Planning Framework Ireland 2040* and the *National Development Plan 2021-2030* (NPF/NDP) and the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region* (RSES). The LECP identifies objectives from those framework plans to be implemented locally. It identifies local objectives under other national and regional policies in areas including social inclusion, rural development, urban regeneration, health and well-being, education, training and skills development, employment, enterprise and climate change / climate action.

The LECP must be consistent with overarching local authority plans – in particular, the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028* and *Limerick City and County Council’s Corporate Plan 2019-2024*. All of the local plans need to align with the *UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, to which Ireland is a signatory. The *UN SDGs* aim to address urgent economic, social and environment challenges in a harmonised way across all governments of the world.

1.2 The Structure and Process for Preparation of the LECP

The LECP has the following elements:

1. Economic elements
2. Community elements
3. Integrated elements with shared objectives and outcomes across Economic and Community elements.

The LECP has been developed under the joint oversight of the Limerick Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), responsible for the Community elements of the Plan and the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) of the Council, responsible for the Economic elements of the Plan. The preparation and drafting the LECP have been assisted by an Advisory Steering Group at all stages of development. The Advisory Steering Group includes members of the LCDC and Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC, public agencies, the local development sector, community and voluntary organisations and sectoral interests (agriculture, business). It is chaired by an Elected Member of the Council. Community and voluntary organisations

on the Advisory Steering Group include representatives from youth services, community and social inclusion and the environment sector. Some of these members are nominated by the Public Participation Network (social inclusion and environment).

The preparation of the LECP involved a public consultation process across Limerick city and county and targeted consultations with groups not traditionally well-represented in such consultations.

Under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, in the process of preparation and approval of the LECP, consultation with the Regional Assembly is required to ensure consistency of the LECP with the RSES. Consultation with the Municipal District members is required to ensure consistency between the economic and community elements of the Plan and with the core strategy and objectives of the statutory *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*. Statements of consistency are required from both sets of structures (the Regional Assembly and the Municipal Districts).

A Strategic Environmental Assessment / Appropriate Assessment of the Draft LECP is undertaken to evaluate any environmental implications and /or on the conservation of wild habitats and of wild flora and fauna.

The stages involved in the preparation of the LECP, as outlined in the *Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines 2021*, issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), and applied in the preparation of the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan are shown below.

Stages in the Preparation of the LECP	
Stage 1: Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Socio-economic Analysis• Socio-economic Statement & High-Level Goals based on Socio-economic Analysis• Preparation of Draft Socio-Economic Statement by Advisory Steering Group• Sign-off by Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and LCDC
Stage 2: Public Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Consultation on High-Level Goals• Revision of the Socio-Economic Statement based on the Consultation• Preparation of Draft Plan by Advisory Steering Group• Sign-off by the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and LCDC
Stage 3: Develop Objectives and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop detailed Objectives and Outcomes• Preparation of the Draft LECP by the Advisory Steering Group• Sign-off by the Economic Development, Enterprise and Planning SPC and LCDC• Final Draft LECP to Municipal Districts and Regional Assembly for input
Stage 4: Finalise Framework Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SPC & LCDC adopt Final Draft LECP following Municipal District and Regional Assembly input• Local Authority to approve the Final Draft LECP• Submission of LECP to the Minister & Published by the Local Authority
Stage 5: Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare Implementation Plans (2-year cycle)• Consideration of available Resources (€)• On-going flexible implementation of LECP
Stage 6: Monitoring & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to address proposed outcomes• On-going data collection including case studies• Implementation Report

The Limerick LECP is presented in the following Sections:

- Section 2: Strategic Policy Context
- Section 3: Socio-Economic Analysis: Limerick City and County
- Section 4: Public Consultation: Process and Findings
- Section 5: Economic & Community: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT)
- Section 6: Vision, High Level Goals and Objectives
- Section 7: Implementation Arrangements
- Section 8: Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

2. Strategic Policy Context

The LECP is an important plan to support the implementation at local level of national and regional policies. Objectives and actions in the LECP must fit with national policy priorities so they contribute locally to important policy agendas and in order to attract funding to implement them. National, regional and local plans must also fit with over-arching international and EU policy frameworks. Appendix 6 of the LECP Guidelines lists relevant policies and strategies to inform the development of the LECP. The most relevant ones are presented in summary and reviewed here.

2.1 International Frameworks: UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to which Ireland is a signatory, aim to address urgent economic, social and environmental challenges. There are 17 SDGs - shown below.

Climate action (SDG 13) and environmental challenges (SDG 6 Clean Water, 7 Affordable & Clean Energy, 12 Responsible Production & Consumption, 13 Life Below Water, 14 Life on Land) are key goals in global development. However, the SDGs are not only about the environment. They include social goals such as 1 No Poverty, 10 Reduce Inequalities, 3 Good Health & Well-being, 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality and economic goals including 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, 9 Industry Innovative & Infrastructure and 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities. Implementation involves a harmonised response across governments. Partnership with public bodies, civil society and business stakeholders, as reflected in SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals, is part of the approach.



Government's first *Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2022* adopts a whole of government approach where every government department is assigned one or more SDGs. The Plan (2018) acknowledged that public awareness of the SDGs in Ireland is low. It contains actions to improve awareness

where the focus is on how the SDGs relate to everyday life. Strategic priorities are: (1) Awareness raising; (2) Participation by all stakeholders, (3) Support and encouragement to communities / organisations to contribute to the Goals and (4) Policy Alignment across government and enhanced policy coherence.

The next SDG national implementation plan is being developed. This will expand public

awareness, focus on mapping SDGs against national, regional and local policy goals, identify targets and strengthen reporting mechanisms. Already national, regional and local plans show links to UN SDGs.

2.2 EU Level Plans & Frameworks

The EU agenda for jobs and growth, completing its delivery phase (up to 2023), was out in *Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. Under this strategy, targets

were set for increasing employment, reducing early school leaving, increasing completion of third level education and a reduction in the number of persons living in poverty. Ireland performed above the European average in relation to the education indicators (early school leaving and third level education) and has made very significant progress in raising the employment rate. By 2022, the number of people at work in the state is the largest it has ever been. Since summer 2022, the new EU policy and funding frameworks and new social targets to be achieved by 2030 are agreed.

2.2.1 European Pillar on Social Rights and Social Targets to 2030

Under the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan 2030, Member States have committed to a strong social Europe focused on jobs, skills and social inclusion. Three EU headline social targets are set, to be achieved by 2030, compared with a baseline in 2019. All Member States have committed to national targets, to contribute towards achievement of these EU headline targets. The EU and national targets adopted by Ireland, to be achieved by 2030, are:

Indicator	EU 2030 Target	Ireland 2030 Target
Employment rate (%) 20-64 years:	78%	78.2%
Adult learning (%) in training annually:	60%	64.2%
Poverty reduction, No. risk of poverty / social exclusion:	15 million (of which 5million children)	-90,000

2.2.2 The European Green Deal

A European Green Deal for the European Union (EU) sets out the commitment to tackling climate and environmental-related challenges, which the EU Commission identifies as “*this generation’s defining task*”. The European Green Deal is a response to these challenges and frames a new growth strategy to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy and where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050. It also aims to protect, conserve and enhance the EU’s natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment-related risks and impacts, while at the same time, achieving a just and inclusive transition. Action priorities under the EGD are as follows:

1. Fresh air, clean water, healthy soil and bio-diversity
2. Renovated, energy efficient buildings
3. Healthy and affordable food
4. More public transport
5. Cleaner energy and cutting-edge clean technological innovation
6. Longer-lasting products that can be repaired, recycled and re-used (the “circular” economy)
7. Future-proof jobs and skills training for the transition
8. Globally-competitive and resilient industry.

2.2.3 The Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan

Agriculture and rural areas are considered central to the *European Green Deal*. The new legislative and funding framework (from January 2023) brings “*a fairer, greener and more performance-based CAP*”. It is defined by a “Green Architecture” that includes targeted support to smaller farms and allows greater flexibility to Member States to adapt measures to local conditions.

The *CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) 2023-2027* and financial package for Ireland (€9.838 billion), was agreed in 2022 and is broken down by two Pillars: Pillar 1: €5,976.7 (Direct payments and Sectoral Interventions) and Pillar 2: €3,861.6 (Rural Development). Pillar 1, providing direct payments to

support farm incomes and sectoral interventions (Guarantee Fund), and Pillar 2, support for Rural Development have been brought within a single Strategic Plan supporting the economic, social and environmental sustainability of rural areas. The CSP will be a key tool in achieving the ambitions of the “Farm to Fork” and bio-diversity strategies.

New elements include a stronger redistributive approach in the CSP - shifting support from larger / most efficient farms to medium and smaller-sized farms, interventions to address the ageing farmer population and supporting a generational shift via entry by younger qualified farmers, farmer education and support for women farmers. The “Green Architecture” of the CSP includes: an Eco Scheme to support farming practices that protect bio-diversity (space for nature), tree and hedgerow planting, setting maximum livestock stocking rates and limits for use of chemical fertilisers in farming under Pillar 1 and an Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) under Pillar 2. ACRES involves participation by farms (individually and in cooperation projects) on land with high environmental priority in the delivery of measures to improve bio-diversity, climate and air and water quality outcomes. Other interventions include European Innovative Partner (EIP-AGRI) Operational Groups to develop and test innovative solutions in the agricultural sector, On-farm Capital Investment, a Collaborative Farming Grant to support land mobility and succession to younger farmers, Knowledge-Transfer Groups across the farming sector, and support for community-led local development in the LEADER Programme.

2.2.4 EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2021-2027

The EU *Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)*¹ sets out the EU budget for the period 2021-2027 under seven headings. Budgetary headings under the MFF relevant to objectives and actions in the LECP are:

Heading 1: Single Market, Innovation and Digital (€149,512 billion) which includes HORIZON Europe, providing funding for advanced research in third level institutions. It also supports participation by organisations such as local authorities and NGOs in research on the major societal challenges.

Heading 2: Cohesion, Resilience and Values (€426,694 billion): including the European Regional Development Fund, which funds the Regional Operational Programmes in the Irish regions, the European Social Fund+ (skills/upskilling, social inclusion and poverty reduction), and Erasmus+ which offers cooperation opportunities in education, training, youth and sport across the EU.

Heading 3: Natural Resources and Environment (€400,996 billion) incorporating Agriculture and Maritime Policy including the Common Agricultural Policy and Environment and Climate Action including the LIFE programme open to support local climate action, nature conservation and environmental projects.

2.2.5 EU Cohesion Policy

EU Cohesion Policy aims to promote and support the “overall harmonious development” of Member States and regions by strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion and reducing inter-regional disparities. This is a key strategy to deliver on the green and digital transition across the EU.

Under Ireland’s Partnership Agreement (2021-2027), Ireland will benefit from some €1.4 billion in Cohesion Funding under the following programmes/funding streams:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): for investments in regional and local actions aligned with the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies* and the *NPF: Ireland 2040*. Priorities

¹ The MFF 2021-2027 commitment in current prices is €1,210,894 billion plus an additional commitment of €806,925 billion under *NextGenerationEU*, the EU’s response to the economic and social impact of COVID-19. Ireland was allocated just under €1 billion to support investment in recovery and transition 2020-2026.

are: (1) SMART Cities/SMART Regions supporting innovation, digitalization and economic transformation and investment in Technical Universities; (2) Low carbon and climate resilience including investment to improve energy efficiency in the housing stock and help families at risk of energy poverty; (3) Urban dimension supporting revitalisation of medium-sized and smaller towns.

- European Social Fund + (ESF+): for investments in improving access to employment, upskilling, lifelong learning, tackling poverty and social exclusion and social innovation. Poverty reduction and social inclusion target specific groups including vulnerable children, migrants and persons with disabilities.
- European Territorial Cooperation and three inter-regional cooperation (InterReg) programmes; and
- Just Transition Fund (JTF), applying to counties in the midlands badly impacted by reliance on peat extraction industries.
- The European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

When match funding is included, the value of the programmes supported by the 2021-2027 EU allocation is approximately €3.5 billion. The ERDF, ESF+ and inter-regional cooperation programmes (InterReg) are all relevant to objectives and actions in the LECP.

2.3 National Policy Context: Spatial Development & Over-arching Policies

At a spatial / territorial level, the *National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040* and the *National Development Plan to 2027* are the key frameworks within which the LECP is located. The *Programme for Government* sets out policy priorities. In addition, a number of national sectoral policies and strategies are relevant to the scope and objectives of the LECP. An indicative list of these is included in the **LECP Guidelines** and a cross-section of these are reviewed / summarised below.

2.3.1 National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040

Project Ireland: National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040 (NPF) is the government's strategic framework for delivery of economic and population growth over the next 20 years. An important objective is to promote balanced growth across the regions and between urban and rural areas. Transition to a climate neutral and climate resilient society cuts across all elements. The overall objective is to achieve a pattern of growth to support the projected increase in population by one million by 2040. This will require the creation of 660,000 additional jobs and 550,000 additional homes. The objective of balanced regional development is reflected in planning for 25% of projected population growth to occur in the Dublin region, 25% across the other four cities in the state combined (Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford) (which would require their populations and jobs to grow by 50-60%) and 50% of projected population growth in key regional centres, towns and villages.



The NPF is structured around ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). NSOs that are particularly relevant to objectives and actions in the LECP are:

- **NSO1 Compact Growth:** sustainable growth of urban and rural settlements supported by jobs, housing, community services and amenities within the footprint of the settlement.
- **NSO3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities:** regeneration and development of rural areas, taking advantage of opportunities arising from improved digital connectivity, climate action, tourism, culture and arts, the agri-food sector and improved transport.
- **NSO4 Sustainable Mobility:** active travel and public transport (bus, rail, light rail) to create high-quality sustainable mobility to improve quality of life, support transition to a low-carbon society and enhance economic competitiveness.
- **NSO5: A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills:** creation of a competitive, innovative and resilient enterprise base, providing high-quality jobs and employment opportunities for people to live and prosper in all regions.
- **NSO7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage:** protect our natural and historic built environment, develop public realm to improve attractiveness and “placemaking”; develop amenity to improve health and well-being and support economic development and expansion of tourism.
- **NSO 8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society:** achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.
- **NSO 9 Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources:** conserve and enhance the quality of these resources, improve capacity to deal with waste / waste reduction and promotion of the circular economy.
- **NSO 10 Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services:** quality accessible education and health services, based compact smart growth in urban areas and strong stable rural communities.

2.3.2 National Development Plan 2021 - 2030



The *National Development Plan 2021 - 2030* (NDP) sets out the investment priorities that underpin the implementation of the *National Planning Framework: Ireland 2040*. The NDP presents the investment strategy under each of the National Strategic Objectives (NSOs) in the NPF: *Ireland 2040*. An up-date and review of the *NDP 2021-2030* was published in October 2021 with a view to promoting '*infrastructure-led recovery*' and '*green recovery*' in the wake of COVID-19. It has a strengthened focus on climate action ambitions and targets. The NDP sets out Departmental allocations to 2025 and a total public investment of €165 billion over the period 2021-2030. Major investments planned under specific NSOs relevant to objectives and actions in the LECP include:

- NSO1: Compact Growth: Investment in provision of 6,000 affordable homes each year, the Croí Conaithe Fund (support to expand private housing options including re-use of vacant dwellings for housing in urban / town centres), and the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund for large-scale regeneration projects in cities / urban centres
- NSO 3 Strengthening Rural Economies and Communities: Investment via the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund for large-scale regeneration projects in towns and villages, the National Broadband Plan, remote working hub infrastructure and better public transport through the Connecting Ireland Bus Programme
- NSO2 Enhanced Regional Mobility: including €360 million investment in active travel, the N/M20 Cork to Limerick and enhancement of inter-regional bus services
- NSO5: A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise Innovation and Skills Route including the Green Transition Fund, Digital Transition Fund and Investment in Technological Universities
- NSO 7 - Enhanced Amenity and Heritage includes investments in the National Cultural Institutions and National Parks, Sports Capital and Equipment Programme and Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund
- NSO10: Access to Quality Education and Health Services including delivery of 150 to 200 school building projects annually over the period 2021 to 2025 and expansion of primary and community care in line with Sláintecare.

2.2.3 Programme for Government: Our Shared Future



The *Programme for Government: Our Shared Future* (2021), was drafted against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. Government committed to promoting economic recovery and social justice and well-being through investment in public infrastructure, and critical areas such as housing, health care, transport, and energy. The key priorities include: A better quality of life for all; Reigniting and renewing the economy; A new green deal; Universal health care; Housing for all; Balanced regional development; A new social contract; Building strong and safer communities; Better opportunities through education and research; A shared island; At the heart of Europe and global citizenship; Reforming and reimagining public life; and Functioning of Government.

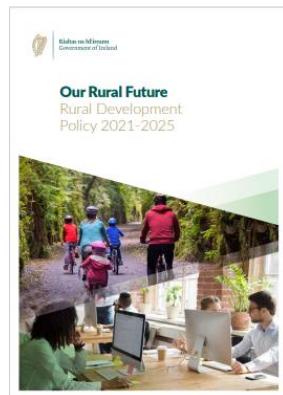
2.3 National Policies: Rural and Area-based Development

National policies in rural, community and area-based development, relevant to the community, integrated and economic objectives of the LECP are reviewed selectively below.

2.3.1 Rural Development: Our Rural Future

Under *Our Rural Future* (2021), a thriving rural Ireland is integral to our national economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being and development, and is built on interdependence of urban and rural areas. The policy recognises the centrality of people, the importance of vibrant and lived-in rural places, the potential to create quality jobs and sustain our shared environment. *Our Rural Future* focuses on the following thematic objectives:

- Optimising the opportunities for rural communities from high speed broadband.
- Supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas.



- Assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages, with an emphasis on a place-based approach.
- Enhancing the participation, leadership and resilience of rural communities including a focus on young people in decision-making.
- Enhancing public services in rural areas.
- Supporting a Just Transition to a climate neutral economy.
- Supporting the sustainability of Agriculture, the Marine and Forestry.
- Supporting the sustainability of our island and coastal communities.
- Nurturing our culture and heritage.

The development of rural areas is best pursued using an integrated approach reflected, for instance, in LEADER, in *Town Centre First Policy* and in funding programmes in rural development. Funding streams in rural development to support implementation of the policy include: *Rural Regeneration and Development Fund*; *Town and Village Renewal Scheme*; *Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme*, LEADER, CLÁR (targeted on areas that have suffered the greatest levels of population decline), *Connected Hubs Fund* and *Community Enhancement Programme and Community Investment Fund* (the last two applying to urban as well as rural communities).

2.3.2 Rural Towns: Town Centre First Policy

The *Town Centre First Policy* (2022) presents the approach to regeneration and development of rural towns based on an assessment / “health check” of the town, preparation of a masterplan / vision that identifies and promotes utilisation of local assets including derelict and vacant buildings, unused lands and other local resources. The *Town Centre First Policy* also has an institutional dimension with the plan and proposed actions to be prepared and delivered based on a multi-stakeholder response at the local town level, the Town Team, supported by the Local Authority and drawing on available government funding streams.

2.3.3 Community-led Local Development: LEADER

LEADER is the EU-supported programme to promote Community-Led Local Development with a history of successful implementation in Ireland over 30 years. The *LEADER Programme 2016-2020: Local Development Strategy for Limerick* had funding of some €10.8 million and supported over 200 local projects across rural Limerick. These will complete implementation by the end of 2023.

The LEADER Programme (from 2023-2027) is part of Ireland’s *CAP Strategic Plan* (2023-2027) with an overall budget (including EU and National Exchequer contributions) of €180 million. The allocation to Limerick for its *LEADER/Local Development Strategy* (LDS) is €6.9 million. The overarching objective is: *To promote employment, growth, gender equality, social inclusion and local development in rural areas including the bio-economy and sustainable forestry*. The themes and sub-themes of LEADER 2023-2027 focus on aspects of development detailed in *Our Rural Future*. It has a stronger emphasis on environmental sustainability and climate action compared with the past and this must be reflected across all themes. Themes and sub-themes are as follow:

- **Theme 1 - Economic Development and Job Creation:** The Green Economy, Agricultural Diversification, Rural Tourism & Recreation, Enterprise Development, Rural Food Production and Social, Community & Cooperative Enterprises
- **Theme 2 - Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion:** Rural Infrastructure, Accessible Services, Optimising Digital Connectivity and Rural Youth
- **Theme 3 - Sustainable Development of Rural Environment and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:** Sustainable Development of Rural Environment, Climate Change Capacity Building and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

2.3.4 Urban Development

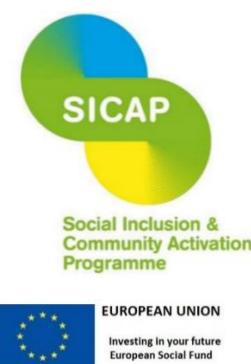
Regeneration and development of cities and larger urban centres, is a priority under the *NPF: Ireland 2040 and National Development Plan*. The *Urban Regeneration and Development Fund* (URDF) aims to deliver more compact and sustainable development of Ireland's five cities and other large urban centres through part-funding large-scale regeneration and development projects. The focus is on regeneration from the core of the city, particularly addressed to removal of dereliction, re-use of brownfield sites and transformative projects within the framework of a comprehensive regeneration masterplan.

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) has responsibility for implementing the URDF, which has an allocation of €2 billion in the *NDP* to 2027. Compact growth and sustainable development involves a greater proportion of residential and mixed-use development within the existing built-up footprints of Ireland's cities and towns. The objective is that urban areas become attractive and vibrant places in which to live, work, visit and invest. Regeneration funding from URDF can complement other sources of funding, for instance, for enterprise development projects, housing infrastructure and housing, active travel and transport connectivity and other sectoral programmes to support the development of well-functioning urban areas with good quality services and environment (public realm, green space, civic and cultural space). Smaller-scale funding streams that are open to urban communities and rural community include the *Community Enhancement Programme*, *Community Centres Investment Fund* and the *Local Sports Capital* programme.

2.3.5 Area-based Targeting Social Disadvantage

Due to greater clustering of populations in urban environments, the most disadvantaged spatial communities are found in larger urban areas, especially cities but also larger towns. Smaller towns/village also show clusters of social disadvantage. Through area-based targeting, mainstream funding programmes support delivery of services to disadvantaged populations. These focus on social inclusion, access to education, childcare, health services, family support, community services and sports and recreation facilities.

Key programmes to support local community development and social inclusion in both urban and rural areas are outlined below:



Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public sector agencies. Goal 1 under SICAP involves support to local community groups, to build their capacity as organisations for planning and delivery of social inclusion actions and support participation in wider fora and decision-making structures. Under Goal 2 of SICAP individuals in target groups most affected by and at risk of exclusion are supported on a one-to-one basis in a pathway to inclusion through engagement in learning, well-being supports and support to access employment, self-employment and social enterprise. In the delivery of the programme, there is a requirement and Key Performance Indicator set for area-based targeting of disadvantaged communities, with a higher target set for supporting individual at risk of exclusion in urban disadvantaged communities (50% and higher for cities) compared with more rural areas (approx. 30%) targeting rural towns and villages. In Limerick, SICAP is delivered by the three Local Development Companies (LDCs) – the PAUL Partnership in the city, West Limerick Resources in west Limerick and Ballyhoura Development in east Limerick.

Community Services Programme (CSP) supports community companies and co-operatives to deliver local social, economic and environmental services by providing funding contributions towards the cost of employing a manager and full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. Other programmes include *Family Resource Centres*, core funded by Tulsa, *Youth Services*, specific programmes such as *Garda Youth Diversion* projects (supporting young people at risk of offending) and in-school and out-of-school services delivered under the *DEIS schools' programme*. Such programmes are delivered by community and voluntary groups. Many funding programmes, such as *Sports Capital Programme*, give additional weighting to applications from disadvantaged areas.

2.4 National Economic Policies

A number of economic policies relevant to the LECP are reviewed below.

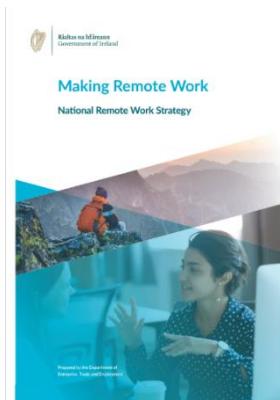
2.4.1 Economic Recovery, New Patterns of Work & Job Creation

Government's *Economic Recovery Plan 2021* aims to create more resilient and better jobs. As a policy that is regionally balanced, rural proofed and puts communities at the centre, it aims to ensure that no one is left behind. The Plan is framed to enable Ireland meet the challenges of economic recovery from the pandemic and climate change.

The Plan includes policies to invest in businesses and workers; help people get back into work, training or education; provide enhanced and more targeted support for sectors that may lag behind, and invest in infrastructure and reforms that enhance Ireland's long-term capacity for growth. Tourism and hospitality, arts and culture and live events are specifically identified as sectors for the package of supports, as a result of the challenges they have faced since the pandemic. Challenges and changes identified include housing, automation, the geopolitical and global landscape, international taxation trends, demographics, regional development, an SME productivity gap, as well as Ireland's target to achieve an average of 7% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2030.



The *National Remote Work Strategy* was published in 2021 in the wake of increased remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of the strategy is to ensure that remote working is a permanent feature in the Irish workplace in a way that maximises economic, social and environmental benefits. While an increase in remote work can improve quality of life, impact positively on the environment (reduced commuting by car) and bring benefits to the location of remote working facilities (e.g., villages, towns), it can also impact negatively on footfall into traditional spatial locations of office workers, particularly city centres. The *Remote Work Strategy* is built on three pillars: (1) creating a conducive environment for the adoption of remote work; (2) development and leveraging of remote work infrastructure to increase adoption; and (3) maximising the benefits of remote work to achieve public policy goals.



2.4.2 Inward Investment and Job Creation



The IDA launched its strategy, *Driving Recovery and Sustainable Growth 2021-2024*, against the backdrop of greater uncertainties in the global economy, changed conditions for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) including greater competition and a strong focus on green and sustainable growth. The strategy aims to work with existing clients “*to safeguard and enhance their mandates in Ireland, while also attracting the next generation of leading-edge MNCs in core sectors of focus*”. It aims to realise opportunities from digital transformation, the green transition, new business models and an enhanced focus on operational resilience (supply chain reconfiguration, new models of work and the future of work). Areas of opportunity identified include cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), 5G, big data, advanced

manufacturing, cell and gene therapy, connected health, industrial automation and renewable energy. A target is set for 50% of all investments (400) to go to regional locations from 2021- 2024 (representing a stronger focus on the regions where the target for the previous strategy was for 30-40% to go to regions outside of Dublin). Delivery of property solutions in designated regional locations is a key action to support the realisation of these targets.

2.4.3 Sectoral strategies: Tourism, Food Sector, Culture, Arts, Media & Sport

Tourism is an important sector in terms of jobs and growth potential. Strengthening Ireland’s tourism offering, its international reputation and attractiveness as a tourism destination are the goals of the Ireland’s tourism strategy. Strategic Investment Priorities centre on capital investment in tourism infrastructure and attractions including activity-based tourism (*Tourism Product Development*) and marketing and promotion (*Tourism Ireland Marketing Fund*). Job creation and sustaining current and future jobs while managing transition of the tourism industry to a sustainable tourism model are key objectives.



People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025 is centred on Ireland achieving its full potential as a destination for overseas tourism. However, it is recognised that the domestic tourism market underpins the range of visitor accommodation and services that provide competitive advantage to Ireland in the international market. Many measures in the statement will also benefit the domestic tourism sector. The overall goals and targets are: (1) By 2025, revenue from overseas visitors, excluding carrier receipts, will increase to €5 billion in real terms (i.e. excluding the effects of inflation); (2) Employment in the tourism sector will be 250,000 by 2025, compared with around 200,000 at present; and (3) There will be 10 million visits to Ireland annually by 2025.



Food Vision 2030 – A World Leader in Sustainable Food Systems is government’s 10 year Strategy for the Irish agri-food sector (including primary agriculture, food and drink processing and manufacturing, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing, forestry and forestry processing and the equine sector). The strategy, adopts an integrated food systems approach and seeks for Ireland to become a global leader of innovation for sustainable food and agriculture systems. The Strategy consists of 22 Goals, grouped into four high-level Missions, for the sector to work toward: (1) A Climate Smart, Environmentally

Sustainable Agri-Food Sector; (2) Viable and Resilient Primary Producers with Enhanced Well-Being; (3) Food Which is Safe, Nutritious And Appealing, Trusted And Valued at Home and Abroad and (4) An Innovative, Competitive and Resilient Agri-Food Sector, Driven by Technology And Talent. Development of the artisan food sector is important locally as an opportunity for enterprise and job creation while food and hospitality has important links to tourism – e.g., food tourism – and attractiveness of place.

Culture, Arts, Sport and Media offer opportunities for economic and social development and for individual and community well-being and pride in our culture and / or place. A *National Cultural Policy Framework to 2025* is based on three principles: (1) the value of culture and creativity to the individual and society, (2) support creative practice and cultural participation and (3) cherishing our cultural heritage. The policy framework covers a range of areas including the arts, the Irish language, heritage and audio-visual sectors and promotes a unified / coordinated approach.

Policy aims are achieved through delivery of programmes including: the *Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022* (reviewed and extended to 2027), strengthening culture and creativity including funding for community projects and youth-led arts and participation projects; the *20-year strategy for the Irish language, Global Ireland 2025* which promote Irish culture world-wide, *Heritage Ireland 2030* which focuses on the role of the built heritage and natural heritage in society and the economy; the *National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021* where there is a key role for arts-based / creative projects; the *Audio-visual Action Plan* which links into new opportunities and advances opened up with digitalisation. The policy is supported with investment for capital projects under the *NPF: Ireland 2040*. Under the *Creative Ireland Programme 2023-2027*, local authorities are required to prepare a five-year cultural and creative strategy to steer community-led participation in creativity and work to embed culture and creativity in other plans including the LECP, enterprise and tourism. Investment in enhanced sports facilities is supported through the *Large-scale Sports Infrastructure Fund* and the *Sports Capital and Equipment programme*.



2.4.4 Entrepreneurship and Enterprise



Enterprise 2025 Renewed - Building resilience in the face of global challenges aims for Ireland to be the best place to succeed in business delivering sustainable employment and higher standards of living for all. The focus of the Plan is on the following: (1) Sustaining what Ireland has in the immediate term; (2) Transforming the enterprise base for longer-term resilience; and (3) Building on Ireland's strengths to be successful in international trade while managing potential vulnerabilities.

The aim is for the policies to deliver jobs that are sustainable over the longer term – skills-based jobs to support productivity-led wage increases; deliver higher standards of living and quality of life for all and ensure that all of Ireland's regions benefit from economic growth.

Published in January 2021, the *Report of the SME Growth Taskforce: SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan* came from the commitment in the *Programme for Government* to draw up an ambitious long-term blueprint for SMEs and entrepreneurs beyond COVID-19. It was developed by an SME Growth Taskforce of entrepreneurs, business leaders and other stakeholders. The Taskforce's Growth

Plan sets out a range of recommendations including measures to assist companies to start up, scale up, enhance their digital capabilities and increase export activity.

Social enterprises are an important route to enterprise in local communities and progress important social objectives including provision of local services not viable in the private market, economic inclusion/jobs and environmental sustainability. The aim of the *National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland* is to enable social enterprise to grow in scale, support jobs, and make a positive impact on individuals and communities in both rural and urban areas. Social enterprises take many forms, across a wide spectrum from local community-based enterprises to larger enterprises, some of whom trade internationally. This policy recognises the characteristics and contribution of all forms of social enterprise. It focuses on three key objectives: (1) Building Awareness of Social Enterprise; (2) Growing and Strengthening Social Enterprise; and (3) Achieving Better Policy Alignment. The policy sets out a series of commitments on the part of Government under each of these Objectives to support the development of social enterprise over the period 2019-2022. These commitments will be delivered in partnership with social enterprise stakeholders



National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022



Department of Rural and Community Development

2.4.5 Further Education and Skills



The *National Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-2024* (FET) aims to transform learning in communities throughout Ireland. The approach is based around three strategic pillars: (1) building skills; (2) fostering inclusion; and (3) facilitating pathways. The strategy is underpinned by four enabling themes: digital transformation; learner and performance focus; staffing and structures; and capital development. The central premise of the new strategy is that FET is for everyone and will serve as a major driver of both economic development and social cohesion.



Building Future Skills: The Demand for Skills in Ireland's Built Environment Sector to 2030 identifies the skills required by the Built Environment sector over the next decade to deliver on ambitions related to housing, infrastructural development and climate change mitigation, as set out in strategies such as *Project Ireland 2040* and the *Climate Action Plan*. The range of activities in the sector means that a large variety of skills are required in the built environment sector, many of which are specific to the sector. The report highlights how the sector will face strong and consistent demands for its services and skills over the next ten years to deliver on these priorities for Irish society and the Irish economy.

2.5 National Policies: Public and Social Infrastructure

The *Statement of Strategy 2021-2025* for transport is framed in the context of climate change, political change, and a global pandemic. It states the commitment to enabling active travel and prioritisation of sustainability in decision-making on transport infrastructure. The purpose is to provide sustainable transport infrastructure and services, delivering a better quality of life for people, supporting economic growth and respecting the environment. There are three over-arching aims of the strategy: (1) To be leaders in the delivery and operation of



sustainable transport infrastructure; (2) To ensure that Ireland's national road and light rail infrastructure is safe and resilient, delivering better accessibility and sustainable mobility for people and goods; and (3) To be recognised as an organisation that values its people, customers and partners. Improved public transport services to meet the needs of local communities, people of all ages and abilities are key requirements to improve accessibility to services and economic opportunities and reduce reliance on the car. The statement includes a commitment to introduce new transport initiatives in rural areas. Strategic investment priorities for rural areas include the National Transport Authority's *Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan*, a national transport initiative to increase connectivity for people living outside of the main towns and villages and better connections across rural towns and villages through enhanced local routes.

The *National Broadband Plan* (NBP) (2020) aims to deliver high speed broadband services to parts of Ireland and address issues of digital divide/digital exclusion. The NBP underpins government strategies across areas including climate, agriculture, education, transport, tourism, sustainable growth, jobs and health. The Plan will be delivered through investment by commercial enterprises together with intervention by the State in those parts of the country where private companies have no plans to invest. An objective of the NBP is to ensure no premises in Ireland are left behind. The State Intervention area includes: some 560,000 premises; 1.1 million people; over 54,000 farms; 44,000 non-farm businesses and 679 schools. To support connected communities, approximately 300 Broadband Connections Points (BCPs) have been identified to be connected to high speed broadband, to assist communities get free public access to high speed broadband in advance of the main NBP deployment.

Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland to 2030 aims to boost the supply of housing, increase availability and affordability of housing, and create a sustainable housing system into the future. The Plan outlines the context: that Ireland's housing system is not meeting the needs of the people, there are not enough houses to buy or rent and not enough houses are being built. In addition, houses have become increasingly unaffordable, people are experiencing homelessness, the cost of building is too high, vacant housing stock remains unused, and housing stock needs to be more environmentally-friendly. The Plan is based on four pathways: (1) Supporting home ownership and increasing affordability; (2) eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing and promoting social inclusion; (3) Increasing new housing supply and (4) Addressing vacancy and efficient use of the existing stock. Targets are set at national level to increase housing supply by 2030 and annually. Target are also set for each local authority. Since its publication, a range of measures have been introduced including affordable housing supports; measures for renters; measures aimed at addressing home-building viability and activating delivery of new homes; planning reforms; measures to improve land management and to tackle vacancy.



Figure 1:
Four Pathways
to Housing for All

2.6 National Policies: Social Inclusion & Social Policies

This section reviews a number of relevant policy statements/frameworks.

2.6.1 Social Inclusion

The *Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition, Goals, Commitments* (RSI) sets out Government's ambitions for social inclusion and identifies specific commitments to minimize the risk of poverty and deprivation. The plan identifies seven goals: 1) Extend employment opportunities to

all who can work, 2) Ensure work pays – fair pay, fair conditions for workers, 3) Provide income security for older people, 4) Support families – Reduce child poverty, 5) Reduce poverty among people with disabilities, 6) Build inclusive communities – Encourage active citizenship, and 7) Ensure that all people have access to quality services. In delivery arrangements, the Roadmap argues that *the state should support rather than displace the community and voluntary sector in terms of delivering supports and services.*

Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019-2024 (SIEC) addresses *The Roadmap for Social Inclusion's* goal in “Building Inclusive Communities”. The strategy sets out the long-term ambitions for community and local development and the community and voluntary sector. It aims to promote vibrant, active communities to support a robust and deliberative democracy, with particular attention to marginalized communities. The Strategy calls for strengthening local and community development, particularly by supporting local voluntary and community organisations and facilitating their participation in development initiatives and policy processes.



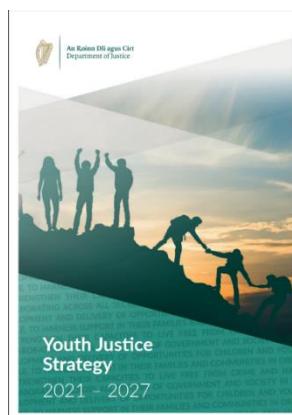
2.6.2 Children, Families & Youth

The central aim of *Young Ireland: National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028* is to provide a platform to realise the rights of children and young people in Ireland. The Policy Framework will re-establish governance structures to drive policy development and implementation, while demonstrating accountability for children and young people's policy. The governance structures report to the Cabinet Committee on Children and Education.



The previous policy framework for children and young people, *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, identified five National Outcomes for children and young people. These are continued into the new policy framework and are as follows: (1) active and healthy with physical and mental health; (2) achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development; (3) safe and protected from harm; (4) having economic security and opportunity and (5) connected, respected and contributing to their world. A review of the framework (2021) identified improvements in areas including reduction in the rate of drinking alcohol and smoking amongst young people. Areas where the situation has dis-improved include: reduction in rates of participation in physical activity; worse mental health and increased rate of reported bullying in school. Reviews of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, public consultations on the new framework and concluding observations from the hearing of the UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) identify the major issues impacting children and young people and identify specific groups that face additional challenges and need more support. These groups include: those with a disability; with mental health challenges; living in or at risk of poverty including homelessness; members of the Traveller or Roma communities; members of the LGBTI+ community; those who have suffered abuse or neglect; seeking international protection; from minority ethnic backgrounds; migrant children and young people; living in a single parent household; living in Care or Aftercare; young carers; living in a household with substance misuse; or with a family member in prison. The UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) forms the basis for the vision set out in *Young Ireland*. Priority areas for attention are identified as 'Spotlights'. Child poverty is the first Spotlight and it has been launched through a new Programme Office in the Department of the

Taoiseach. It will be followed by a Spotlight on Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being, led by the Department of Health, and a Spotlight on Disability Services.



Government's *Youth Justice Strategy 2021-2027* is embedded in principles of child welfare and the rights of the child (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). It also acknowledges the impact of offending behaviour on society and victims of crime. Core objectives are to promote positive behavioural change in children at risk, strengthen their capacity to participate in community in positive ways and bring the voice of the child and young people to the design of policies and programmes. Action addressed to children at risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system include: early intervention and preventive work; diversion from crime; family support; processes applied with children before the courts; supervision and support in the community and support post-release from detention. The strategy prioritises expanding resources for existing services

including Garda Youth Diversion and specialist interventions to address needs of hardest-to-reach and most disadvantaged children and young people.

2.6.3 Health & Well-being



Healthy Ireland: A framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013-2025 presents a roadmap for building a healthier Ireland. The framework is based around four key goals: (1) to increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life; (2) to reduce health inequalities; (3) to protect the public from threats to health and well-being and (4) to create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland. The framework uses a social determinants of health approach. This means that health and well-being are affected by all aspects of a person's life: economic status, level of education, housing, the physical environment in which people live and work; lifestyle factors (smoking, drinking, nutrition and physical activity),

social connections / participation in community life and other factors. This is particularly relevant to addressing health inequalities. Implementation of the framework is based on partnership and collaboration across public bodies including the Department of Health, the HSE, public agencies including the Education and Training Board, local authorities and community and voluntary sector organisations. Local authorities play an important role in delivering a local *Healthy Ireland* programme including public health campaigns (e.g., lifestyle changes), infrastructure to support increased physical activity, access to information and initiatives addressed to both physical health and mental health and well-being.

A review in 2020 showed that substantial progress has been made in implementation of *Healthy Ireland* across the broader population. However, it identified the need to address health inequalities and put greater emphasis on disadvantaged and harder-to-reach communities. Key areas of focus for *Healthy Ireland* from 2020 to 2025 (Phase 2) include: Prevention, through healthy behaviours and the implementation of national strategies to support better health and wellbeing; and the delivery of a new programme, the *Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme*, to address health inequalities. The latter takes an area-based approach targeting areas of highest deprivation, all of which are in urban areas particularly the cities and including designated areas in Limerick City.



2.6.4 Travellers / Roma & Migrants

The *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021* contextualised the situation of Travellers and Roma in Ireland as amongst the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in the state, reflected across a range of indicators. They have significantly lower levels of participation in education at all levels (from pre-school through to higher education), have low levels of educational attainment, highest levels of unemployment, poorest health and highest rates of premature mortality; they suffer from high rates of mental ill-health and suicides; they have higher rates of imprisonment; have greatest difficulties in access to public services; they have poorer housing – sub-standard, fewer housing options, overcrowding; children and young Travellers have much poorer outcomes compared with the general population; and Travellers and Roma suffer from discrimination.

Strategic themes and higher levels of objectives and actions of the Strategy are addressed to: Cultural Identity, Education, Employment and the Traveller Economy, Children and Youth, Health, Gender Equality, Anti-Discrimination and Equality, Accommodation, Traveller and Roma Communities and Public Services. Key initiatives arising from this strategy include: (1) State recognition of Travellers as an ethnic group of the Irish nation; (2) investment in community-based support mechanisms to ensure greater retention of Traveller and Roma children and youth in education; (3) increased funding to promote knowledge of, and pride in, Traveller culture and heritage; and (4) reinvigorated efforts to ensure that Travellers and Roma interact fully with the public health sector in order to address underlying health-related challenges facing those communities.

Linked to the *National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy*, the first *National Traveller Health Action Plan* was developed by the Department of Health and the HSE (2022). This Action Plan, which aims to create equitable health outcomes and a healthy resilient Traveller community, is aligned with addressing health inequalities and creation of a universal healthcare system, as outlined in *Sláintecare 2021-2023*. Implementation involves the HSE working with Traveller Health Units and Primary Healthcare for Traveller Projects and with other public bodies whose services impact on Traveller health and well-being. Actions in community and local development, anti-discrimination measures, accommodation and homelessness, employment and income support, and education are also included in the Plan.

The Migrant Integration Strategy: A Blueprint for the Future sets out the commitment of government to promote migrant integration in a more culturally-diverse society. It proposes actions to support migrants fully participate in all aspects of life in Ireland, to make integration a core principle of Irish life and that institutions work together to promote integration. The strategy is addressed to economic integration, participation in civic and community life, culture and sport, politics, actions to make public services accessible and responsive to needs of migrants and anti-racism campaigns and cultural awareness training and access to education and health services.

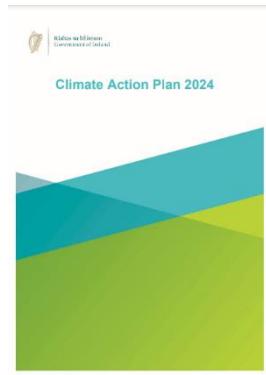
2.6.5 Other Relevant Strategies

Other relevant strategies include: the *National Disability Inclusion Strategy (2017-2021)* which puts a strong emphasis on rights of people with disabilities and for them to be involved in decision-making and enabled to make choices in how they live their lives; the *LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021*; and the *National Positive Aging Strategy*. In the last case, local authority-led *Age-friendly Strategies* and programmes are embedded across all local authorities in the state, while a national age-friendly programme office and regional management / support structure provides overall direction and

support on programme strategy and implementation. *The National Access Plan: A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028* focuses on inclusion and greater diversity in higher education and support to promote participation and student success. The Plan identifies three main groups under-represented in higher education and targeted for support: (1) people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds; (2) members of Irish Traveller and Roma communities and (3) people with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities.

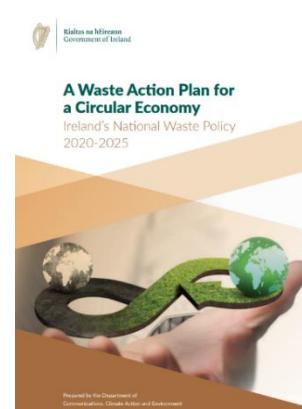
2.7 National Policies: Environment & Climate Action

Government's *Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24)*, published in December 2023, is the third annual update to the *2021 Climate Action Plan: Securing Our Future* which identifies action on climate change as an urgent need, affecting all sectors and society as a whole. Under *Agenda 2030*, Ireland is required to achieve a legally binding target of a 51% reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 2030, from a baseline in 2018, and ultimately net zero by 2050. This target is in the *Programme for Government* and set out in the *Climate Act and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021*.



Progress in achieving annual targets, working towards the 51% reduction by 2030, have been well behind planned targets. Agriculture and transport are sectors where there will be significant challenges in meeting the sectoral targets set. Generally, a significant modal shift from car to active travel and public transport must be made as well as investment in, and actions to effect, the transformation of agriculture and agricultural practices. Working towards and achieving the target, will put Ireland on a more sustainable path, create a cleaner, greener economy and society and protect the population from the consequences of climate change. CAP24 refines and updates the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The green transition provides opportunities to create new jobs and businesses in green energy and energy efficiency improvements and improved quality of life. Delivering a "Just Transition" is a key objective. The 2024 Plan (CP24) includes an additional *Sustainable Development Goals* (UN SDG) chapter which provides an assessment of each chapter of the Plan for SDG impact at SDG target level. The SDG assessment carried out indicated that CAP24 is contributing to progression of 115 out of 169 SDG targets

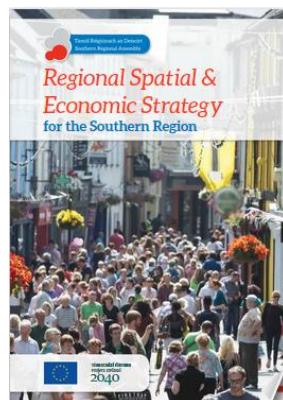
The *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025* presents a roadmap for waste planning and management, shifting the focus away from waste disposal and aiming to take advantage of the emerging new economy based on circularity. A key objective is to shift the focus back up the product life cycle, to remove or design out harmful waste, to extend the life of the products and goods used and prevent waste arising in the first place – consistent with the concept of a zero-waste future. Increased regulation is proposed and measures in areas including: Circular Economy, Municipal Waste, Consumer Protection and Citizen Engagement, Plastics and Packaging, Construction and Demolition, Textiles, Green Public Procurement and Waste Enforcement. The Plan will open up opportunities for job creation in innovative fields, as well as reducing carbon footprint and helping towards climate targets.



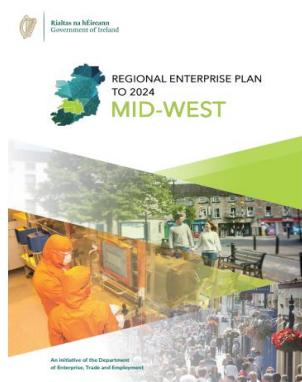
Government's first *National Policy Statement on the Bio-economy* (2018), which aims to make Ireland a global leader for the bio-economy by harnessing our natural resources and competitive advantage is another relevant policy statement in this area.

2.8 Regional Plans and Strategies

The *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), Southern Region (2020)* was developed with reference to the overall aim of the *NPF Ireland 2040*, to promote balanced regional development. The *RSES* presents a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Southern Region, to build a strong resilient and sustainable region. The strategy is developed around 11 Strategic Objectives, aligned with the *NPF: Ireland 2040*. The strategy will be implemented in cooperation with local authorities and state agencies operating in the region. The LECP is required to be consistent with the *RSES*. The *RSES* vision for the Southern Region is summarised as to: Nurture all our places to realise their full potential; protect, and enhance our environment; successfully combat climate change; achieve economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all our citizens; accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations and make the Southern Region one of Europe's most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions. In order to support and achieve the ambitious growth and development targets for the five cities, *Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs)* are designated in the *NPF* and included as a component in the *RSES*. The *MASPs* provide a framework for accelerated sustainable growth in each Metropolitan Area and a mechanism to ensure co-ordination between the local authorities within each *MASP*. There are three *MASPs* in the *RSES for the Southern Region*: Cork, Limerick and Waterford. In the case of Limerick, the *MASP* area extends from the outer urban suburbs and extend to Shannon Town in County Clare. The *Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)* has a population growth target of 50% for Limerick City by 2040. Within the Limerick Shannon *MASP*, the vision for the *MASP* is articulated and key transformative and infrastructure projects are identified (including transport). Under the *RSES*, Newcastle West has been designated a Key Town targeted for population and economic growth. It includes a SMART Southern Region initiative which seeks to work with people and communities on collaborations across sectors to harness digital technologies and generate / use data to create vibrant, sustainable and liveable communities. The Southern Region is a *UNESCO Learning Region* while Limerick has attained *UNESCO Learning City* status.



The Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 – Mid West Region (2022) covers the counties of Limerick, Clare and Tipperary. The Plan is developed around five strategic objectives: (1)



Enable innovation to make the Mid-West a leading digital region; (2) Make the Mid-West Ireland's leading sustainability / low carbon region; (3) Enable enterprise growth in regional towns / rural areas; (4) Initiatives to support SME, start-ups and microbusiness and (5) Social enterprise and tackling areas of high unemployment. The Plan identifies actions for each of the objectives and partners involved in implementation. Examples of actions include: decarbonising industry by developing the Shannon Estuary as a renewable energy hub; creation of a network of enterprise centres and remote

working eHubs; support the regional agri-food sector through the development of food hubs; and digitalisation of tourism.

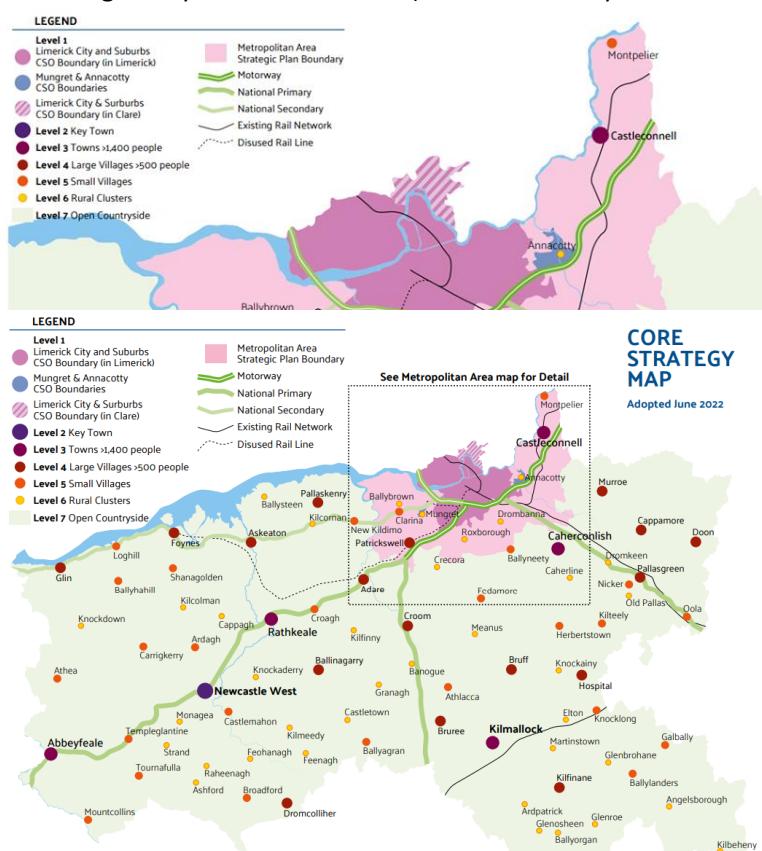
The *Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce* was established in 2022 following from a commitment to do so in the *Programme for Government*. The objective is to capitalise on the opportunity for



Ireland's economic competitiveness / consolidate economic progress and secure our economic future centred on renewable energy and enabling infrastructure in the wider Shannon Estuary. The work of the Taskforce recommends using the natural resource of the Shannon Estuary region for the development of one of the world's largest renewable energy hubs, built primarily around the harnessing of offshore wind energy from the Shannon Estuary, to create an Atlantic Green Digital Corridor. The report outlines five action areas: 1. Offshore Energy 2. Onshore Energy 3. Transport, Logistics and Connectivity 4. Tourism, Leisure & Placemaking and 5. Enabling Infrastructure. Expected outcomes include the creation of 50,000 high quality, green jobs; by harvesting and use of wind energy from the Atlantic, the Shannon Estuary Region can become a net carbon neutral region by 2035 and provide Ireland and the EU with secure, green, affordable energy; investment in places and new and enhanced tourism offerings can make the region a vibrant place to live, visit, and invest; delivery of a sustainable and integrated transport and connectivity network, and a national logistics hub connecting the region to the rest of Ireland and beyond can build the bedrock for sustainable economic development and demographic growth in the region, and help to address national challenges around balanced regional development, congestion, and decarbonisation.

2.9 Local Level Strategies / Plans

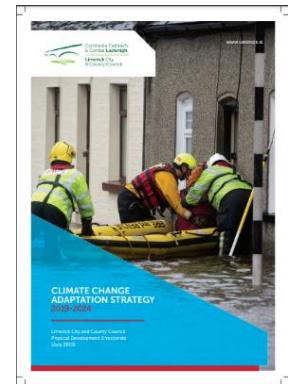
The statutory *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028* is the most important spatial plan in the local setting. The LECP is complementary to the Development Plan. It is a requirement that these plans are consistent with each other. The vision set out in the *Limerick Development Plan* is that: *By 2030, Limerick will become a green city region on the Shannon Estuary connected through people and places. This will be achieved through engagement, innovation and resilient urban development and self-sustaining rural communities.* The Plan supports the development of a robust City, towns and villages across Limerick, placing quality of life at the centre of decision-making. The *Core Strategy Map of Limerick* shows the Metropolitan Area, the key towns and villages in the settlement hierarchy and connecting transport infrastructure (*Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*)



Under the Core Strategy, the key locations for population growth and housing are identified. Consistent with the *NPF: Ireland 2040*, population growth of 50% is projected for the existing built-up areas of Limerick City and Environs including Mungret and Annacotty; Newcastle, the largest town outside of urban Limerick, is targeted as a key town for growth, while Limerick's towns and villages are also expected to grow their populations. In terms of number of persons, projected population growth figures for Limerick to 2026 is 229,000 to 235,500, and for 2031 to 246,000-256,000 (between 40,000-50,000 more than the level in 2022). Sufficient lands have been zoned to

accommodate over 15,500 new homes in Limerick over the lifetime of the Plan. The *Development Plan to 2028* focuses on sustainable growth of the built environment, employment generation and the provision of community and social services in a low carbon, compact, consolidated and connected pattern of development. Strategic objectives include: Revitalisation and consolidation of the City, towns and villages, through public realm and place-making initiatives and addressing vacancy and dereliction to create compact attractive, vibrant and safe environments in which to live, work, visit and invest; Creation of a competitive environment in which to do business, promoting and enabling sustainable and economic development, enterprise and employment generation; Sustainable development of rural Limerick where residents can enjoy a high quality of life and access to quality services and to promote connection and balanced development across urban and rural Limerick and development of sectors that are important in the rural economy (e.g., tourism) and Transition to a low carbon economy and society, mobility solutions centred on sustainable transport and public transport.

Limerick City and County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024: Local authorities in Ireland were required to develop a Climate Adaptation Strategy for the period 2019-2024 under the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) and the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015. These local strategies are to “*be used to inform development plans and other statutory plans and policies of the Local Authority.*” The aim of Limerick City and County Council's *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024* is to mainstream climate adaptation in all functions and activities of the local authority. Themes of the Limerick Strategy are: Extreme weather event response; Land Use Planning; Infrastructure, Built Environment; Environment, Economic Development Activities and Emerging Issues. Specific action focuses on risk assessment and mitigation, building climate resilience, climate proofing and measures in climate adaptation and mitigation.



In addition to the above local plans, there are many others relevant to LECP objectives, delivered under separate strategies and action plans of the local authority. These include:

- Limerick City and County Council Corporate Plan 2019-2024
- Limerick City and County Council Housing Strategy 2021
- The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2022
- Limerick City and County Council Climate Action Plan (in development in 2023 and Draft Strategy 2024)
- Limerick Tourism Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023
- Limerick Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Strategy and Action Plan (2021)
- Limerick Cultural Strategy: A Framework 2026-2030
- Limerick Cultural and Arts Strategy (new strategy in development, 2023)
- Limerick City and County Council Digital Strategy 2017-2020
- Limerick Rural Development Strategy incorporating LEADER 2023-2027
- Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Strategy (updated 2022)
- Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan 2013-2023
- Limerick City & Environs Greenway & Blueway Infrastructure Strategy (in development 2023)
- Limerick Age-friendly Strategy (new strategy in development 2023)
- Belonging to Limerick – Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2019-2023
- Learning Limerick Strategic Plan 2018-2022

- Retail Strategy for Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 –2028

2.10 Strategic Policy Context of the LECP: Summary of Priorities

This section reviewed the strategic policy context of the LECP. This shows strategic fit from international frameworks – the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*, the *European Green Deal*, the *European Pillar on Social Rights*, *EU Cohesion Policy*, *EU Innovation and Digitalisation* agenda and *the EU Common Agricultural Policy* – through national, regional and local level strategies and plans. The “green agenda” is a core cross-cutting element in all current / new strategies and must see further progress in its implementation. Important current policy priorities are:

Places & Cross-cutting Issues:

- Advancing balanced regional development with population growth and development outside of the Dublin Region, especially to the other cities and larger towns across the state.
- Compact and sustainable growth of cities, towns and villages as socially vibrant places with quality accessible services, amenities and good quality of life. Regeneration and renewal of the physical fabric and economic and social functions of the core of cities and rural towns and villages is an important line of action with funding streams specifically addressed to this.
- Investment in public social infrastructure – especially housing to expand supply, improve quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock, address housing needs of more vulnerable groups in the population, affordability and provision of mix of housing types and tenures.
- Developing our transport infrastructure connectivity, expanding public transport and active / sustainable travel with specific attention to reducing reliance on the car for everyday travel.
- Roll-out of the National Broadband Plan infrastructure and improved digital connectivity to all areas across the state.

Social & Community:

- Progressing universal health care, improving access, advancing public health promotion/well-being of the population in general and addressing health inequalities.
- Community building around placemaking, citizen / community engagement and adopting the principle of co-design of services, projects and local initiatives.
- Social inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups where there is evidence they are falling further behind (e.g., disabled people, Travellers, disadvantaged from migrant backgrounds).
- Recognising and celebrating societal diversity, acknowledging advantages of diversity, promoting integration between new cultural communities and the host community.
- Mobilising and engaging with youth as well as adapting to challenges of demographic ageing – positive ageing, active ageing and age-friendly strategies.
- Addressing the digital divide and progressing digital inclusion.
- Supporting a “Just Transition” in climate action adaptation and mitigation.

Economic:

- Consolidation of our economic progress, promoting diversification as a response to changing conditions, innovation and building resilience of the national, regional and local economies underpinned by human capital development, a learning culture and continuous upskilling.
- Expanding economic activities in the knowledge economy and high value-added sectors based on Research & Development & Innovation (RDI) capacity especially drawing on RDI in Ireland’s third level institutions and private industry in advanced sectors.

- Planning for and putting in place the business (land, premises and associated infrastructures) and social infrastructure (housing, schools) as well as supporting the human capital development and quality of life factors needed to attract Foreign Direct Investment. The geographic distribution of such investment should promote balanced regional development.
- Promote enterprise development in the indigenous economy focused on micro, small and medium sized businesses in view of their importance in local job creation, sectoral profile and their important role in terms of products and services to people and businesses. Policy measures continue to focus on ensuring the services and infrastructure are available to support start-up, operation and expansion / upscaling of SMEs, with a strong emphasis on support for digitalisation.
- Focus on sectors of particular importance in the local economic including agri-food sector, tourism, cultural industries and new opportunities especially in renewable energy and the green economy.
- Expanding social enterprise and the circular economy.
- Taking advantage of digitalisation and new models of work (remote working) and service delivery.

3. Socio-economic Analysis: Limerick City and County

This section present statistical data on socio-economic characteristics of Limerick City and County.² Analysis of the baseline conditions – such as population, education levels, employment and unemployment, general health in the population in 2022 – as well as recent trends and comparison with the average situation in the state are an important part of the evidence base for the LECP. This helps to identify strengths and opportunities and challenges or where change is needed in Limerick. As new data become available, this will be used to inform implementation and monitoring of the LECP.

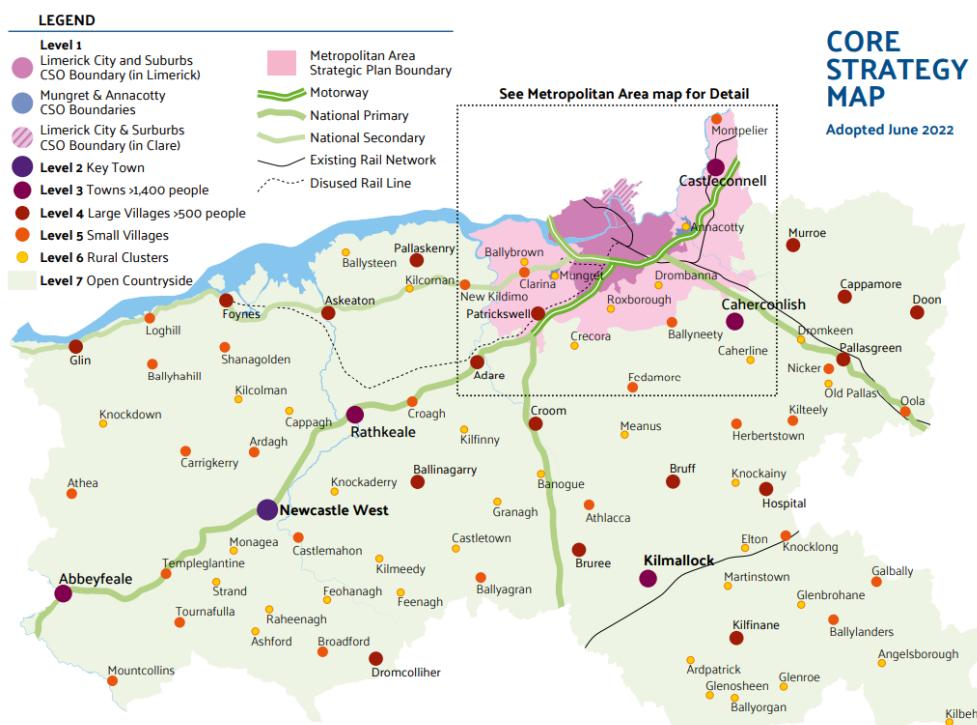
3.1 Characteristics of the Spatial Area & Population

This section defines the spatial area of Limerick City and County and presents key characteristics of its population including age structure and cultural and ethnic composition.

The Spatial Area & Population

Limerick City and County covers a geographic area of 2,755 km² including Limerick City, the largest centre of population and economic activity in the Mid-West Region. The population density of Limerick City and County is 76 persons per km². Outside of Limerick City and suburbs, rural Limerick is characterised by a large number of settlements dominated by small settlements. The largest town outside of the metropolitan area is Newcastle West and this is the only town outside of Limerick city and suburban area with a population in excess of 5,000.

The Map of Limerick below shows the Metropolitan Area, the key towns and villages in the settlement hierarchy, and connecting transport infrastructure.



Source: Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028

² This section draws on data from the 2022 Census – See link to Interactive Mapping Tool

<https://visual.cso.ie/?body=entity/ima/cop/2022&boundary=C04160V04929>

and the Pobal HP Deprivation Index – See link to Pobal Maps <https://data.pobal.ie/portal/apps/sites/#/pobal-maps>

The local authority area is divided into sub-units known as Municipal Districts (MDs). These are the Metropolitan Area which covers the city urban area and extends outwards to Patrickswell to the south west and Castleconnell to the north east; and the three rural Municipal Districts of Adare-Rathkeale, Newcastle West and Cappamore-Kilmallock.

The population of Limerick City and County is 209,536 (Census 2022), registering a growth rate of 8% between 2016 and 2022 (increase of 14,637 persons) – the same rate (8%) as the national average. Net migration – people coming into the country - accounted for more than half the population growth (53%) in the state and 42% of the population growth in Limerick. This gives an average annual net migration rate of 6.6 per 1,000 population for the state as a whole and 3.8 per 1,000 population for Limerick.

InfoGraphic or Box

Population

Limerick City and County 209,536 (2022)

Since 2016

Limerick population up 8%, National Average, up 8%

Metropolitan Area, up 12%

Newcastle West largest town, 7,209 population (2022), up 8.9% (2016)

Population Density 76.05 persons per km², National average 73 per km²

Highest Limerick Dock Road/Steamboat Quay 17,026.6 persons per km²

Average age in Limerick 39.3 years, National average 38.8 years

Towns with populations of 500 persons and over

Youngest Murroe, average age 32.5 years

Oldest Foynes, average age 44.5 years

Towns over 1,500 population

Oldest Kilmallock, average age 42.5 years

Internal Variations in Population Change

Within Limerick, the Limerick Metropolitan Area (population 114,692 in 2022) grew at a faster rate (11.9%) between 2016 and 2022 compared with the city and county as a whole (8%). The more rural parts of the County show positive but lower rates of population growth - Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District (+5.8%), Cappamore-Kilmallock Municipal District (+4.8%) and Newcastle West Municipal District (+5.9%).

Town settlements showing the strongest population growth are located in the outer parts of the city suburbs (Annacotty, +16%, Clarina, Kildimo, +22.8%, Mungrat, +34%; Castleconnell, +18.1%). Parts of the inner city also experienced strong population growth, especially around the Docks area (ranging from +15% to +29% in Electoral Divisions in this area). In terms of larger rural towns, the population of the town of Newcastle West grew at rate of 8.9%, just above the national and Limerick average, Abbeyfeale at a similar rate (+9%) and Kilmallock at a slower rate (5.6%), while Adare (+8.4%), Croom (+7%), Caherconlish (6.3%) and Askeaton (+8.9%) also grew their populations. The population of Rathkeale experienced a significant decline (-14.6%), while a smaller decline was experienced in Kilfinane (-4.6%) and Dromcollagher (-1.7%). Within the city, the population of the regeneration areas of the city (Moyross, Southill, St. Mary's Park and Ballinacurra Weston) – which experienced very

significant population loss in the 10 years from 2006-2016 of some 50% - stabilised between 2016 and 2022. The two larger estates, Southill and Moyross, experienced positive population growth between 2016 and 2022.

Population Densities

The average density of population in the state in 2022 was 76.05 persons per km² (above the national average at 73 persons per km²). Population densities are higher in urbanised counties especially Dublin and Cork. In 2022, 32 Electoral Divisions registered population densities over 10,000 person per km², one of which is in Limerick, Dock A at 17,026.6 person per km². This area, along the Dock Road in the city, is dominated by apartment blocks and private rental accommodation and has a high proportion of migrants, a younger age structure of population and families with children. Other Electoral Divisions in Limerick City which registered highest population densities in 2022 are: Market in the inner city (9,695.7 persons per km²), Dock B (8,230.6 persons per km²) and Shannon A (7,944.3 persons per km²). These areas have similar social characteristics (apartment living, migrants, young populations).

Age Structure & Age Dependency

Similar to the overall trend at national level, Census 2022 shows that Limerick has an ageing population. The average age of the population in Limerick in 2022 is 39.3 years compared with 37.7 years in 2016. This is above the national average at 38.8 years in 2022, up from 37.4 years in 2016.

The city, inner and outer suburbs are younger on average: Limerick City and Suburbs, including part of Co. Clare, has an average age of population of 37.9 years. Settlements over 500 population within the peri-urban area / 15km commute of the city with younger populations include: Murroe (average age 32.5 years) where there was significant population growth and housing development from 2006 to 2016; Annacotty (average age 35.4 years); Kildimo (average age 36.7 years), Caherconlish (36.7 years) and Castleconnell (37.4 years). In more rural parts of Limerick, the largest town, Newcastle West has an average age of 38.1 years, while other relatively larger towns (1,000+ population), Abbeyfeale (average age 40.7 years), Rathkeale (40.7 years), Askeaton (39.4 years), Adare (41.9 years) are above the Limerick and state average. Kilmallock (average age 42.5 years) is amongst the towns in the category 1,500 to under 5,000 population with the oldest average age in the state (11th oldest). Some settlements with over 500 population that are oldest on average are: Foynes (average age 44.5 years) and Glin, Broadford and Dromcollogher, all with an average age of 44.3 years.

In Limerick City and County, the number of people aged 65 years and over has increased by 23% since 2016, to 33,588 in 2022, compared with a national rate of increase in older people of 22%. The percentage of the population of Limerick aged 65 years and over is now 16% (15.3% for males and 16.8% for females) while the percentage of oldest old (80 years and over) is 3.6% in 2022. The ageing of our population highlights the importance of preparing for an ageing society.

InfoGraphic

33,588 aged 65 years+, 16% of population, up 6,170 since 2016

7,563 over 80 years+, 3.6% of population

The demographic strength or weakness of an area is measured in the dependency ratio: Youth Dependency (0-14 years), Old Age Dependency (65 years and over) and Total Dependency (combination of both) relative to the economically productive population (15-64 years). A higher value for the Youth Dependency Ratio is an economic strength that can be harnessed in the future. With population ageing, there has been a decline in the Youth Dependency Ratio (to 28.9 in 2022), an increase in the Old Age Dependency Ratio (to 24.6 in 2022) and Total Dependency Ratio (52.4 in 2022)

over the period 2011, 2016 and 2022. The Limerick Youth Dependency Ratio is slightly lower than the national average (30.1) while the Old Age Dependency Ratio is slightly above the national average (23.1). See further details in Appendix 1.

InfoGraphic

Limerick Young Dependency Ratio 2022: 28.9, down from 31 2016

Limerick Old Age Dependency Ratio 2022: 24.6, up from 21.4 2016

Limerick Total Dependency Ratio 2022: 53.5, up from 52.5 2016

Again, there are strong variations within Limerick. Suburban Limerick and the outer metropolitan area have a higher Youth Dependency Ratio and a lower Old Age Dependency Ratio. The city has a mixed pattern where parts of the inner city have high Youth Dependency Ratios (areas around the Docks and Market) while other parts have high Old Age Dependency Ratios - in both affluent areas (northside around the Ennis Road area) and disadvantaged areas (Janesboro, Killeely/Thomondgate).

Cultural & Ethnic Diversity

Over the last 10 years, Ireland has become a more culturally diverse society and this is also the case in Limerick. In 2022, 85% of the population of Limerick are Irish or Dual Irish citizens (5,487 Dual Irish, up from 3,258 in 2016) compared with 84% at national level; 11% are non-Irish citizens compared with 12% at national level while 4.3% did not state their nationality (3% at national level). Of non-Irish citizens in Limerick, 2.1% are Polish, 1.2% UK, 2.6% other EU Country citizens and 3.7% are from the "Rest of the World". In terms of place of birth, 83.4% of the population of Limerick were born in Ireland and 16.6% outside of Ireland. Of the latter, some 6% were born in the Rest of the World, 4.4% in the UK, 2.4% Poland, 2.6% other EU and 1.2% India.

The largest area-based concentrations of non-Irish populations are in Limerick City centre. In 10 inner city Electoral Districts (12,855), some 47% were not born in Ireland and 40% have non-Irish citizenship. Within that, 23% of the total population (and 50% of migrants) were born in areas from "the Rest of the World" apart from the UK and EU countries. The highest concentrations of migrants in inner city areas are in Electoral Divisions (EDs) in the Docks area (Shannon A, 61% born outside Ireland; Dock A, 55% born outside Ireland) and the Market area (Custom House and Market, each with 52% born outside Ireland). These are also areas with highest population densities (persons per km²) in Limerick and the state. A further characteristic of these areas is the relatively high percentage of adults with third level education – e.g., Shannon A, 38% with Ordinary Bachelor's or above and Dock A/Mount Kenneth and Steamboat Quay, 26% with an Ordinary Bachelor's or above). Parts of the suburbs have strong concentrations of migrant populations - e.g., Ballycummin ED including Dooradoyle/Raheen with a population base of 19,130 has 27% of its population born outside of Ireland and 18% are non-Irish citizens. Outside of the city and suburbs, Newcastle West Urban ED has 30% of its population born outside of Ireland and 21% are non-Irish citizens.

InfoGraphic

11% non-Irish citizens in Limerick, 12% national average (2022)

17% born outside Ireland in Limerick, 15% national average (2022)

Limerick Inner City areas, 47% born outside Ireland

The arrival and re-settlement of refugee populations in Ireland linked to wars in other parts of the world – in particular, Syrian and Ukrainian refugees – have increased cultural diversity. In summer 2022 (arriving after Census 2022), there were approximately 1,700 known Ukrainian refugees in Limerick, processed through the International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS). The local authority plays a key role in sourcing accommodation and leading a coordinated service response across public agencies to the Ukrainian refugee crisis.³ In addition, people seeking asylum / international protection from other countries are part of the migrant population - there are three Direct Provision Centres⁴ in / or serviced by Limerick City (one in Meeleek Co. Clare) with occupancy capacity of some 430 persons. The numbers living in other accommodation options in Limerick, while waiting for a decision on their case, is not known.

InfoGraphic

1,700 Ukrainian Refugees (Summer 2022)

3 Direct Provision Centres, capacity 430 persons

In relation to ethnicity, in Census 2022, some 77% identified as White Irish (compared with 85% in 2016), and just under 1% (1,860 persons) identified as White Irish Traveller. Some 13% identify as Other Ethnic Origin (Other White 7%, Black or Black Irish 1.3%, Asian or Asian Irish 3.2%) while 8.8% did not state their ethnicity. While Travellers as a percentage of the Limerick population remains more less the same, the number of persons identifying as White Irish Travellers in Limerick is 1,860 in 2022 (up from 1,659 in 2016). Limerick has a rate of 9 Travellers per 1,000 population, lower than the state average (6 per 1,000 population). The actual numbers self-identifying as White Irish Travellers in Limerick is considered to under-estimate the size of this population. Concentrations of Traveller families are found in certain county towns, especially Rathkeale, Kilmallock, Abbeyfeale and Askeaton and in parts of the city.

InfoGraphic

White Irish Traveller 1% Limerick, same as national average

Highest numbers in: Rathkeale, Askeaton, Abbeyfeale, Kilmallock

3.2 Educational Attainment, Provision & Education Outcomes

A trend reflected across the state over the recent Census period is the significant increase in the level of educational attainment in the adult population.

[Attainment: Profile of Higher & Lower Level Education Qualification](#)

In 2022, 30.1% of the population in Limerick City and County aged 15 years and over whose education has ceased had third level educational qualifications (defined as from an Ordinary Bachelor's Degree to Post-Graduation qualification), below the national average, 34%, but up from 25.2% in 2016.⁵ The percentage with third level education was higher for females (32.7%) compared with males (27.5%). The percentage with a technical or vocational qualification or completed apprenticeship was 13% in 2022, higher for males at 15% compared with females, 11%. While apprenticeships and trades are

³ Data from Limerick City and County Council

⁴ Direct Provision Centres, overseen by the International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS), are due to end in 2024, to be replaced with a new accommodation model and support services

⁵ The question on education level was asked in a different way in Census 2022. 3rd level education in 2022 is defined as qualifications from Ordinary Level Bachelor's Degree and upwards

being promoted strongly linked to employment opportunities in vocational sectors, the proportion with such qualifications in 2022 is slightly lower compared with 2016 (14.9%).

At the other end of the spectrum, in Limerick, 10% of adults who have ceased their education have No Formal or Primary Education only (more or less the same as the national average, 9.8%) and a decrease in the rate since 2016 (13.5%). The actual number of adults in this category is 14,253 (a reduction of 2,685 since 2016). Approximately, one quarter of adults in Limerick have Lower Secondary or below as their highest level of qualification, above the national average, 23% in 2022.

InfoGraphic

Education 2022

30% in Limerick with Ordinary Bachelors qualification or above, National average, 34%

10% in Limerick with No Formal or Primary Education only, National average 9.8%

25% in Limerick, 34,284 persons, with Lower Secondary or lower, National average, 23%

34,284 persons in Limerick with Lower Secondary as their highest level of education

Since 2016

No Formal/Primary down in Limerick, 13.5% in 2016

Lower Secondary or lower down in Limerick, 29.6% in 2016

Ordinary Bachelor's Degree & Above up in Limerick, 25.2% in 2016

Internal Variations in Educational Qualifications & Education Inequalities

While the education profile of Limerick as a whole has shown an improvement since 2016, there are strong educational inequalities in evidence. Low education levels in the adult population is a key characteristic of the most disadvantaged areas in Limerick. Data for specific areas that are most socially disadvantaged are provided in Appendix 1.

The rates of lowest education (% with Primary or No Formal Education) in most disadvantaged areas are twice the Limerick average and in two areas (St. Mary's Park, 33%, and Rathkeale Urban, 33%) more than three times the Limerick average (10%). Rathkeale Urban ED, has a concentration of population from the Traveller community – a group particularly affected by low education. The level with lowest education in St. Mary's Park in 2022 (33%) is an improvement compared with 2016 (46.8% with no Formal or Primary Only). The percentage with Lower Secondary Education and below as the highest level of qualification is also much higher in these disadvantaged areas – twice the Limerick average (25%) in most of them. St. Mary's Park has the highest percentage of adults with Lower Secondary or below, at 62%. Disadvantaged areas have low percentages of adults with Third Level Educational qualifications (Ordinary Bachelor's Degree and above), lowest in St. Mary's Park (2% and unchanged since 2016) followed by Galvone B (O'Malley Park/Keyes Park) at 4.6% (2.7% in 2016) compared with 30% for Limerick.

InfoGraphic

% with Lower Secondary and below:

Twice the city and county average in socially disadvantaged areas

Highest at 62% in St. Mary's Park, down from 75% 2016

% with 3rd Level:

One-third the rate or lower in most disadvantaged areas

Lowest in St. Mary's Park (2%) and Southill/O'Malley Park (5%)

Highest Ennis Road Area / Courtbrack /Ballinacurra and suburbs 40%-56%

Other parts of Limerick have a profile of high education levels with the rate of those with an Ordinary Bachelor's Degree and above from 40% to 56%. These include more affluent areas within the city (around the Ennis Road, Courtbrack/Summerville Avenue, South Circular Road and Ballinacurra), suburban areas (Ballysimon, Ballyvarra, Ballycummin and Roxborough Electoral Divisions), Adare and environs. Other areas where the percentage of adults with higher education is at or above the average include parts of the inner city with concentrations of migrants (Shannon A/Bishop's Quay/Howley's Quay, 38%; Dock C/O'Connell Avenue and environs, 39%; and Dock B/Barrington Street, Pery Square and environs, 29%).

[Education Infrastructure & Provision](#)

Data on the number of schools/colleges and number of pupils or students in Limerick are provided in Appendix 1.

Limerick has 133 Primary Schools with 22,350 pupils in the school year 2023/2024. It also has a wide distribution of primary schools throughout the city and county including many small schools. In the 2023/2024 school year, there are 20 schools with 50 pupils or less (with 567 pupils in total) and an additional 29 have between 51 and 100 pupils (with 2,195 pupils). Thirty-seven (37) Primary Schools are DEIS⁶ School (17 in the city and 20 in Rural Limerick) with 6,056 pupils. Following a review in 2021/2022 (where there were 17 DEIS Schools with 2,725 pupils), there was a significant increase in the number of DEIS schools. Limerick has eight (8) Special Schools providing services for pupils with disabilities including intellectual disability and physical disabilities (598 pupils).

At post-primary level, there has been significant change in the school infrastructure over recent years, with a reduction in the number of schools from 33 in 2012 to 28 at present. New schools have been established over that period and there has been significant investment in new school buildings. Pupil enrolment in post-primary schools for the school year 2023-2024 is 17,473. There are eight DEIS Post Primary Schools in Limerick with 4,046 pupils.

InfoGraphic

133 Primary Schools, 22,350 pupils
37 DEIS Primary Schools 6,056 pupils
8 Special Schools 598 pupils

28 Post Primary Schools, 17,473 pupils
8 DEIS schools, 4,046 pupils

3 third level colleges with 35,970 students enrolled

7,557 learners enrolled in Further Education and Training options

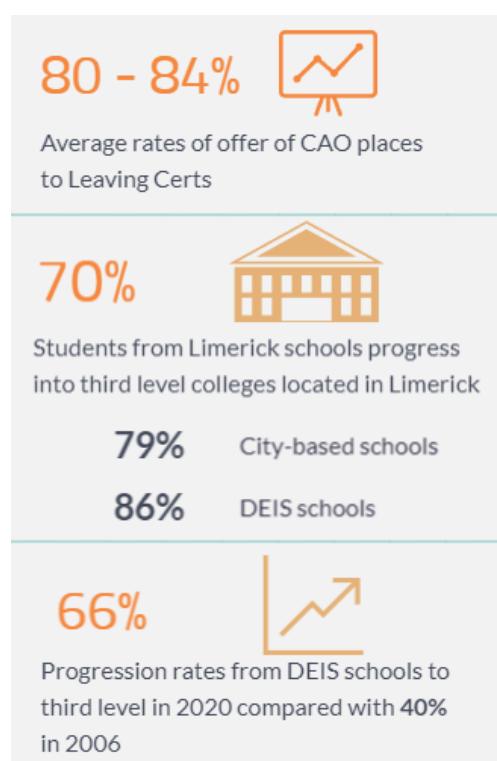
In relation to third level education, the location of the three third level / Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Limerick is an important strength, providing opportunities and a pool of graduates in different areas of specialisation (business, science & engineering, arts and culture, teacher training, social sciences and social care). In 2022/2023, the three colleges had a combined intake of 35,970 students.⁷

⁶ DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in School). These schools are located in and/or servicing disadvantaged population, offering additional resources to address educational disadvantage

⁷ Higher Education Authority Statistics April 2024. <https://hea.ie/statistics>

In addition, the Further Education and Training (FET) sector, operating under SOLAS, delivers life-long learning options to learners aged 16 years and upwards across the state. These include Post-Leaving Cert Courses (the largest proportion of courses), apprenticeships, traineeships, community education and core learning in literacy and numeracy with courses developed for, and certified at, different on the National Framework of Qualification, levels 1 to 6. The number of learners enrolled in FET options in 2020 with Limerick as the county of residence was 7,557, or 5.2% of all learners in the state. This gives a rate of participation in adult learning of 49.4 per 1,000 population aged 16 years and over (2016), above the national average rate (39.6 per 1,000 population 16 years and over). With a stronger focus on developing apprenticeship training to meet skills needs of employers / industrial and business sectors, the number in apprenticeship training in the state was 24,212 in 2021 with over 8,600 new registrations in that year.⁸ The Education and Training Boards in the Mid-West Region had some 1,500 in apprenticeship training in 2020.

Performance: Retention Rates, Progression to Third Level Colleges & Graduate Outcomes



Retention rates to Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate have shown steady improvement over the last ten years.⁹ Based on the latest data - the 2016 school entry cohort, sitting the Junior Cert in 2019/2020 and the Leaving Cert in 2021/2022 – national average retention rates to Junior Cert are 97.6% and 91.7% to Leaving Cert. Limerick City and County performs the same as the state average in retention rates to Junior Cert (97.6%) and slightly better than the state average on retention to Leaving Cert, 92.6% for pupils sitting Leaving Cert in 2021/2022.

Focusing on socially disadvantaged areas/populations, a gap in retention rates remains between DEIS¹⁰ and non-DEIS schools but this has been reducing over time. The “achievement gap” in retention rates to Leaving Cert between DEIS and Non-DEIS schools currently stands at 8.4% for the school entry cohort 2016, slightly higher than the gap for the previous year (7.6% for the 2015 school entry cohort). Males in DEIS schools are also more at risk of early school leaving (with a retention rate of 82.2% for males to Leaving Cert compared with 88.3% for females).

It is known from national level data that Travellers have lowest retention rates to qualification in second level education. While improving, national average retention rates to Junior Cert for Travellers (for the school entry cohort 2016) are 72.2% (lower for males at 67.5%) and to Leaving Cert 31.4%

⁸ The target number of new registrations per year is 10,000 from 2021 to 2025 under the *Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021-2025*

⁹ The retention rate to Leaving Cert is used as a measure of Early School Leaving (ESL). However, retention rates in mainstream schools do not take into account participation in educational pathways outside the school system, such as Youthreach and apprenticeship training, or early entry into the labour force (Department of Education, 2020). If participation in alternative educational pathways were included – e.g., measured by the completion of the National Framework of Qualifications levels of 4, 5 and 6 – retention rates to completion of second level qualification would be higher and Early School Leaving Rate lower.

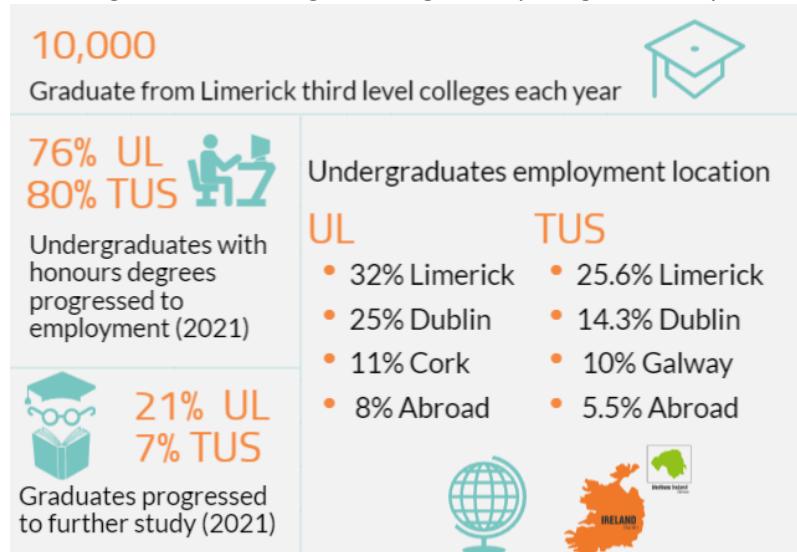
¹⁰ DEIS (Delivery Equality of Opportunity in Schools) schools are those supported with a special support programmes and higher levels of capitation because of the profile of their pupils intake as socially disadvantaged / location in socially disadvantaged communities.

(lower for males at 25.9%) significantly below the average for the population as a whole. Other groups most at risk of early school leaving are young people in the criminal justice system, and youth with mental health issues.

Over the last ten years, rates of progression to college from Limerick Second Level Schools, based on offers of places through the Central Applications Office (CAO) system¹¹, have increased. The significant increase occurred in the period from 2006 to 2012 – a rate of progression of 77% in 2012 compared with 60% in 2006. Since 2013, it has been 80% (highest in 2019 and 2020 at 84%).¹² A significant change has been in the rate of progression from DEIS schools. In 2021, the rate of progression to college from DEIS schools in Limerick City and County was 66% compared with 58% in 2012 and 40% in 2016. However, the gap between DEIS schools and non-DEIS schools remains significant. In 2021, the rate of progression from Non-DEIS schools was 85% compared with 66% for DEIS – a gap of 19%. While fluctuating over the years above and below 20% - the gap was lowest in 2018 at 17% and highest in 2015 at 29%. The gap in progression rates to third level education between DEIS and non-DEIS schools has been consistently greater in the city. In 2021, Non-DEIS schools in the city / urban area achieved a progression rate of 88% compared with 64% for DEIS schools (a gap of 24%). In recent years, the achievement gap was largest in 2015, at 32%.

The destination colleges for Limerick students' progression to third level shows the importance of having HEIs located in Limerick. In 2021, 70% of second level offers of college places for students in Limerick schools were for Limerick colleges – University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College and the Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands and Mid-West (TUS, formerly LIT).

In relation to graduates from HEIs in Limerick, based on Graduate Outcomes surveys, in 2021, 76% of under-graduates gaining honours degrees from UL were in employment and a further 21% in further study nine months after graduation. In the case of TUS, 80% of honours under-graduates were in employment and 7% in further study nine months after graduation. Rates of entry to employment were higher for those graduating with post-graduate qualifications. Details on the location of employment of graduates are shown in the graphic. While employment destinations show the importance of the third level colleges generating an educated workforce for Limerick's labour market (one-quarter to one-third remaining in Limerick), it also shows some leakage of talent out from the county and the region. A significant percentage of graduates take up employment elsewhere in



¹¹ This is based on data from schools on offers of CAO places to Irish third level institutions and not on progression rates issued by Department of Education. The latter report lower rates in general and there is no local area data published

¹² Data collated from www.schooldays.ie published data on progression statistics from Limerick-based post-primary schools excluding "grind" schools and LCFE

Ireland and a small proportion go abroad.

3.3 Poverty, Social Exclusion and Area-based Deprivation

Poverty, social exclusion and social inequality are key inter-related issues that must be addressed in the interest of fairness and societal cohesion.

Poverty Rates & People Most at Risk of / Living in Poverty

Living standards of people in Ireland have improved significantly. However, a certain percentage of households / people live in poverty and social deprivation. In the state in 2021, 11.6% of households were at risk of poverty, meaning that their income was at or below the poverty threshold of 60% of median disposable income. Under another measure of poverty – enforced deprivation - the rate in 2021 in the state was 13.8%. Enforced deprivation is a measure of households unable to afford two or more basic items considered the norm for society. Using the third measure of poverty - the consistent poverty rate – the percentage of households that are both at risk of poverty and in enforced deprivation – was at 4% in 2021. The social welfare system is very important in addressing income poverty. If all social welfare income transfers were excluded from income, the risk of poverty rate (60% median disposable income or below) in 2021 would have been 38.6% compared with a rate of 11.6% with social welfare transfers (e.g., unemployment and disability benefits, pension, family and child allowances etc.).

Based on household surveys of income and living conditions, we know the characteristics of households that are most at risk of poverty and deprivation. People unable to work due to illness or disability have highest poverty rates under all three measures (e.g., 39.1% are at risk of poverty, at the threshold of 60% or less of median disposable income), followed by unemployed people. Disability or illness can relate to mental health as well as incapacity due to addiction / substance misuse. Households headed by people with lowest education, households with adults living alone and in one parent households with young children, people in rented housing (particularly local authority-rented and on rent-support schemes) and in households where no adult is working or only one adult is at work have highest poverty rates across all three measures. Travellers and persons coming out of or in Direct Provision / International Protection system are also at high risk of poverty and deprivation. Rural areas have higher rates of at risk of poverty (based on 60% or less median disposable income) but lower rates of enforced deprivation and consistent poverty compared with urban areas. Isolation, lack of transport, unemployment /under-employment and poor access to services are characteristics of rural deprivation.

Local data for Limerick show that we have relatively large numbers of people with characteristics associated with higher rates of poverty/risk of poverty. In 2022, just under 10,000 persons aged 15 years and over stated their Principal Economic Status as “unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability” (9,808 or 5.8% of persons aged 15 years and over) and a further 4,410 stated that they were “long-term unemployed” (2.6%); 47,348 persons (22.6% of the total population) state they have a disability; there are 3,869 lone parent families with at least one child under 15 years (11% of all families in Limerick City and County) and 7,657 children living in those lone parent families with young children; 14,253 persons whose education has ceased has Primary Only or No Formal Education while a further 20,031 state that their highest level of education is Lower Secondary. In 2022, between local authority housing stock and rent subsidy scheme for households in housing need on low means, there are some 9,200 households in social housing provision.

Area-based Deprivation & Social Inequalities

The 2022 Pobal HP Relative Deprivation Index shows that the upturn in the economy since 2016 brought improvements in the deprivation measures across the state as a whole but the gap between the most disadvantaged areas and the average has widened. This pattern is reflected in Limerick. It shows continuity of a pronounced and deeper pattern of social inequality in Limerick City and pockets of deprivation in some rural Limerick towns (especially Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale and Kilmallock). Affluence has moved out beyond the suburbs of Limerick into the peri-urban areas, a pattern also observed across the state. See Maps of Pobal HP Deprivation Index in Appendix 1.

In 2022, based on analysis at the level of Small Areas (the smallest geographic unit of analysis)¹³, across Limerick City and County, 17,518 persons live in Small Areas classified as Extremely Disadvantaged/Very Disadvantaged (8.4% of the total population of Limerick) and 17,844 persons live in areas classified as Disadvantaged (8.5%). The absolute number of people living in Small Areas classified as Disadvantaged through to Extremely Disadvantaged increased in 2022 (36,362) compared with 2016 (32,623). The proportion in these categories has also increased slightly from 16.7% in 2016 to 16.9% in 2022. At the other end of the spectrum, 29,031 persons or 13.9% of the population of Limerick live in Small Areas classified as Affluent (28,014) or Very Affluent (1,071 persons). This represents an increase in the absolute number and proportion of the population living in areas categorised as Affluent / Very Affluent compared with 2016 (21,135 persons, 10.8% of the population in 2016). In 2022, 145,143 or just under 70% of the population live in Small Areas classified as Just Above Average (88,043, 42%) and Just Below Average (28,014, 27.3%). This is an increase in the absolute number and proportion of the population living in areas with Average classification in 2022 compared with 2016 (141,141 or 72.4% of the population in 2016). The increase in the proportion living in Disadvantaged Areas, especially in Extremely Disadvantaged Areas, combined with an increase in the proportion living in Affluent areas and reduction in the number living in Small Areas classified as Average means there has been an increase in social inequality at a spatial level in Limerick over the years 2016 to 2022.

The regeneration areas of the city – Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St. Mary’s Park – have highest deprivation levels. Adjacent to them are other Very Disadvantaged and Disadvantaged neighbourhoods, mostly areas of older social housing stock and traditional working class communities. Affluent areas within in the city area located along the Ennis Road, Ballinacurra/Courtbrack and parts of Corbally.

The suburbs of the city generally are Just Above Average and parts are Affluent (e.g., Castletroy/Monaleen/Annacotty). However, there are some Small Areas Just Below Average and Disadvantaged (e.g., within Dooradoyle/Ballycummin ED).

Since 2016, there has been an expansion in the corridor of Affluent Small Areas out from the city suburbs along the N69 (Munret, Clarina), the M20 (Crecora)/N20 and N21 (Adare, Croagh, Kilfinny). There are also some new pockets of Affluent areas in rural Limerick - e.g., Kilfinane, Ballingarry in the centre and south, and Murroe and Castleconnell in the peri-urban area in the east. In 2022, Newcastle West has no Small Areas classified as Affluent and this is a change compared with 2016.

Some of the larger rural towns are relatively more disadvantaged. Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale and Kilmallock have Small Areas classified as Extremely Disadvantaged – and are areas with concentrations

¹³ Small Areas were first published for Census 2011. They were designed as the lowest level of geography for the compilation of statistics in line with data protection guidelines and typically contain between 50 and 200 dwellings. Small Areas are nested within Electoral Division (ED) boundaries, covering a larger spatial area. Small Areas are generally comprised either of complete townlands or neighbourhoods.

of Traveller families – while Newcastle West, Askeaton, and Patrickswell in the west have Small Areas that are Very Disadvantaged. In the east, in addition to Kilmallock (Extremely Disadvantaged Small Area), Cappamore and Croom have areas classified as Very Disadvantaged while Pallasgrean/Kilteely, Castleconnell, Hospital and Bruff have areas that are Disadvantaged. The border areas of Limerick, especially in the west of the County, have areas classified as Just Below Average and some Disadvantaged areas.

InfoGraphic

36,362 persons (16.9%) live in Disadvantaged/Very Disadvantaged/Extremely Disadvantaged Areas, Pobal HP Relative Deprivation Index

Up from 16.7% in 2016

29,031 (13.9%) live in Affluent Areas, up from 2016 (10.8%)

Extremely Disadvantaged areas in the city, Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale & Kilmallock

The dispersed population base of rural Limerick means that many people who are disadvantaged are not “picked up” in an area-based measure, which requires clustering of people with characteristics of disadvantage into certain areas such as social housing estates in towns and villages.

Data on household income levels at ED level (CSO Household Median Gross Income Series) confirm the pattern of variation and social inequalities across Limerick. In 2016, Household Median Gross Income for Limerick as whole was €41,824 (below the state average €45,256 and below those counties with highest incomes, of which all are in the Greater Dublin Region). At ED level, highest levels of Household Median Gross Income are in rural Limerick mostly within or close to the Metropolitan Area and along the main road transport corridors (N20, M20, N69, N21). The border areas and parts of the centre of the County have relatively lower household incomes. However, lowest levels of Household Median Gross Incomes are in the inner city area (the Docks areas, environs of Colbert Station, Market and Custom House EDs) – all of which have significant migrant populations. Within the inner city, incomes are lowest in Shannon B (€15,687). Household incomes are also low in the most disadvantaged areas of the city (especially St. Mary’s Park, Southill and Killeely/Thomondgate).

InfoGraphic

Average Household Median Gross Income, €41,824 Limerick, state average €45,256

Highest Kilpeacon ED €72,946

Lowest Shannon B, Limerick City €15,687

3.4 Health & Well-being

The overall profile at national level and in Limerick shows a population with a good health, with some deterioration in evidence over the last 10 years, mostly connected to the ageing of our population. This health profile for Limerick City and County as a whole and trends are close to the national average.

General Health Status

Based on Census 2022, 166,651 persons or some 80% of the population of Limerick City and County stated that their health was Very Good or Good, below the national average, 83%. The rate in Limerick is down from 86% in Census 2016 and 88% in 2011. This is also in line with the national trend which showed a decrease in the percentage of the population in Very Good and Good health compared with 2016 (87%) and 2011 (88%) – trends that were reflected in all counties in Ireland. In Limerick, 4,059

persons reported their health as Bad or Very Bad, representing 2% of the population. The proportion in Fair/Bad/Very Bad health in Limerick is 11.1% in 2022 (compared with a national average of 10.4%). The rate in Fair/Bad/Very Bad health is slightly up compared with 2016 (10.6% for Limerick and a national average of 9.6% in 2016).

InfoGraphic

Health in Limerick 2022

80% in Good/Very Good Health in Limerick, national average, 83%

11.1% in Fair/Bad/Very Bad Health in Limerick, national average, 10.4%

Change 2016-2022

Reduction in rate in Good/Very Good health, 86% in 2016

Increase in rate in Fair/Bad/Very Bad health, 10.6% 2016

Health inequalities in disadvantaged areas

23% in Killeely A ED & 22% in Rathkeale Urban in Fair/Bad/Very Bad health

Disability

In 2022, 47,348 persons (22.6% of the population) reported a disability (defined as having at least one long-lasting condition).¹⁴ The rate is slightly higher for females (23.1%) compared with males (21.9%). These rates are very close to the national average (22% reported a disability, 22% for females and 21% for males).

Smoking

In relation to smoking behaviour, in Limerick, 27,996 persons or 16.4% of the population aged 15 years and over, report that they smoke daily or occasionally. The remainder have either never smoked or have given up. This is in line with the national average (16% smoking daily or occasionally). More detailed data at local level are not available as yet. However, CSO report greater number of males compared with females smoking daily in Limerick, also consistent with the national average.

Carers

In relation to unpaid carers, 12,223 persons or 6% of the total population were caring for others in 2022, up from 4% in 2016. These are the same as the national rates of unpaid carers in 2022. In Limerick, more females (7,287 and 7% of all females) compared with males (4,936, 5% of all males) were carers. This is also similar to the national trend. In 2022, 187 carers in Limerick were under the age of 15 years, up from 149 in 2016. In addition to the increase in the numbers providing unpaid care, there was a significant increase, a doubling, in the hours of unpaid care provided. In 2022, 3,714 persons in Limerick provide 43 hours or more unpaid care compared with 1,921 persons providing this level of contribution in 2016.

InfoGraphic

47,348 report a disability (22.6%) in Limerick

27,996 smoke daily or occasionally (16%) in Limerick

12,223 are carers (6%) in Limerick

¹⁴ Disability in the population is measured using different questions in the 2022 Census compared with earlier Census. In 2022, questions are address the extent of the disability experienced but this level of detail at local level is not yet available

Health Inequalities

The overall findings from 2022 confirm variations in health status and smoking behaviours in the population by social factors, or social determinants of health. Health status varies age, Principal Economic Status (employed v. unemployed people), socio-economic grouping and other factors. As well as older age, people living in social deprivation tend to have poorer health. While Limerick approximates the national average on key health indicators, the most disadvantaged areas of Limerick show poorer health status on all health indicators in Census 2022. Data related to health and well-being for disadvantaged local areas in Limerick are shown in Appendix 1.¹⁵

Killeely A ED (Killeely/Thomondgate) has the worst health status based on the percentage of the population in Fair/Bad/Very Bad health (23%) followed by Rathkeale Urban (22%), part of Southill (Galvone B, 22%), part of Ballinacurra Weston (Prospect B, 21%) and St. Mary's Park (21%). In all of the regeneration areas, some one-fifth and upwards of that report that they are in Fair/Bad or Very Bad health, compared with 11% for the city and county as a whole.

Disability rates are also significantly higher in the disadvantaged areas, highest in St. Mary's Park (38%) followed by the ED of St. Laurence, which includes Limerick Prison on Mulgrave Street (37%) and Ballynanty ED, including Moyross (34%).

Rates of daily or occasional smoking are also highest in very disadvantaged areas / context, highest in the ED of St. Laurence (including Limerick Prison) at 39% of people aged over 15 years, followed by St. Mary's Park (39%) and part of Ballinacurra West (Prospect B, 33%). Generally in the most disadvantaged areas, the rate of smoking is just under or just over twice the city and county average.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an important part of community and social life. Many local facilities in sport, recreation, community centres and services in communities rely on a volunteer base. The rate of volunteering in a population is a measure of civic community and social capital. Volunteering brings people together around common interests/action and also contributes to health and well-being, building social connectedness and giving people a purpose.

Census 2022 included a question on volunteering. Based on this, 27,775 persons in Limerick report that they volunteer, giving a rate of 132.6 per 1,000 population. Based on analysis of volunteering rates at Electoral Division (ED) level, rates are significantly higher in rural areas. All of the top 40 EDs (of 172 EDs in Limerick) in terms of rates of volunteering are rural areas. Rates of volunteering per 1,000 population are highest in the EDs Darragh (290.7 per 1,000), Kilmeedy (247.3 per 1,000) and Athlacca (238.8 per 1,000) and lowest in city EDs – Glentworth C (43.2 per 1,000), Custom House in the city centre (36.6 per 1,000) and John's A/St. Mary's Park (33.5 per 1,000).

InfoGraphic

Limerick volunteering rate 132.6 per 1,000 population

Higher rates in rural Limerick

Lowest rates in city disadvantaged areas

Highest in Darragh ED 290.7 per 1,000

Lowest St. Mary's Park 33.5 per 1,000

¹⁵ All of the city-based EDs for which data are provided are target areas under the HSE Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme. This is a mainstream programme addressed to reducing health inequalities in the most disadvantaged urban areas in the state.

3.5 Families and Children

In 2022, there are 34,348 family-based households in Limerick City and County with children. These comprise households with young children, all under 15 years, households with children over 15 years and households with children both under and over 15 years. Of all family-based households with children, 74% comprise couples with children and 26% are one-parent families, an increase in the latter rate since 2016 (17%). One-parent families are mostly headed by females (84% of one parent families in Limerick). Focusing on families with any child under 15 years, 20% of those in Limerick are one parent families.

In 2022, there are 66,143 children in all families in Limerick and 14,399 (22%) children live in one-parent families. The number of children in all families decreased in 2022 compared with 2016 (by 1,166) but the rate of children living in one parent families remains the same.

InfoGraphic

Households with children in Limerick 2022

74% couples with children

26% one-parent families, up from 17% in 2016

14,399 children (22% of all children in Limerick) live in one-parent families

One-parent families highest in St. Mary's Park 72% and Southill/O'Malley Park, 61%

38% in Rathkeale Urban

Families & Social Disadvantage

Data on family structure for the most disadvantaged areas in the city and a cross-section of rural towns with small areas of disadvantage (Abbeyfeale, Askeaton, Croom, Kilmallock, Newcastle West, Patrickswell and Rathkeale) are provided in Appendix 1. In the most disadvantaged communities in the city, the percentage of one parent family households is much higher, at twice the rate and upwards of the Limerick average (26%). The rate of one-parent families is highest in St. Mary's Park at 72% followed by Galvone B / O'Malley Park Southill (61%). Parts of the city centre, with a high proportion of households in rented accommodation (e.g., under the Housing Assistance Payment), also have high rates of lone parent households with children. This is reflected in Abbey C (Old Clare Street/Pennywell) where 52% of families are one parent families. In relation to disadvantaged rural towns examined, apart from Croom, all of these settlements have rates of one parent families above the Limerick average. The highest rate (one parent families as a percentage of all households with children) is in Rathkeale Urban (38%), followed by Patrickswell, Kilmallock and Abbeyfeale (29%).

Focusing on households with young children (any child under 15 years), rates are significantly higher in the most disadvantaged areas of the city, highest in Galvone B/Southill (62%) followed by Prospect B/part of Ballinacurra Weston. In the towns, the rates of one parent households with young children are highest in Rathkeale Urban (28%) followed by Askeaton West (25%) and Patrickswell (24%) and they are close to the Limerick average in the other towns examined. Rates in some disadvantaged city areas and towns have decreased compared with the situation in 2016 (e.g., St. Mary's Park at 74% of households with any child under 15 years) and this is linked to changing demographics of these areas.

In 2020, 840 children in Limerick City and County were in households in need of social housing. Of these, 596 were living in lone parent households and 240 in households comprising a couple with a child / children. Other indicators that reflect the number of children in Limerick who are at highest

risk of exclusion/poverty or welfare or protection is at risk are shown in the graphics below. Based on Census data (2022), the rate of children with a disability in Limerick is higher than the national average. Rates of those registered with an intellectual and with a physical or sensory disability in Limerick are below the national average. Rates of referrals to Tusla and children in care are down compared with earlier years. While the numbers of children in these social groups or categories are small relative to the number of children living in Limerick, they represent most vulnerable children.

InfoGraphic or Box

Social Groups –Traveller Children & Foreign National Children

750 Traveller Children in Limerick, 15.8 per 1,000 children; National Average 11.6 per 1,000 children (2022 Census)

3,137 Foreign National Children in Limerick, 66 per 1,000 children; National Average 72.7 per 1,000 children (2022 Census)

InfoGraphic or Box

Children with a Disability & Registered Disability

5,486 with a disability in Limerick, 115.3 per 1,000 children; National Average 108.1 per 1,000 (2022 Census)

4 per 1,000 children for Limerick with an intellectual disability v. national average 7.2 per 1,000 children (2022)

2.9 children per 1,000 children for Limerick with a physical and sensory disability v. national average 5.2 per 1,000 children (2022)

InfoGraphic or Box

Child Welfare & Protection & At Risk of Offending

Mid-West Region:

1,651 referrals to Tusla rate 17.2 per 1,000 children v National Average, 18 per 1,000 children (Q2 2022)

549 children in the care of Tusla, 5.7 per 1,000 population 0-17 years; National Average 4.9 per 1,000 (2021)

Limerick City and County:

427 children, 20.2 per 1,000 population 10-17 years referred to Garda Youth Diversion Programme; National Average 19.6 per 1,000 population (2019)

Health Outcomes for Children

In relation to health outcomes for children, key statistics at the level of administrative county – the averages for Limerick City and County – are mostly in line with national averages. Breast-feeding rates, however, are significantly lower for Limerick. A campaign to promote and support breast-feeding was delivered in Limerick under Healthy Ireland in 2018 – “*We’re Breast-feeding Friendly*”. Rates of admission of children to psychiatric care services are low overall and particularly low for Limerick residents.

InfoGraphic or Box

Immunisation rates:

at 12 months 90% for Limerick Health Office v. national average 88%

at 24 months 93.3% for Limerick Health Office v. national average 91% (2020)

Hospital discharge:

122.4 hospital discharges of children resident in Limerick per 1,000 children v. national average 110.3 per 1,000 children (2022)

12.0 hospital discharges of children resident in Limerick with a principle diagnosis of injury poisoning or other external causes per 1,000 children v. national average of 9.6 per 1,000 children (2022)

Admissions:

21.2 children per 100,000 admissions to psychiatric hospitals / units and child and adolescent units Limerick v. national average of 40.4 per 100,000 (2020)

Breast feeding on discharge of mothers from hospital:

51.4% Limerick v. national average of 61.9% (2021).¹⁶

Well-being of Children & Youth



A local study of needs of children and young people in Limerick County (10-18 years) conducted by Limerick Youth Services identified certain minority groups of young people face greater difficulties than their mainstream peers.¹⁷ These include LGBTQ+ young people, immigrants to Ireland and Traveller young people. The graphic highlights other finding of this study related to safety and satisfaction with information services. A further finding is

that a significant number of young people in rural Limerick wish to access support to stop, reduce or avoid substance misuse.

Services for Children & Families: Childcare & Family Services

In 2020/2021, there were 191 Early Learning & Care (ELC) and School Age Childcare Services (SACS) in mainstream services provision for children – childcare supported by subventions from the state (under the National Childcare Scheme, Early Childhood Care and Education and Community Childcare Subvention Plus by Department of Children Equality Disability Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)). The Pobal Annual Early Years Sector survey for 2020/2021 recorded 174 child care facilities with capacity for 4,880 children in Limerick. There are four Family Resource Centres (FRCs), core-funded by *Tusla – the Child and Family Agency*, located in disadvantaged communities, and providing a range of universal

¹⁶ Data collated in *State of the Nation's Children* report series. Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/1f703-state-of-the-nations-children/>

¹⁷ Limerick Youth Service (2019). *Baseline Study & Needs Analysis of Young People Aged 10-18 in Rural County Limerick*

and targeted services for families. There is no Family Resource Centre in west Limerick despite significant levels of deprivation in some west Limerick towns (e.g., Abbeyfeale, Askeaton, Rathkeale). Further details are provided in Appendix 1.

InfoGraphic

Children 0-14 years in childcare 12,500 (Census 2022), of which:

0-4 years 5,592

5-14 years 6,908

3.6 Labour Market and Persons at Work by Industry

The health of the local labour market can be measured in different ways including the employment rate (the percentage of the working age population at work) and unemployment rates.

Unemployment

The ILO unemployment rate for the state in July 2023 was 4.1%, a small decrease compared with July 2022 (4.2%) and July 2021 (6.3%). The ILO unemployment rate for the Mid-West Region in Quarter 2 2023 is 4.8%, above the national level and higher than the rate in Quarter 2 2022 (4.3%). These are amongst the lowest unemployment rates ever recorded.

Based on the measure, Principal Economic Status (PES) used in the Census, the unemployment rate for Limerick in 2022 is 8.6% compared with a rate of 8% for the state as a whole. The unemployment rate in 2022 decreased compared with 2016, at 14.4% for Limerick City and County and a national rate of 12.9% in 2016.¹⁸ Over half (51%) of all those unemployed in Limerick (looking for first job, short-term unemployed and long-term unemployed) are long-term unemployed. In Limerick, 6% of persons aged 15 years and over report they are unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability, 16% are retired, 12% report their Principal Economic Status as Student and 7% as looking after the home and family.

InfoGraphic or Box

Unemployment rate 8.6% Limerick, National average 8% (2022)

Unemployment rate down from 2016 (14.4% Limerick & 12.9% National average in 2016)

51% unemployed in Limerick, long-term unemployed

6% unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability (2022)

Total population in Limerick 15 years & over: 170,062

Unemployment blackspots

Structural unemployment remains a problem in certain areas. Census 2016 identified 18 unemployment blackspots in Limerick (17 in Limerick City and one in rural Limerick, Rathkeale) where

¹⁸ This measure of unemployment is based on self-identified “principal economic status” in the Census. The measure returns a higher rate than the official unemployment rate, based on the ILO measure. The lowest level at which the official unemployment rates are recorded routinely (on a quarterly basis) is the Regional Level.

the rate of unemployment was at least twice the national average. Data presented in Appendix 1 shows the situation of these areas in 2022, drawing on key indicators.

The analysis shows that, with the exception of St. Laurence ED (including Limerick Prison), unemployment rates reduced in all of these unemployment blackspot areas between 2016 and 2022. However, in 15 of the 18 areas, unemployment rates in 2022 remain at more than twice the Limerick average. They are at over five times the Limerick average in the St. Laurence ED (47%), almost four times the average in St. Mary's Park (34%) and just over three times the average in Galvone B ED/O'Malley Park, Southill (27%). They are above twice the Limerick average in all EDs corresponding with the regeneration areas of Limerick City and adjacent disadvantaged areas (such as Killeely/Thomondgate and areas adjacent to Ballinacurra Weston). In the city centre, rates are highest in Shannon B (William St./Catherine St.), Abbey C (Old Clare St./Pennywell) and Singland A (Garryowen) at between 19-21%.

In parts of the city centre, unemployment rates have reduced at a faster rate compared with the average reduction in unemployment in Limerick, especially in the EDs, Custom House (Michael St./Watergate) and Abbey C (Old Clare St./Pennywell) and also Glentworth A (Parnell St., Sexton St.) and C (Hyde Ave.). These are areas where demographics have changed and there has been strong population growth. In the regeneration areas, while still extremely high, the unemployment rate in St. John's A (St. Mary's Park) and Ballynancy (including part of Moyross) reduced at a faster rate compared with the Limerick average. In Rathkeale, the unemployment rate in 2022 (17.7%) is just over twice the Limerick average. It has also reduced at a slightly faster rate between 2016 and 2022 compared with the average reduction in the unemployment rate in Limerick.

In rural Limerick, in addition to Rathkeale Urban, areas with relatively higher unemployment rates in 2022 are: Askeaton (Askeaton East 16% and Askeaton West 9.9%), Abbeyfeale (13.9%) and Newcastle West Urban (10.6%) in west Limerick, and Bruree (13%) and Kilmallock (10.3%) in east Limerick. Areas which had higher unemployment rates in 2016 that have reduced to below the Limerick average include: Grean (8.2%), Cappamore (7.8%) Croom (7.6%) and Ballylanders (8.2%) in the east and Patrickswell in the west (8.5%).

InfoGraphic

Unemployment rates in 2022, down in 17 of 18 unemployment blackspots in 2016

Unemployment rates in 15 of these areas more than twice the Limerick average in 2022

Highest in St. Laurence ED, 47% & St. Mary's Park, 34%

Rural Limerick with highest rates: 18% Rathkeale Urban & 16% Askeaton East

The Employment Rate

The employment rate – the percentage of the working age population (15-64 years) at work - is an important indicator of the health of the economy. This has been increasing steadily since the end of the Great Recession and, in the state as a whole, there has never been more people in work. Based on Census 2022, the employment rate for Limerick City and County is estimated at 66%, up from 60.4% in Census 2016.¹⁹ The employment rate in the areas blighted by highest unemployment (where it was

¹⁹ This is an estimate as the local CSO Census statistics does not provide a breakdown of the number at work in the specific age bands 15-64 years. However, most of those “at work” are likely to fall within this age group.

between 25-38% in 2016) has also increased. It approximates the city and county average in Custom House ED (66%) – indicating that the substantial proportion of the working age population is at work – and is also above 60% in other parts of the city centre (Dock A and Shannon B). The employment rate remains lowest in St. John's A (St. Mary's Park) at 34% (up from 25% in 2016) followed by St. Laurence ED (40%). See Appendix 1 for further details.

Persons Unable to Work Due to Permanent Sickness / Disability

In the most disadvantaged areas, rates of people unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability are also extremely high. Rates are three times or greater than the Limerick average (6%) in the EDs of Galvone B (Southill), John's A (St. Mary's Park) and Killeely A (Killeely Thomondgate) and at twice the average or more in all apart from four of the 18 unemployment blackspot areas (2016). See data in Appendix 1.

Persons at Work by Industry

In 2022, 90,623 persons over 15 years resident in Limerick were at work, an increase of almost 13,500 since 2016 (+17%). In 2022, some 15% were working in Manufacturing, 5% in Construction, 4% in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and 58% in Service Industries. One quarter of all persons at work were in Professional Services in 2022. Apart from agriculture, where there was a decline (-8%) in employment, there was an increase in the numbers at work in all other sectors. The largest percentage increases were in Building and Construction (+24%), Transport and Communications (+22%), Professional Services, Other industries and Public Administration (all approximately +22%).

Females account for 47% of the share of all persons at work in Limerick. They have a greater share of the employment in Professional Services (71% female) and Public Administration (53% female); and the smaller share of employment in Building and Construction (8%) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (12%). Details the number of Limerick residents that are at work by industrial sector and male/female breakdowns in 2022 and 2016 are provided in Appendix 1.

InfoGraphic

90,623 persons resident in Limerick at work in 2022, up 13,500 since 2016

15% manufacturing

5% construction

58% service industries

Numbers employed in agriculture, down 8% from 2016

All other sectors, up since 2016

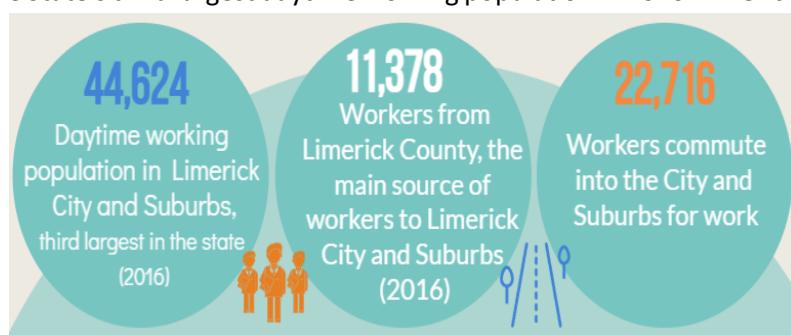
3.7 Distribution of Economic Activity: Areas of Concentrations of Jobs & Decline

This section examines the main locations or centres of employment and dereliction and vacancy, the latter hallmarks of economic decline and a priority in regeneration and development of the city centre, towns and villages

Distribution of jobs: Economic importance of city & suburbs & county towns

CSO, based on analysis of commuting patterns included in Census data, provides an analysis of the daytime working population – the important locations of jobs – across the spatial area. 2022 Census data on this aspect of the labour market are not available as yet.

Commuting data from Census 2016 confirm that Limerick City is a major centre of employment, with over 22,700 workers commuting daily into the city and suburbs. This represents slightly more than the number of city residents who work within the city and suburbs. After Dublin and Cork, Limerick City and Suburbs overtook Galway as the State's third largest daytime working population in 2016. Limerick County (11,378) was the main source of workers to Limerick city and suburbs, followed by Clare (5,553) and Tipperary North (2,542). Annacotty was the main feeder town for Limerick city and suburbs (743), followed by Castleconnell (400), Ballina (355), Newport (318) and Ardnacrusha (302).



The towns of Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale and Kilmallock have more jobs / larger daytime working population than the number of residents at work in the settlement. Newcastle West, the largest town, has the largest daytime working population (2,413), followed by Abbeyfeale (1,354). Abbeyfeale has the largest proportion of residents at work who live and work within the settlement (51%) followed by Rathkeale (48%) and then Kilmallock (42%). This analysis highlights that even towns with structural weaknesses including Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale and to a lesser extent Kilmallock remain important locations of work in rural Limerick.

InfoGraphic

2,413 daytime working population Newcastle West (2016)

1,354 daytime working population Abbeyfeale (2016)

51% in Abbeyfeale live and work in the town (2016)

Dereliction and Vacancy: Residential & Commercial Vacancy

Dereliction and vacancy of buildings and sites in cities, towns and villages and abandoned rural dwellings are the hallmarks of decline. In Limerick City and County, the total number of vacant dwellings in 2022 was 6,641 giving a vacancy rate of 7.8%, the same as the national average (7.8%). The residential vacancy rate in Limerick in 2022 declined by 14.6% compared with 2016, reducing at a faster rate compared with the state average (-9%). In the state as a whole, rates of vacant dwellings are higher in more rural areas and this is reflected in Limerick where some towns and villages in rural Limerick show high rates of residential vacancy. Using a different source of data – An Post GeoDirectory - in Q2 2023, the GeoDirectory reported a residential vacancy rate of 3.9% for the state as a whole, the lowest ever recorded and 4.1% for Limerick. The trend here has been consistently downwards.

InfoGraphic

6,641 vacant dwellings in Limerick in 2022, 7.8% vacancy rate, same as National Average

Down by 14.6% from 2016

Residential vacancy in Limerick, 4.1% v. National average 3.9%, Q2 2023 GeoDirectory

The GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report reports a national commercial vacancy rate in Q3 2023 of 14.1% (+0.2 percentage points compared with Q3 2022). The trend has been upwards and the current rate is the highest recorded. Commercial vacancy rates increased across the country, increasing in 20 of the 26 counties including Limerick. Limerick is amongst the counties with a high commercial vacancy rate at 16.9%, higher than the average for Munster (13.9%) and sixth highest in the state. The commercial vacancy rate in Limerick increased by 0.3 percentage points compared with Q2 2023. Locations with highest commercial vacancy rates in Limerick (and Munster) include Abbeyfeale 22.1% (the same as Q3 2022), Newcastle West (21.6%, the same as Q3 2022) and Limerick City (19.4% and increase from 19.1% in Q2 2022). Drawing on health checks, surveys and reviews of derelict site cases in Limerick, the towns of Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale, Newcastle West and Askeaton in the west and Kilmallock and Bruff in the east have large number of vacant properties. Vacancy is much less an issue in villages / towns within the Metropolitan Area (e.g., Castleconnell, Caherconlish).

InfoGraphic

Commercial vacancy in Limerick 16.9%, national (14.1%) and Munster (13.9%) average, Q2 2023

Highest rates in:

Abbeyfeale 22.1%

Newcastle West 21.6%

Limerick City 19.6%

3.8 Enterprise, Business Activity and Jobs

Limerick has been performing well in enterprise growth and job creation. New enterprise start-up, enterprise expansion in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and indigenous business sectors are important objectives to build resilience and sustained job creation in Limerick.

Business Activity and Jobs Located in Limerick

The CSO's Business Demography series²⁰ shows that the number of active enterprises located in Limerick was 12,896²¹ in 2021, an increase of 571 since 2020 and of 1,327 since 2019. The number of persons engaged (owner-managers and employees) in businesses located in Limerick was 79,552 in 2021 which was less than the number in 2019 (83,480). Lower numbers engaged in 2020 and 2021 is linked to contraction of the economy due to COVID-19, although enterprises and employees were sustained with the financial support (COVID payments) from government.

Enterprise Size-structure: SMEs and Large Enterprise

Analysis of latest data (2019, 2020 and 2021) shows the importance of micro and enterprises in the local economy of Limerick City and County. In 2021 and 2020, 92.7% of all active enterprises in Limerick and 25% of all jobs in those enterprises were in micro-enterprises (less than 10 person engaged). Some 47% of all jobs in enterprises located in Limerick are in companies with under 50 persons engaged while Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) – up to 249 persons engaged – accounted for 64% of all jobs. Large enterprises (250 and over persons engaged) accounted for only 0.2% of enterprises in 2019 to 2021 and for 36% of jobs in Limerick-based enterprises.

²⁰ CSO Business Demography. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-bd/businessdemography2021/keyfindings/>

²¹ This number relates to enterprises classified as Business Economy excluding Sector O and Activities of Membership Organisations (B to S-O-S94) under the NACE Code classifications

InfoGraphic or Box

**12,896 Active Enterprises in 2021, increase since 2020
79,552 persons engaged in 2021, down from 2019 (83,480)**

**Enterprises 0-10 persons engaged, 92.7% of all enterprises & 25% of all jobs
Enterprises 250 persons engaged & over, 0.2% of all enterprises & 36% of all jobs**

Persons engaged by sector

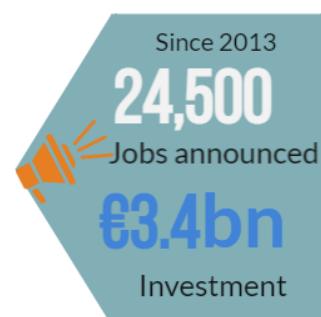
**14% in manufacturing
13.3% in wholesale & retail trade
8.2% Construction
62% Other Services**

Sectoral Profile of Businesses Located in Limerick

Analysis of the sectoral profile of employment in enterprises in Limerick shows the importance of manufacturing, accounting for 14% of persons engaged in companies located in Limerick in 2021 (higher than the national average 11.8%), 13.3% in Wholesale and Retail Trade (lower than the national average 16.6%), 8.2% in construction (higher than the national average of 7.4%) and the remainder in Other Services (61.9%). Accommodation and food enterprises had 6,229 persons engaged in 2021 (7.8% of persons engaged in private enterprises). In the latest CSO Business Demography Series (2021), Limerick has 9.52% of enterprises in the tourism sector, which is the second highest in Munster after Kerry (12.8% of total enterprises in the county and highest in the state) and just ahead of County Clare (9.48%).

Investment and Job Creation: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) & Indigenous Enterprise

Limerick has been very successful in recent years in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and jobs to the County. Between 2013 and April 2022, over 24,500 jobs and €3.4 billion of investment has been announced by companies located to/in or expanding in Limerick. Later in 2022 and 2023, major investments announced include Eli Lilly (€400m), Johnson & Johnson (€135m) Analog Devices (€100m) and Ortec. Predominant sectors for investment and employment growth include biopharma, medical devices, ICT, construction, retail, fintech and the creative sector.²²



Since 2016, employment in IDA client companies has increased considerably, by 40.5%, and the most important sector for FDI investment is ICT/Hardware/Software, followed by Engineering and Medical Technology.



Enterprise Ireland-assisted jobs in Limerick have also increased since 2016, by 14%. Data on client companies assisted by the Limerick Local Enterprise Office (LEO) is shown in the graphic.

²² Data from LCCC Economic Development Directorate / Forward Planning

Retail

Restrictions during COVID-19 and changing trends in shopping have particularly impacted on the retail sector in Limerick. The *Retail Strategy for Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 –2028* provides analysis of the changing sector and challenges. It shows particular difficulties in Limerick City Centre where of the 1,014 retail units in the City Centre, 220 are vacant (a vacancy rate of 22%).

In Q3 2023, the Retail and Wholesale Trade sector occupied 23.3% of the commercial stock of buildings in Limerick, lower than the rate in Q2 2022 at 24% (GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report). Retail and Wholesale accounted for 30.6% of the commercial stock of buildings in Abbeyfeale and 29.6% in Newcastle West, showing the importance of retail to County towns. In 2021, there were 1,820 active enterprises and 10,565 persons engaged in the Wholesale and Retail Sector (including repair of Motor Vehicles) in Limerick (CSO Business Demography Series 2021).

InfoGraphic

1,014 retail units in Limerick City Centre, 22% vacancy rate (2022)

Retail & Wholesale Trade as % of commercial stock (2023):

23.9% Limerick City

30.6% Abbeyfeale

29.6% Newcastle West

1,820 enterprises and 10,565 job in wholesale & retail trade in Limerick (2021)

Agriculture

In the 2022 Census, it is reported that 3,920 persons in Limerick are at work in Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing. Limerick County has approximately 5,000 farm families and some 7% of the national herd (IFA estimates). The average farm size in Limerick is 27.1 hectares, smaller than the national average (32.4 hectares).²³ The predominant system of farming in Limerick is dairying and cattle rearing. The Teagasc National Farm Survey Sustainability Report 2021 found average economic returns per hectare in dairy farming are significantly higher than those in other farm systems. Dairy also has better social sustainability metrics: lower isolation risk and with fewer households with an older age profile in comparison with other farm systems. Cattle rearing is amenable to part-time farming and there is a tradition of this in Limerick. Availability of off-farm jobs in manufacturing, agricultural contracting and construction has enabled the sustainability of family farms that were not economically viable.

Based on IFA estimates, agricultural output for Limerick County is some €560 million at farm gate prices. In terms of income from subsidies, based on Department of Agriculture “CAP beneficiaries’ publication”, in 2020, there were 54,959 individual recipients (farmers / farm units) of area-based direct payments in Limerick receiving €49 million in direct payments and a total of €73 million under all CAP measures. Agriculture in Limerick, while accounting for a small percentage of direct employment, is extremely important to the local economy. The economic impact is estimated at €1.2 billion.²⁴ Farming supports additional jobs in related sub-sectors in the rural economy (estimated at 7,000 off-farm), in food and drink processing and in the wider agri-industry including: input suppliers, agricultural contractors, auctioneering, transport and engineering, accountancy, legal, veterinary and

²³ Farm Structure Survey 2016

²⁴ Multiplier of 2.2 used for Limerick based on farm structure and using the multiplier for dairy output (2.0) and beef output (2.5), presented in the *Annual Review and Outlook for Agriculture Food and the Marine 2020* (DAFM 2019)

advisory services. Agriculture is a sector most impacted by climate change where changes in farm practices and land management are required in order to meet climate action targets.

InfoGraphic

3,920 persons at work in Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing in Limerick 2022

Limerick County 5,000 family farms, 7% of national herd

Agricultural output Limerick €560 million

Economic impact of sector Limerick estimated at €1.2 billion (IFA)

3.9 Energy, Transport & Internet

Renewable energy plays an important role in energy production nationally and in Limerick. In order to achieve 2030 targets for Ireland, energy from renewable sources is expected to grow significantly. Limerick has resources to support the development of renewable energy sources. In Limerick, 12 solar farms have been permitted with an output capacity of 113.49 MW and there are 15 wind farms with a total output of 205.75 MW. Data presented below on energy use and energy efficiency of domestic and non-domestic buildings show the need to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, expand use of renewables and improve the energy efficiency of our buildings – across public bodies, businesses, community / sports and other user types as well as dwellings.

Energy Efficiency of Buildings: Reliance on Fossil Fuels

Census 2022 data show the significant reliance of private households in Limerick (76,295 households) on fossil fuels as the main space heating source, with 78% reliant on these (43.4% using Oil, 27.9% using Natural Gas, 5% Coal, 1.4% Peat and 0.6% Liquid Petroleum Gas LGP). Just over 10% use Electricity and 2% Wood. Just under one-quarter (24%) have at least one renewable energy source installed.

Based on national and county-level data on dwellings with Building Energy Rating (BER), the trend has been towards the reduction in fossil fuels and improved energy efficiency. CSO data²⁵ on main sources of energy used in domestic and non-domestic buildings from 2010 to 2022, shows electricity is the main space heating source (82%) in the most recently constructed dwellings (2020-2022) compared even to those constructed in 2015-2019 where 48% of dwellings with a BER audit used electricity.

InfoGraphic

78% households in Limerick, fossil fuel as main space heating source (2022)

10% Electricity, 2% Wood

24% at least one renewable energy source installed

²⁵ Data from CSO. <https://data.cso.ie/table/DBEREL01>

Building Energy Ratings (BERs): Limerick

Data on BERs for Limerick City and Limerick County (2009-2022), based on 18,705 dwellings in the city and 25,223 in the county and an average age of dwelling of 38 years, showed that only 5% in the city and 5% in the county have an A rating. This compares with a national average of 10% with an average



age of dwelling of 33 years. Twelve percent (12%) in Limerick City and 11% in Limerick County have B ratings (B1 to B3) compared with 13% at national level. The most common rating is C with 40% of dwellings in the city and 38% in the county have ratings from C1 to C3. Six percent (6%) of dwellings in the City and 8% in the County have a G (worst) rating compared with 7% at national level.

A local Limerick study to audit community buildings and community cultural facilities across the city and county (2020-2021) found that these building mostly have poor energy efficiency and are heavily reliant on fossil fuels as the main source of heating.

Analysis of social aspects of energy efficiency of dwellings (based on Census 2016 data) shows that older people, unemployed people, one-parent families with children, one person households, people with poor mobility and people from black and Asian ethnicity are more at risk of energy poverty. People from these social backgrounds have lower combined A and B ratings, and in many cases, have the highest percentage of G ratings. Social groups living in dwellings with a higher percent of G ratings are farmers (9%), agricultural workers (11%), persons over 75 years (8%), people with mobility difficulties (7%), people in Very Bad Health (7%) and people living alone (7%).

Most at risk of energy poverty

- Older people,
- people living alone
- in poorer health
- with mobility difficulties
- farmers and agricultural workers
- one parent families with children
- black and Asian ethnic minorities



Transport and Usual Means of Travel

An effective transport network and public transport are essential for the creation of compact and connected places in the 21st Century (consistent with objectives of the *NPF Ireland 2040*, the *RSES for the Southern Region* and the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*). Based on Census 2022, in Limerick City and County, only 13.8% used active travel (12.3% walking and 1.5% bike) as their usual means of travel to work, school, college or childcare. This is lower than the rate in 2016, 16% (14.4% walking and 1.5% bike) and, overall, has changed very little compared with 2011. In 2022, some 62% use the car as the driver (37%) or passenger (21%) or van (4%) as the usual means of transport, lower than the rate in 2016 (68%). The main change between 2016 and 2022 is in the percentage using the car as the driver (43% in 2016). Only 7% used a bus / coach or train, the same as in 2016, while 7% work mainly from home, more than double the rate in 2016 (3%). The actual number of people who work from home is 24,552 or 27.3% of all working persons in Limerick while 58% state they never work from home (and 15% unstated).

InfoGraphic

13.8% commute by walking or cycling in 2022, down from 16% 2016

62% commute by car, down from 68% in 2016

7% use public transport, same as 2016

7% work mainly from home, up from 3% in 2016

24,552, 27% of all persons at work in Limerick work mainly from home

These data on active travel and public transport rates are disappointing in view of the extent of change needed in transport as a response to climate action and promotion of alternatives to the car. Change in favour of sustainable travel and expansion of public transport services are challenging in view of the highly dispersed population base in rural Limerick and current patterns of cross-commuting to work between the city and county and adjacent counties. The level of home working in 2022 is perhaps not as great as might have been expected, with the shift to home working during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

In terms of commuting times, 30% had a commute time to work, school or college of under 15 minutes (down from 35% in 2016) while 30% had a commute time of 15 to 30 minutes (also down from 33% in 2016). Approximately 5% had a commute of more than one hour. The overall trend is in favour of longer commute times for Limerick residents to work, school or college. This can be connected to population growth, increase in the numbers at work, mismatches in the location of residence and locations of work or school/college and continued strong reliance on the car.

InfoGraphic

30% commute time of under 15 minutes, down from 35% in 2016

30% commute time of 15-30 minutes, down from 33% in 2016

Internet Access

Availability of high-speed and reliable broadband underpins economic development and contributes to good quality of life for Limerick's communities. Based on Census 2022, just under three quarters (74%) of private households have broadband and a further 4% have other internet connection. Just over one-tenth have no internet access (10.6%). Based on analysis at Electoral Division (ED) level, rates of households without any internet connection are twice the Limerick average and upwards in remote rural areas and disadvantaged areas of the city and county. Digital exclusion arises in these areas due to lack of infrastructure in some areas and poverty/deprivation in others. Rathkeale Urban has the highest percentage of households with no internet (39%), followed by Kilmoylan (29%) and St. John's A/St. Mary's Park (27%). In affluent parts of the city and suburbs, rates of households without any internet connection are 5% and under, lowest in Ballysimon ED, at 3%.

To address lack of infrastructure in rural areas, 16 Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) are installed in areas in rural Limerick including Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kildimo, Cappamore, Hospital and Galbally - an initiative of National Broadband Ireland, the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and Vodafone, working in partnership with local authorities²⁶. The Council's Digital Services team has delivered 40 free public WiFi access points across Limerick under the WiFi4EU initiative in 2021, part-funded by the EU, the DRCD and LCCC. The WiFi4EU locations are Abbeyfeale, Adare, Askeaton, Bruff, Caherconlish, Cappamore, Castleconnell, Croom, Foynes, Kilmallock, Limerick Metro, Newcastle West, Patrickswell, and Rathkeale.

InfoGraphic

78% private households with broadband or other internet connection, 2022

11% no internet access

Isolated rural & disadvantaged areas highest percentages with no internet

Rathkeale Urban 39% with no internet

²⁶ Data from LCCC Digital Strategy

3.10 Housing

Housing is a basic need. A well-functioning housing market, with a supply of accommodation to suit households at different stages of the lifecourse, underpins a successful economy and sustainable communities. Current difficulties in the housing market in Ireland – limited supply, strong demand and increase costs of house purchase and rent - are well-documented. These difficulties are present in the local housing market in Limerick.

House purchase and rental costs Limerick

Based on most recent GeoDirectory data for residential buildings (Q2 2023), the average house price in Limerick is €264,512 compared with a national average of €366,219 and an average of €293,446 excluding Dublin. This is a significant increase (by approximately 17%) compared with 2020. The average cost of a new house for first time buyers in Limerick is €296,675 and €222,500 for an existing house (Q2 2023). Across all the cities in the state, Limerick City has the lowest average house price at €232,206 in Q2 2023 and Dublin City Council Area the highest (€539,298). As such, Limerick has cost competitive advantages in the wider housing market. Based on analysis of transactions in 2023 by post codes, the average house price for Limerick including the sub-urban and peri-urban area (V94) in Q2 2023 was €278,424 compared with €209,655 for the Kilmallock area (V35) and €184,000 for the Newcastle West area (V42).

InfoGraphic

Average house price in Limerick €264,512 (Q2 2023), up 17% since 2020

Average house price higher in Limerick city and environs, €278,424

Kilmallock Area €209,655

Newcastle West €184,000

Based on Census 2022, between 2016 and 2022, the average weekly rent to a private landlord in Limerick (at €221 in April 2022) increased by 46% compared with 2016. Average weekly rent in Limerick, however, still remains below the national average (€273). GeoDirectory data on residential rents shows the same trend - the average monthly rent (all property types) for Limerick City and County in Q4 2022 is €1,219 compared with €892 in 2020 (+37%). Local data show substantial variations across Limerick with areas within or in close proximity to the city having higher rental costs.

InfoGraphic

Average weekly rent Limerick €221 v. €273 national average in 2022, up 46% compared with 2016

Average monthly rent for all property types in Limerick €1,219, up 37% since 2020, GeoDirectory 2023

Limerick Housing Stock

The total housing stock in Limerick increased to 85,363 units in 2022 from 82,112 in 2016 (+4%), growing at a slower rate than the national average (5%). The rate of growth was faster in the Metropolitan Area (8%) compared with the City and County as a whole. The largest increases in housing stock between 2016 and 2022 are in the Metropolitan Area and mostly in or close to the suburbs – in the Electoral Divisions of Limerick South Rural (+26%), Ballysimon (+14%) and Clarina (+16%). Electoral Divisions in the city where the housing stock increased at faster rates are Prospect A

(Lord Edward Street, Bourke Avenue connected to a new social housing scheme, +15%) and Shannon B (inner city around Catherine Street, Glentworth Street, +13%).

InfoGraphic

Housing stock 85,386 in 2022, up 4% since 2016, below national average (+6%)

8% growth in housing stock in Limerick Metropolitan Area

The number of vacant dwellings in Limerick City and County recorded in Census 2022 was 6,641 – as reported above. This is a vacancy rate of 7.8%, the same as the national average (7.8%). With the pressures on housing supply, the residential vacancy rates, as reported in the GeoDirectory (Q2 2023), at 4.1% for Limerick are the lowest ever recorded.

Housing Tenure

While the actual stock of housing, in all tenure types, has increased, the percentage in the different types of tenure has remained broadly similar. The number of households in private rental accommodation increased to 13,497 in 2022 from 12,787 in 2016. However, the percentage renting from a private landlord (17.7%) in 2022 is more or less the same as in 2016 (18%). In 2022, 65% of homes in Limerick were owned with a mortgage or loan (26%, 19,617 households) or owned outright (39%, 29,689 households), just below the average for the state as a whole (66%), and a decrease in the rate of home ownership in Limerick compared with 2016 (68%). In 2022, 9.1% of households are social housing (compared with 9.2% in 2016), rented from the local authority (7.5%) or from a voluntary or cooperative housing agency (1.6%). Some of those households in private rented accommodation are supported under rent subsidy / support schemes (the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)) for families in housing need with low means. This means that some of the private rental market is social housing.

Social housing rental rates are highest in city housing estates - highest in Galvone B ED at 55% (including new housing developments in O’Malley Park/Keyes Park with the regeneration programme) followed by Ballynally ED including Moyross (48.7%) and St. Mary’s Park (48.5%). Rates of private rental households are highest in the city centre in particular in Shannon A ED (75.5%), Dock A (64.9%), Shannon B (62.5%) and Market (53%). These are inner city areas with the highest population densities and a high proportion of migrants. In Market ED, there is also a relatively high proportion of housing rented from the local authority or voluntary housing bodies (16%), bringing the combined percentage of households in rented accommodation to 69%. In Abbey C ED, in the city centre, 36% of households are privately rented and a further 26% rented from the local authority or voluntary housing body. The mix here is generally young populations on low incomes. A further trend noted by CSO at national level and in Limerick is the significant increase (+83% compared with 2016) in the number of persons over 65 years renting from a private landlord. The number of households privately rented by persons 65 years and over in Limerick in 2022 was 703, an increase of 81% compared with 2016.

InfoGraphic

Household privately rented 18%, same as 2016

65% household in home ownership, down from 2016 (68%)

9% in social housing

Highest rates social housing in city local authority housing estates, 49%-55%

Highest rates private rental inner city areas, 53%-76%

Future Housing Need Limerick

Housing demand in Limerick over the six-year period 2022 to 2028 is determined to be 15,591 housing units, or 2,598 units per annum, as presented in the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*.²⁷ Public investment in waste water and water infrastructure / services capacity and other infrastructure is required to enable new housing developments as there is a lack of capacity in such infrastructure in many settlements in Limerick. As well as planning for housing locations, housing types and densities – consistent with spatial planning policies - social aspects of housing development must be considered in order to promote sustainable communities. This includes consideration of needs of people with different levels of income, life course aspects (young people, families and older people), people with disabilities, student accommodation

Housing demand in Limerick from 2022-2028 estimated at 15,591 units or 2,598 per annum.

and Traveller accommodation as well as social and tenure mix of housing estates. There are challenges associated with delivery of this level of supply and the different types of need.²⁸

Limerick's Social Housing Stock & Targets for Social & Affordable Housing

Data for Q4 2020 indicates that Limerick City and County Council owns 5,525 housing units, of which 113 are leased. Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) - voluntary and communities organisations – also deliver and manage social housing. There are 52 AHBs in Limerick with a total stock of approximately 1,500 units. Social housing need is also addressed through the private rental market under the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) (766 Private RAS properties at end of year 2021) and the Housing Assistance Payment (2,426 at end of year 2021). Across the different social housing options, the number of households in social housing provision in Limerick in 2022 is 9,192.²⁹

Social housing stock
5,525
owned by LCCC of
which 113 are leased
(2020)
1,500 Approved
Housing Bodies stock

With HAP (2,426)
and RAS (766),
social housing
provision
9,192
(2022)

Limerick City and County Council carries out assessments of need and follows a process to qualify applicants for social housing. The number approved or qualified for social housing in Limerick in 2022 is 2,238. This is the “net” housing need as it excludes those households awaiting transfers and those in private rented accommodation supported under the HAP/RAS. The “gross” number on the “housing waiting list” is 5,863 including those awaiting transfers and on HAP/RAS.

In the last week of September 2022, in Limerick there were 330 homeless adults accommodated in emergency accommodation funded and overseen by housing authorities. The trend in homelessness in the state and in Limerick is upwards. Across Limerick and Clare County, there were 91 families homeless in emergency accommodation in the same period (September 2022). Three-quarters of

²⁷ See *Volume 6 Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, Limerick City and County Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment 2022-2028* <https://www.limerick.ie/sites/default/files/media/documents/2022-07/Housing-Strategy-and-Housing-Need-Demand-Assessment.pdf>

²⁸ See *Limerick City and County Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026*, setting out details of planned social and affordable housing delivery under Government's *Housing for All*. <https://www.limerick.ie/council/services/housing/housing-delivery/housing-delivery-action-plan>

²⁹ Data from the Housing Agency Data Hub. <https://www.housingagency.ie/data-hub/welcome-housing-agency-data-hub>

these were single parent families. Within these families, there were 124 adults and 180 dependent children.³⁰

Housing Supply: Housing Targets & Delivery of Supply

Each local authority is set targets for delivery of social and affordable housing units under government's strategy, *Housing for All* for the period 2022-2026. The social housing target for Limerick City and County by 2026 is 2,693 homes. Currently, 1,220 housing units have been approved and 1,616 are at pre-approval stage. Between the years 2022-2026, the Council's target for affordable housing is 1,264 units, approximately 253 per year. Of this target, 264 units are for direct delivery by the local authority and the remainder by other agencies including the Land Development Agency and Approved Housing Bodies.

InfoGraphic

2022-2026

Social housing targets for Limerick 2,693 homes

1,220 approved & 1,616 pre-approval

Affordable housing targets 1,264

Based on the GeoDirectory Residential Report (Q2 2023), progress is being made in expanding housing supply in the state: the number of housing buildings under construction continues to increase year-on-year (+2% for the 12 month period up to June 2023 compared with the 12-months to June 2022). The Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) reports an increase in the number and rate of housing commencements for the 12 month period up to June 2023 (Q2) compared with Q2 2022 (+15% more commenced in the 12 months to June 2023 compared with the same period in 2022). On new dwelling completions, the total number in the 12 month period to Q1 2023 was up by 39% compared with the same period to Q1 2022, (CSO New Dwelling Completion Series). The Greater Dublin Region, however – which has the largest population base - dominates on all indicators related to expansion of housing supply. For instance, 43.7% of all housing under construction in Q2 2023 was in Greater Dublin, while Limerick accounted for 3% of all housing under construction in the state (and 4% of the total population of the state).

In Limerick, in the 12 months to June 2023, 693 new residential address points (Eircode) were added, increasing the County residential stock by 0.8% (below the state average, 1.3%). In June 2023, there were 696 housing developments under construction in Limerick (which may involve one or more dwellings). In the 12 months to June 2023, a total of 767 housing commencements were recorded for Limerick, greater than the number for the previous year (+0.5%).

InfoGraphic

693 new residential address points in Limerick in 12 months to June 2023

696 housing developments under construction

767 housing commencements

3.11 Conclusion

The socio-economic profile of Limerick City and County, for the baseline year 2022/2023, shows the significant progress that has been made in development issues, particularly related to the expansion

³⁰ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3d034-homeless-report-september-2022/>

of enterprise and employment. It is important to consolidate this, support sectors that are particularly important in the local economy, and continue to promote diversification and strengthening of the local economy.

The population of Limerick has grown in line with the national average, but not at a rate to support balanced regional development / to act as a counterbalance to growth of the Greater Dublin Region.

In line with the overall trend at national level, the population of Limerick is ageing. It is important to address needs of older people and prepare for an ageing society.

Greater cultural diversity is a characteristic of Limerick including a recent influx of people arriving from the Ukraine under international protection. Migrants are particularly concentrated in parts of Limerick City centre, in areas of highest population densities, and have brought new energy to the inner city. They also bring skills and add to an educated workforce for Limerick. It is important to take advantage of this diversity and work to promote integration across all communities in Limerick.

Levels of educational attainment in the population have continued to improve on average. Limerick has a good education infrastructure and services at all levels. It has advantages in the location of third level colleges in the city, making third level education accessible to the local /regional population.

A key issue for Limerick is the persistence of economic and social disadvantage at a spatial level, affecting specific areas, and for certain groups in society including people with disabilities, people in poor health, Travellers, families with a weak social structure and youth at risk. Social inequalities in Limerick are reflected in unemployment levels, levels of educational qualification, health profile and other indicators. While economic progress lifts disadvantaged areas and brings new opportunities for groups that are relatively more disadvantaged, it is not sufficient to impact on deep social inclusion.

Vacancy and dereliction is a key issue particularly affecting the city centre and the core of towns and villages. The residential vacancy level is now at the lowest level it has ever been. However, the rate of vacancy of commercial buildings is very high. This situation reflects changes in the economy in terms of locations of work, changes in retail and commercial/service functions of the city centre and towns and the settlement pattern in Limerick. The regeneration of the city centre and town and village centres is a priority for attention, where solutions require re-imagining the design and functions of these areas.

Insufficient housing supply, to meet general demand, expansion of housing across all tenure types and to meet needs of different groups in society are key issues to be addressed. With the low rate of residential vacancy at present, there is a more limited new supply to be gained from bringing such buildings back into use. Change of use of vacant commercial buildings may be an option to increase residential units. New housing / housing construction programmes to increase supply and investment in the supporting infrastructure for housing development are required urgently.

Environmental sustainability and climate action measures require significant attention over the next couple of years. Active travel has not advanced and there is still over-whelming reliance on the car. Dispersed living patterns combined with mis-matches in the location of employment, education facilities and residential patterns make this particularly challenging to achieve in Limerick. Reliance on fossil-fuel-based systems as the main source of energy in our buildings and relatively low energy-efficiency ratings of large stocks of our buildings are further challenges to be addressed.

4. Public Consultation: Process and Findings

This section presents the approach to, and outcomes of, the public consultation process that informed the preparation of the LECP.

4.1 Design of the Public Consultation / Engagement Plan

The public consultation process was undertaken based on the *Socio-economic Statement*. The *Socio-economic Statement* included: an analysis of socio-economic conditions, draft Vision, High Level Goals and Objectives of the Limerick LECP. Consultations were conducted with public agencies and business and sectoral interests, mostly using on-line platforms, and also including a small number of meetings with key stakeholders. The process centred on public consultation meetings in physical settings in different locations in Limerick and engagement workshops with social groups that typically are not well-represented in consultation processes.

The approach to the consultations with community interests drew *A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision-making* (DRCD 2023), applying the nine principles for inclusive community engagement – genuine, purposeful, planned, clear, inclusive, collaborative, accountable, accessible and fit for purpose. A *Public Consultation / Engagement Plan* was developed which identified: the objective, values and outcome of the process, communities to be consulted, barriers to participation and how they would be addressed and methods of engagement including the structure of meetings and participatory research tools.

The key points on the findings of the public consultations and targeted engagement with specific social groups are presented in summary below. Together with public agency and sectoral consultations at an organisational level and the analysis of the baseline socio-economic conditions, these findings were integrated into an analysis of the Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) underpinning the LECP.

4.2 Delivery of the Public Consultation Process

The delivery of the *Public Consultation / Engagement Plan* commenced in mid-March 2023 and was completed by end of May. Public consultation on the LECP was underway within an overlapping time period with consultations to prepare the *Local Development Strategy* for rural Limerick in the application to the *LEADER Programme 2023-2027*. Survey work with older people was also conducted within the same timeframe as part of the preparation of a new *Age-friendly Strategy for Limerick*. The opportunity was used to dovetail these consultations so that they fed into each other.

4.2.1 Methods: Meetings, Workshops & Online Surveys

The methods used for the public consultation / engagements were as follows:

- Online consultation in response to the *Draft Socio-Economic Statement* on the online platform, MyPoint on www.Limerick.ie
- Open / Public Meetings delivered as Workshops: held in different geographic locations across Limerick City and County (east, west and city) to facilitate access and identify local issues.
- Thematic / Sectoral Interests Meetings/Workshops focused on Rural Development Themes: and connected to the preparation of the *Local Development Strategy / LEADER*. The thematic sectors were Tourism and Recreation, Enterprise and Employment, Digital Connectivity, Environment, Youth, Community Infrastructure and Services and Food and Agriculture. As well as involving businesses, voluntary and community groups and individuals, these engagements included representative organisations of sectoral interests including Farming Organisations in food and agriculture. They also involved public agencies including Fáilte Ireland, Limerick and

Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Limerick Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and relevant service departments within the local authority including Tourism, Digital Services Team, Arts and Culture, Environment, Rural and Community Development.

- Workshops with Marginalised / Under-represented Target Groups that traditionally do not participate in consultation process on local plans: youth (teenagers and young adults from different backgrounds), migrants including some under International Protection and living in Direct Provision, people with disabilities including intellectual and physical disabilities and residents of local authority housing estates in towns / villages and the city. These workshops were organised by “piggy-backing” on activities delivered by local stakeholders to those target groups - e.g., youth via Limerick Youth Services and Comhláirí na nÓg; disabled people with Local Development Companies staff and disability services organisations in the charity sector; migrants with LCETB’s English language course tutors, Local Development Companies and Doras (a migrant advocacy and support services charity); leaders from migrant communities organised by LCCC and including representatives on the Integration Working Group; residents associations operating in local authority social housing estates, facilitated by the Community Sustainment Team, the Housing Directorate of LCCC.
- Workshops for Elected Members of LCCC.
- Online survey: using the same set of open questions used in the workshop setting and hosted on MyPoint on www.limerick.ie
- Meetings / workshops with management/staff of key stakeholder agencies including Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), the HSE, Limerick Local Enterprise Office/Innovative Limerick and the Limerick Forum.
- Options for participation also included written submissions by email or post.

4.2.2 Format & Addressing Barriers to Participation & Out-turn

The open public meetings and workshops used participatory consultation methods. The Participatory Research Tools for the open public meetings were developed as simple “open-ended” questions exploring issues at three levels: (1) the local area: participants were asked to name the positive and negative aspects of infrastructure / facilities and services in local communities and what can be done to improve them; (2) community and civic life: participants were asked to name the positive and negative aspects related to participation in community life / community organisations and what is needed to improve this and (3) Limerick City and County as a whole: participants were asked to name positive and negative aspects of Limerick what is need to improve it.

In terms of the format of meetings / workshops, the structure was as follows:

- General presentation and overview of the LECP; thematic issues examined in the socio-economic analysis and key statistics; the Vision, High Level Goals and Objectives – with a handout providing the text on the High Level Goals and summary of the Sustainable Economic Objectives (SEDOs) the Sustainable Integrated Development Objectives (SIDOs) and The Sustainable Community Development Objectives (SCDOs). Links to the full Socio-Economic Statement were provided in the handout as well as contact details for further information.
- Workshop session in sub-groups at round tables, followed by full group discussion. The meeting structure allowed for questions and information exchange between participants and LCCC staff.

In order to achieve a good public response and address potential barriers to participation, the following actions were taken:

- Awareness-raising involved wide promotion using different methods: adverts in local newspapers, local radio interviews, social media promotion (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn), mailshots to community and voluntary groups via the PPN and other sources, promotion by Elected Members LCCC, the LCDC and staff of the Rural and Community Development Department; targeted emails and 'phone calls to community leaders across the local authority area and other stakeholders to encourage participation in workshop and the online consultations; mailshot to economic stakeholders to inform them of the public consultations, the options for participation and to encourage submissions.
- Ease of access, offering physical meetings in appropriate settings and the options to make online and written submissions. Venues for meetings were in central locations, accessible to people with disabilities, providing neutral venues (mostly hotels). Both evening and daytime events were held in order to accommodate participants with work and other commitments.
- The language used in the presentation materials and consultation tools (for workshops and online survey) used "plain English", avoiding jargon and not requiring prior knowledge of policy frameworks.

In terms of out-turn, the number of meetings, number of participants and other contributions are shown below. Across all methods used, the consultation process involved some 500 participants.

Method of Consultation	Location	No. of meetings	Types of participants	No. participants
Online Consultation on Socio-economic Statement	Mypoint.Limerick.ie		State/semi-state agencies including IDA Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Shannon Foynes Port Company, representative organisations of the farming sector (IFA, ICMSA), third level R&D institutes, charities representing business sector, migrants and youth services, arts & cultural organisations, representative structure of communities in Limerick's Regeneration Areas, community organisations in disadvantaged areas, environmental interests, businesses & individuals	20
Online Survey (open questions)	Mypoint.Limerick.ie		40 (72%) were members / represent an organisation & 15 (28%) not affiliated to any organisation; 64% of all respondents were community / voluntary organisations	55
Open Public Meetings	Templeglantine, Adare, Kilmallock, Cappamore, Limerick City & Herbertstown	5	Community and voluntary groups including development associations, parish groups, Men's Sheds, Tidy Towns, environmental groups, social care / disability services, schools, local businesses, farmers, rural tourism operators, persons engaged in forestry, arts and cultural organisations, youth and non-affiliated individuals	106

Workshops with specific groups	Limerick Youth Services Offices	3	Young people in alternative education streams, migrant youth (Direct Provision / refugee centres & hotel accommodation) & Comhlaire na nÓg	40
Workshops with specific groups	Further Education Colleges	3	Migrants in Limerick from different cultural backgrounds	36
Workshops with specific groups	Newcastle West	1	People with intellectual disabilities, brain injury living in Limerick (east, west and within the Metro Area) & disability services workers facilitating participation	17
Workshops with specific groups	Various	1	Resident Associations / Men's Sheds in local authority housing estates: Limerick City, Doon, Pallaskenry, Pallasgreen, Castleconnell (Group meeting)	30
Workshop/Survey with specific groups	Newcastle West, Limerick Urban	2	SICAP Development Officers, West Limerick Resources	14
Workshops with specific groups	Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre, City	1	Limerick Traveller Network supported by Exchange House Ireland. This group represents Travellers from across all sites/areas within Limerick City & Suburbs	12
Representative organisations / public & private reps	Online (1) & in person meetings (5) in various venues	6	Integration Working Group (multi-agency) & migrant leaders from different cultural communities (30 participants) Limerick Forum (business, education stakeholders), HSE, LCETB and Limerick LEO/Innovative Limerick (26 participants)	56
Public reps	County Hall	2	Elected Representatives / LCDC	20
Sectoral / Thematic Meetings	Adare	8	Community and voluntary groups, youth organisation, rural transport, sporting organisations, local farmers, local businesses in a variety of sectors (tourism, hospitality, food, manufacturing enterprise, off-farm enterprise, renewable energy, health & well-being, ICT) & public agency representatives	93

4.3 Findings of the Consultation / Engagement Process: Overview

The formal submissions to the public consultation process addressed specific issues and sections in the *Draft Socio-economic Statement*.

4.3.1 Review of submissions & contributions from the workshops

These included: data omissions or updates that were suggested for inclusion in the socio-economic analysis and policy priorities / actions / projects suggested for inclusion as objectives of the LECP and/or its operational programme. All of these submissions were considered and, where appropriate, changes were made in the drafting the LECP.

The open consultation process resulted in many specific issues and perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses at different levels (the local area or neighbourhood, Limerick as a whole and the quality of community and civic life), by different interests (urban, rural, sectoral) and sections of the population (youth, migrants, people with disabilities). Participants were asked to write key words/issues on sheets which were collected and then analysed. Specific issues identified were transcribed. The analysis involved clustering them thematically and linking issues to identify the key themes in terms of positives, weaknesses or unmet needs and suggestions for improvements.

4.3.2 Main themes emerging

Quality of life factors emerge as particularly important – recreation and amenities, the natural environment, strong community spirit, active community and voluntary organisations, friendly people and good neighbours. In the case of more disadvantaged groups, experiences of exclusion are reflected in the findings – difficulties in access to services needed, job opportunities and participation in community life. Living in areas with good access to public services (good schools, GPs, medical centres, childcare), consumer services (shops, banks, post office and cafés/restaurants), amenities and work opportunities is highly valued. This is associated with compact local areas and walkability.

In relation to Limerick as a whole, strategic issues and projects identified as important in the consultations are especially addressed to renewal and regeneration of Limerick City Centre.

Focusing on local communities, key concerns are centred on (1) basic social and community infrastructures (housing, sewage and water infrastructure, connectivity of footpaths, cycleways, roads, broadband/connectivity); (2) local provision of, and access to, quality services (public transport, health, education) and (3) recreation and amenities (parks, playgrounds, walkways, places and indoor and outdoor spaces for people to meet). Dereliction and vacancy and the results of this (no shops, unattractive areas, lack of commercial activity in the centre of towns and villages, low levels of residence in parts of the city centre and in the core of towns and villages) is a further strong theme. Fears for community safety and, for some groups, living in places with “nothing to do” are also areas of concern.

In relation to community/civic life, strong community spirit and vibrant and active community and voluntary groups running local activities and community facilities are highly valued qualities of community. The need to increase rates of volunteering, increase diversity of the volunteer base, develop more inclusive organisations and improve capacities of voluntary and community organisations in certain skills areas are identified as areas for improvements. Improving information flows and communication on “what’s happening” in the local area, what services are available, lists of community and voluntary groups, what they do and how to participate in them was identified as an area for improvement.

In relation to the environment, there is evidence of awareness of climate change challenges and the urgency of responding to this agenda across all areas and groups consulted. Issues especially identified are bio-diversity loss and reliance on fossil fuel systems for transport and heating; build awareness and take action locally to adapt and mitigate effects of climate change (circular economy, water conservation/harvesting, public transport); and link into the potential to develop in the green economy especially in renewable energy.

Focusing on economic issues, the findings acknowledge successes in attracting large employers to Limerick providing many jobs and good wages in the local economy. However, the distribution of jobs or where they are located is an issue for some areas (remote rural areas) or in terms of those who commute long distances to jobs or lack transport services to access them. Other issue for attention include skills training and upskilling in areas of skills shortages, addressing recruitment difficulties,

supporting diversification, advancing the development of economic opportunities in the green economy, tourism and other sub-sectors such as food and film and creative industries. In relation to micro and small businesses, infrastructure (workspace/production units) and services to support small businesses, building business networks and support for upscaling are amongst the needs identified.

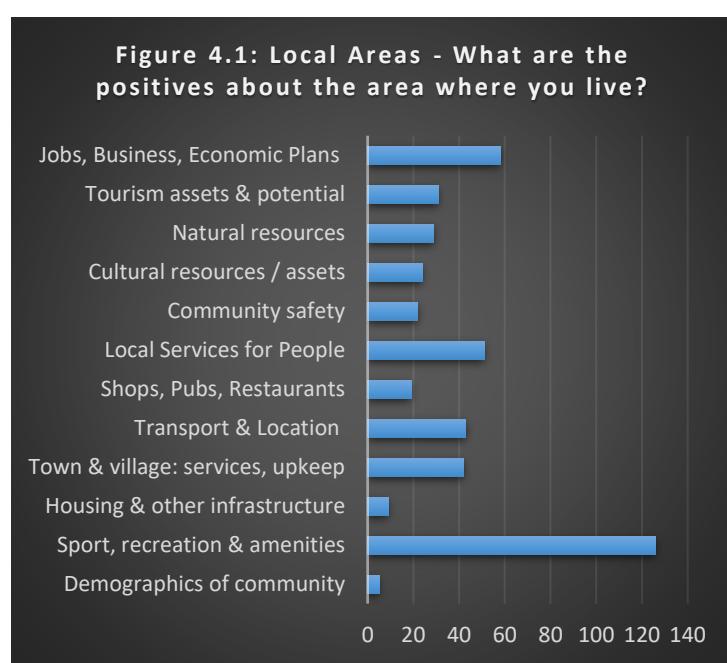
Consistent with the socio-economic analysis, the findings highlight the variation that exists across the local authority area in the strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and areas for improvement. Development interventions need to address different types of deficits and opportunities presenting in local areas. Based on views presented in the consultations, special action and new approaches are required to address needs of certain groups that are most disadvantaged. Travellers and people with disabilities face difficulties across multiple areas – education, health, work, accommodation, transport, discrimination, few role models – and experience barriers in access to services. Traveller males were considered to face greater barriers and are more difficult to reach compared with Traveller women. More engagement in the design of policies, plans and services was identified as an issue – i.e., giving communities and specific groups “a voice” – and, in the case of Travellers, an approach where interventions for Travellers (in education, mental health) are led by Travellers.

A cross-section of the findings of the public consultation process at each level: local area, community life and Limerick as a whole are presented below.

4.4 Local Areas: Positives, Negatives & What Is Needed to Improve Them?

The analysis based on open public meetings/workshops across local areas of Limerick including community groups, business interests, sectoral interests and some agencies are presented below, followed by perspectives from specific social groups. The analysis presented in the graphs is based on the number of times specific issues were named, clustered/ aggregated under thematic headings.

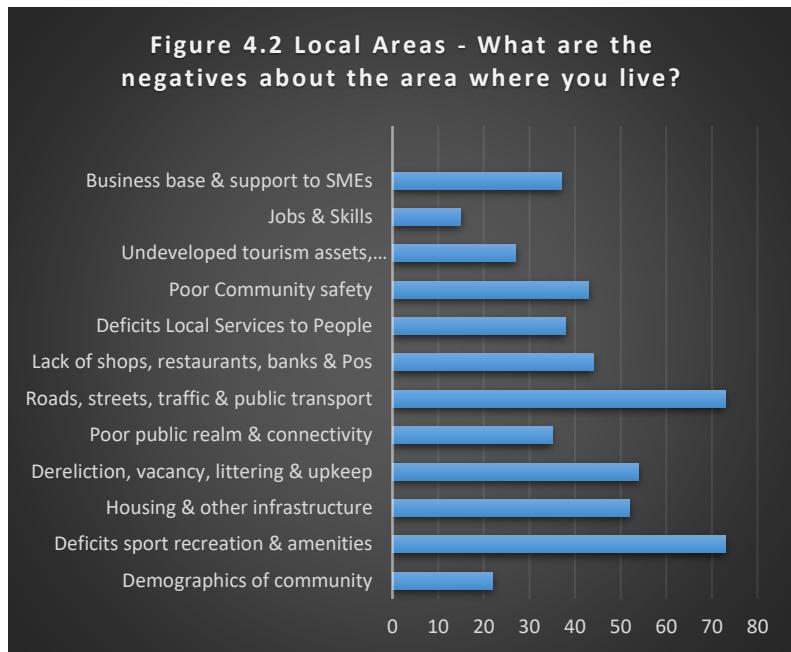
4.4.1 Local Area Level: Perspectives from local area meetings



In relation to the positives of the local area, sport and sport recreation infrastructure for a variety of outdoor and indoor sports and amenities is the issue cited most frequently, followed by jobs, business and the economic plans and potential of the area (e.g., plans to develop Shannon-Foyne Port area along the Estuary/the west). The next most important strength or positive is availability of local services for people (good schools, GPs, Medical Centre, childcare). This is followed by people identifying locational advantages of their area (close to motorways, transport networks to main cities in Ireland) and transport services (buses, trains). The quality of

the town / village infrastructure, public realm and upkeep (e.g., with many references to the work of Tidy Towns) is the next most important strength. The tourism assets and potential of areas and natural resources (landscapes, access to the countryside, rivers and waterways) are also identified as positives. Lesser cited strengths are the demographics of the community (e.g., a balanced social and

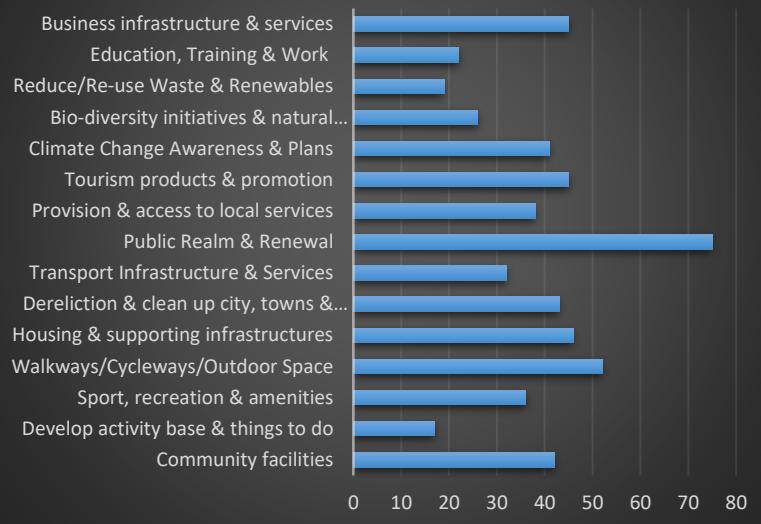
age-related mix, cultural diversity etc.) and availability of housing or affordable housing for purchase or rent.



The negatives cited most frequently and approximately at an equal level are deficits in sports and recreation facilities (pitches, swimming pool, poor disability access) and amenities (play) in the local area and issues related to transport infrastructure and services – including roads (dangerous, not maintained), streets (lack of safe crossing areas), busy traffic through towns/villages and especially public transport – gaps in routes, poor frequency of services, lack of bus stops, no bus shelters. This is followed by

dereliction, vacancy, littering/dog fouling and poor upkeep of parts of the city, towns and villages and housing (lack of housing supply for purchase or rent, unaffordable, over-crowding and lack of capacity of the sewage and water infrastructure). The next set of issues, in order of frequency cited are: lack of shops, pubs, Post Office, banks, café/restaurants in towns/villages; poor community safety (anti-social behaviour, lack of garda presence); deficits in local services to people (childcare, out-of-school services, family support, timely access to healthcare, mental health services); poor public realm related to street lighting, street design and pedestrian connectivity (footpaths, walkways) and environmental degradation (bio-diversity loss, pollution, invasive species, excessive conifer forestry). Demographics of community identified as negatives include ageing populations, imbalanced social structure and loss of population. Economic issues focus on weaknesses in the business base (small businesses not able to compete, lack of new start-ups, difficulties in diversification) and deficits in the infrastructure (workspace/production units) for SMEs. Under/ undeveloped tourism assets in Limerick (landscapes, waterways, culture and heritage, rural tourism), deficits in the tourism infrastructure and promotion is identified. Negatives related to jobs and skills focus on lack of local jobs in certain areas, skills shortages / recruitment difficulties and insufficient upskilling opportunities available locally.

Figure 4.3 Local Areas - What is needed to improve the area where you live?



Focusing on what is needed to improve the local area, improving the public realm (pedestrian infrastructure connectivity, connectivity to the Limerick Greenway, public lighting, traffic calming, car parking and placemaking in town and village centres) was cited most frequently. This is followed by development of walkways, cycleways and outdoor space. More and improved sport and recreation facilities and amenities are also needed. Housing and supporting infrastructures, addressing dereliction and clean-up /

maintenance of city, town and village centres and development of new and improvements /upgrades to community facilities are the key physical improvements needed. Provision of local services (health, Gardaí, family support), timely access to services and improved transport especially public transport are all key areas for improvements. Environmental actions areas identified include: climate change awareness and preparation of community plans, bio-diversity initiatives and actions to protect natural resources (deal with invasive species, dark skies, support for farmers in natural resource protection and management), interventions to reduce and re-use waste (food waste, community renewable energy projects, circular economy) and community water harvesting initiatives. In relation to economic issues improvements to the business infrastructure and services suggested include: workspace for small businesses, support for diversification including farming enterprises (direct selling from farms, rural tourism), support to town/village-based businesses in order to retain commercial activities, expansion of services from and wider use of digital hubs, social enterprise development and business networks. Tourism infrastructure, tourism products and promotion include: heritage and cultural tourism, festivals and arts, activity-based tourism (mountains, waterways / river-based), food tourism and connectivity of tourism sites across Limerick. Other areas identified are: further development of education and training pathways into trades and apprenticeships, diversify work opportunities especially in areas dependent on a large local employer and improve access to training, work experience and work opportunities for groups disadvantaged in the labour market.

4.4.2 Local Areas: Perspectives of youth, migrants, people with disabilities & Travellers

There was a significant body of common issues identified as positives, negatives and areas for improvement at the local area level across all target groups consulted.

First, in relation to youth, the most frequently cited positives are: the sporting culture, sport and recreation infrastructure, followed walkability of the local areas / living close to shops, services and amenities, the upkeep of the local area, and living in a “good place” where people are friendly and “nice to each other”.

Figure 4.4 Youth: What are the negatives of the local area where you live?



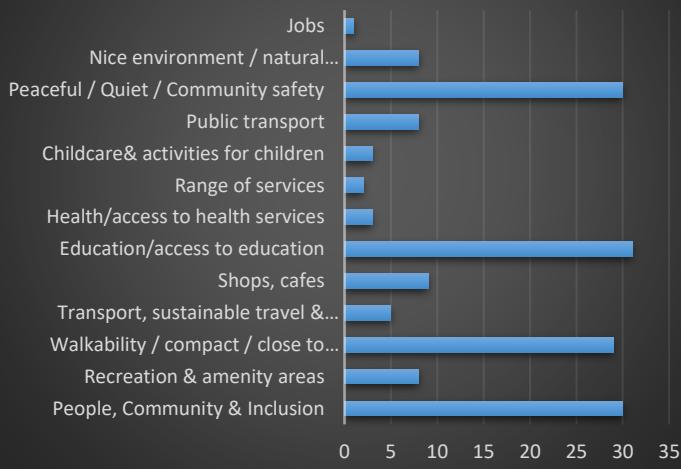
The negative issues cited in order of frequency are poor safety, anti-social behaviour and crime (including drug dealing, dangerous driving/car racing), poor upkeep of the local area (green areas not maintained, littering, illegal dumping, no litter bins), lack of sport and recreation facilities (for neuro-diverse, sports such as basketball and gymnastics, facilities for youth “not into sports”) and lack of transport (public transport). Societal issues including social deprivation and housing (supply, quality and Direct Provision accommodation) were also identified.

In relation to areas for improvement, the most frequently cited suggestions from young people are: develop spaces for young people to meet, additional and more variation in sport and recreation facilities, improve the upkeep of the local areas including enforcement on littering /dumping /dog wardens, improve public realm (civic space for young people, pedestrian infrastructure, traffic

calming) and expand activities for young people.

Focusing on migrants, there was strong consistency in the positives about their local area as a place to live and their day-to-day quality of life. The findings reflect that many migrants consulted are relatively recently arrived and are beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (Ukrainian) or International Protection applicants. The four most frequently cited positives are: education and access to education (especially good schools, access to education and quality of teaching in adult education), living in a peaceful, quite area where

Figure 4.5 Migrants: What are the positives about the area where you live & quality of life?

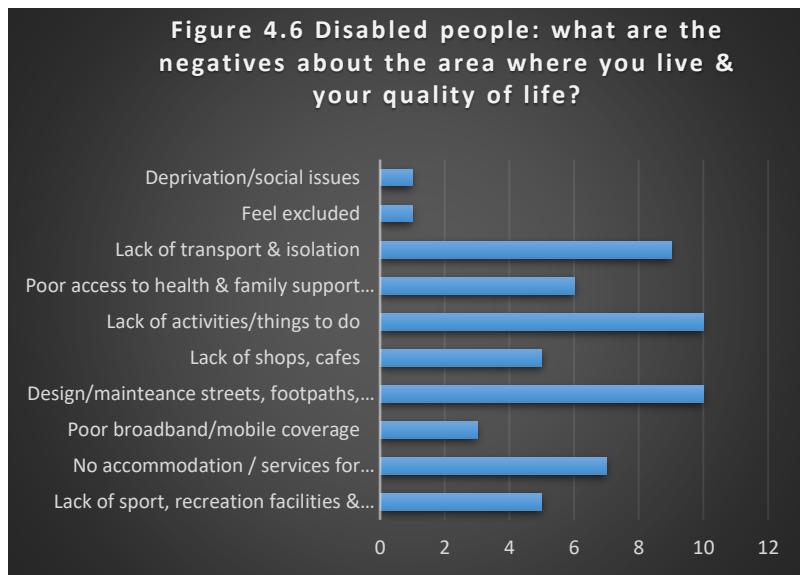


there is a sense of community safety, the friendliness of people, community and inclusion and living in areas (many in the city centre) close to services, shops and amenities or compact and walkable local neighbourhoods.

The negatives from the migrants’ perspectives in order of frequency in which issues are cited are: poor public transport services, long commuting times for those migrants that need to travel to services and jobs and feeling isolated; followed by lack of, or unaffordable housing to rent and issues with accommodation, and difficulties in access to healthcare. Delays in service response is a further issue (immigration and health care). Lack of amenities and activities for children and families (play, free/low cost activities, indoor space and things to do after 6pm) is a further issue cited frequently. In relation to jobs, lack of access to jobs to match the level of skills and qualifications, recognition of qualifications and dependence on low wage jobs are the main issues for migrants.

The top four suggestions by migrants for improvements, in order of frequency cited: better public transport services, investment in sport, recreation and amenities (play, parks and activity areas), increase housing supply and affordability and improve access to health services. These are followed by street cleaning/address litter, more shops and cafés and expand childcare and access to education (including English language classes).

In relation to people with disabilities, the positives of the local area as a place to live and day-to-day quality of life cited in order of importance are: living in a compact place, close to shops and services, living in an area which is quiet, peaceful and friendly or a good place to live, good disability day services and support from family. The last two issues are cited with the same level of frequency.



In terms of negatives, issues cited with most frequency are poor design, maintenance of streets, footpaths, traffic and noise making them inaccessible or unsafe for disabled people; lack of things for disabled people to do; lack of transport services for disabled people and lack of accommodation and services to support independent living by disabled people. Lack of shops, cafés and places to go in their local area, lack of sporting and recreation facilities accessible to them are

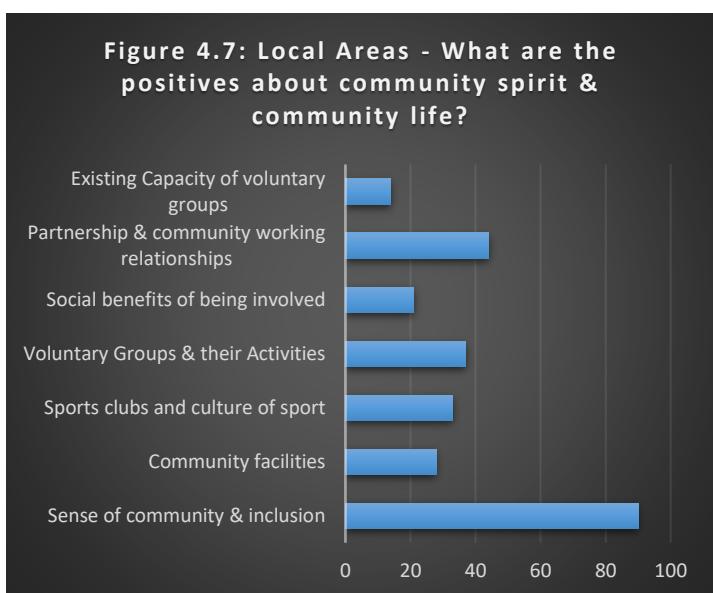
also issues. A small number report feeling excluded and social deprivation or living in a disadvantaged community as issues.

In relation to what's needed to improve their area and quality of life for people with disabilities, the three areas mentioned with the most and the same frequency are sports, recreation and leisure facilities (including a swimming pool) accessible for disabled people, improve public transport and disability transport and access to work experience and jobs. The next more frequently cited issues, all with the same frequency, are more shops and disability access to them/disability assistive services, action on dereliction, street works and footpaths and access to health and family support services. This is followed by housing and support services to enable disabled people to live independently. Improved access to education and training and increase income were also identified.

4.5 Quality of Community Life: Positives, Negatives & What is Needed to Improve It?

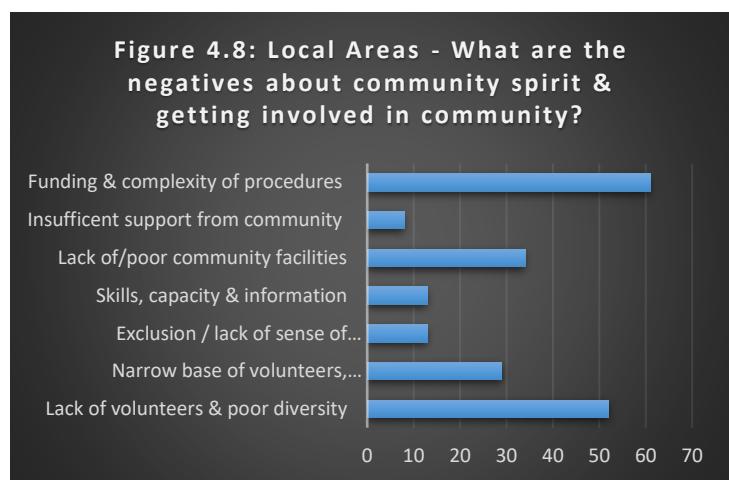
This set of questions relates to the social capital of local areas centred on community spirit/trust, getting involved in voluntary and community groups, collaboration to address local needs and run activities. It also addressed social inclusion/exclusion as well as integration into community life of people from different backgrounds and cultures.

4.5.1 Perspectives from Local Communities on Quality of Community Life



In the area-based public meetings, the most frequently cited positive is sense of community and inclusion. This includes good neighbours, good sense of community and community spirit, opportunities for inclusion and integration with new communities as well as community support for clubs, local causes and fund-raising. The next most frequently cited issue is good partnership where community groups work well together and there is support and good working relationships with the local authority /Local Development Companies. This is followed by having active

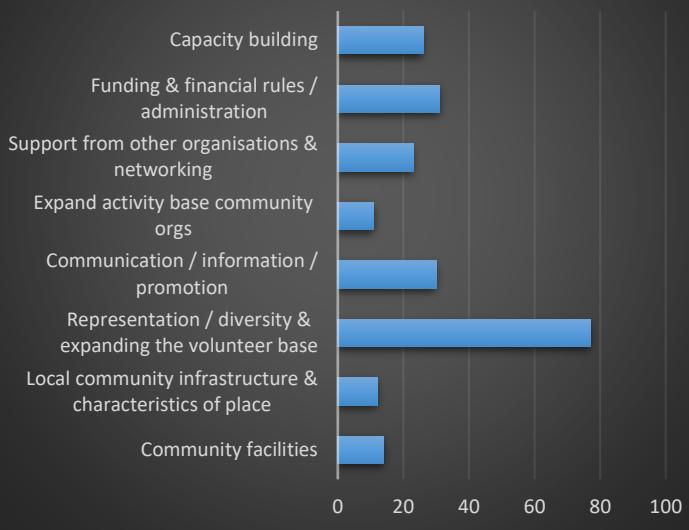
community groups running activities locally. Tidy Towns, Men's Sheds/Women's Sheds, Resident Associations, activities for elderly people, parent, family and youth groups are particularly mentioned. Sports clubs, particularly GAA, and a culture of sport and having good community facilities are positives. Social benefits of being involved (making new friends, building pride in community, good for mental health and well-being) are also highlighted.



In terms of the negatives, access to funding and the complexity of procedures involved in that is the most frequently cited issue (and this particularly reflects findings on consultations related to the LEADER programme). This is followed by lack of volunteers and poor diversity / representation of wider society within the volunteer base. A concern particularly identified is a lack of young people/reliance on people over 55 years in community and voluntary

groups and depletion of the volunteer base after COVID-19. A narrow base of volunteers with the same people involved, volunteer burnout, conflicts and division and competition between groups is the next most frequently cited theme (covering a number of specific issues). Lack of or poor community facilities (places/spaces to meeting, suitable space for running activities) is another important issue. Exclusion, lack of support from the wider community are also cited as negative issues. Anti-social behaviour in the community is seen as a deterrent to building community while other characteristics of the community (dormitory area where people leave every day for work, predominance of apartments/flats) are also not conducive to building sense of community where there is a lack of infrastructure and opportunities for people to get to know each other and no base of community activities. Lack of skills of people in voluntary organisation in areas including governance, financial management, legal issues and poor flows of information/communication are further negative issues cited.

Figure 4.9 Local Areas: What is needed to improve participation in community life & organisations?



In terms of what is needed to improve participation in community life and community and voluntary organisations, improved representation, greater diversity and expanding the voluntary base are the most frequently cited issue. This is followed by the need to improve communication on the work and activities of groups. Simplification of funding applications / reduced administration/red tape and capacity building are the next most frequently cited areas for improvement. Support / engagement and cooperation with other organisations including the Council and other public bodies, improved coordination and networks

across groups are also important. Provision of new, or upgrades to, community facilities are needed in some areas while improvements to community infrastructure and characteristics of place are important in terms of creating spaces and opportunities for people to meet (outdoor space, civic space, seating and indoor space).

The Traveller group consulted in the city (all females) identified additional difficulties in engaging with Traveller men. Travellers identified needs across the board – covering education, health especially mental health, work, accommodation and access to services. They indicated that no real progress has been made in existing programme approaches and a new approach which is Traveller-led needs to be supported. A key message is that Travellers need to be empowered to work within their own communities focusing on areas that need change – with education and Traveller children reaching their potential at school, mental health, child care and accommodation particularly referenced. Travellers working within services and on the ground with Traveller populations, as opposed to being the recipient of services designed and delivered to them, have a better chance of reaching and supporting other Travellers. In this way, they can create role models for their children and peers, break down barriers and stereotypes. Training and qualification of Traveller workers to take on these roles will be a necessary element of capacity building. Support to access funding for Traveller-led initiatives (capital costs for equipment, premises) in order to run own projects was identified as a further need.

4.5.2 Perspectives of Social Groups on Quality of Community life

Focusing on perspectives of Travellers, young people, migrants and people with disabilities on the quality of community life and civic/community participation, there are some common themes particularly focused on the need to pay more attention to diversity and inclusion.

In relation to Travellers, Traveller Health projects, funded by HSE have been established for many years in city and county areas. Representation is a key issue for Travellers in Limerick. Local representative organisations are relatively more developed in rural Limerick (e.g., Kilmallock Traveller Women's Group, Kilmallock Traveller Men's Group while Rathkeale Together is a structure that brings together Traveller and settled communities in the town). The Limerick Traveller Network in the city led by women Travellers, recently awarded funding as a Community Development Pilot, has created a representative structure across all sites/areas with Traveller populations in the city and suburbs.

However, Travellers in the city consider that they are further behind in this respect compared with Traveller organisations in other parts of the country. As well as representation, empowering Travellers to work within and support their own community is a priority at present. Travellers working in the wider community is also envisaged. However, barriers need to be broken down on both sides – the mainstream community/society and Travellers themselves to allow for this.

Focusing on young people, the positives of community life in order of frequency cited are: living in a community where people support each other and good community spirit, followed by sports clubs and sports culture. The next most frequently cited positives are: living in an area where people are friendly / helpful and having good neighbours (which underpins supportive communities with good community spirit) and active voluntary and community groups running a range of activities. Youth clubs and after-school / extra-curricular activities and Tidy Towns are specifically named. Young people also identify respect and inclusion as a positive including mixing with other cultures, and benefits of getting involved in clubs such as meeting new people and having an opportunity to do things when involved with clubs.

The negatives of community life identified by young people, in order of the frequency cited, are: limited activities run by existing groups, dominated by sport and not enough to interest youth; don't know enough about what's going on / "no voice" or not consulted in designing activities and exclusion or lack of sense of community. Lack of facilities for young people to meet is a further deficit followed by conflict and lack of trust amongst people involved in voluntary and community groups and lack of diversity, particularly lacking representation of young people, people from disadvantaged backgrounds and cultural minorities.

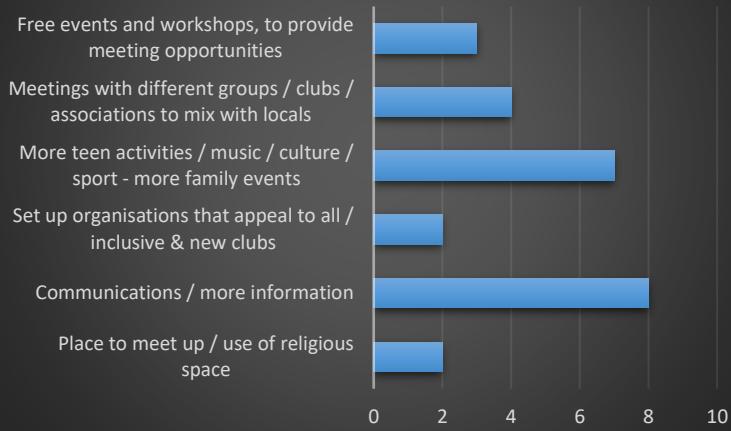


In relation to what is needed to get young people more involved in community life, the most frequently cited suggestion was: to expand youth clubs and develop new types of activities that interest young people followed by communication, consultation and giving youth a voice in designing/developing and running activities. Other suggestions are: direct approach to young people to ask them to get involved and developing volunteering through schools. Improving community facilities and

developing safe places/spaces for young people to meet and generally improving the local infrastructure in communities to support people getting to know each other are also important to increase participation.

In relation to migrants, many stated that they didn't know enough about this or didn't feel their English language skills were good enough to get involved / participate in community life. However, in terms of positives of community life in their host communities, the most frequently cited positive is that they are living in good communities, where people are helpful, nice, respectful and supportive. The next most frequently cited positive is that participation in community has enabled them to interact with other families and cultures. A small number of migrants reported positive experience in getting involved in sports clubs, they have met new people and clubs/association are a good source of information.

Figure 4.11 Migrants: What could be done to improve participation in community life?



In terms of negatives, the most frequently cited issue is that they are not informed of community and voluntary groups and local clubs. A small number state that they feel community and voluntary groups lack diversity, are not inclusive and not welcoming to foreigners.

In relation to what's needed to improve participation in community life, the most frequently cited need is communication and more information. This is followed by having more activities for

teenagers, music, cultural and sporting events and family events locally that migrants could participate in and get to know people. Other suggestions include: having meetings with different groups / clubs / associations so that people from migrant backgrounds can mix with and get to know locals. Hosting free events and workshops would also create meeting opportunities for people from different cultural backgrounds. A small number suggest setting up new organisations or clubs that have wider appeal and are inclusive of all. Migrants also identified the need for places to meet.

In the case of disabled people, the most frequently named positive of being involved in clubs and groups is having an opportunity to go out and do new things. Other positives mentioned are learning new skills, meeting new people and interacting with nice people in the volunteers.

Figure 4.12 Disabled people: What is needed to get more involved in clubs and community life?



The negatives for disabled people in terms of getting involved in clubs and groups are primarily that they need support/assistance to participate and this is not available. They don't have the transport to get to places where clubs/groups meet and building/places are not disability accessible. In addition, they don't see other disabled people involved or represented in these groups.

Following on from this, the areas suggested for improvement are: more disability services / leaders available to assist disabled people to get involved, groups/clubs reaching out to disabled people to encourage and support them to get involved and open events and meeting opportunities so that disabled people

can know about opportunities/clubs and their activities. Other suggestions are: more activities/clubs that meet interests of disabled people and disability accessible transport.

4.6 Limerick: Positives, Negatives & What Is Needed to Improve It?

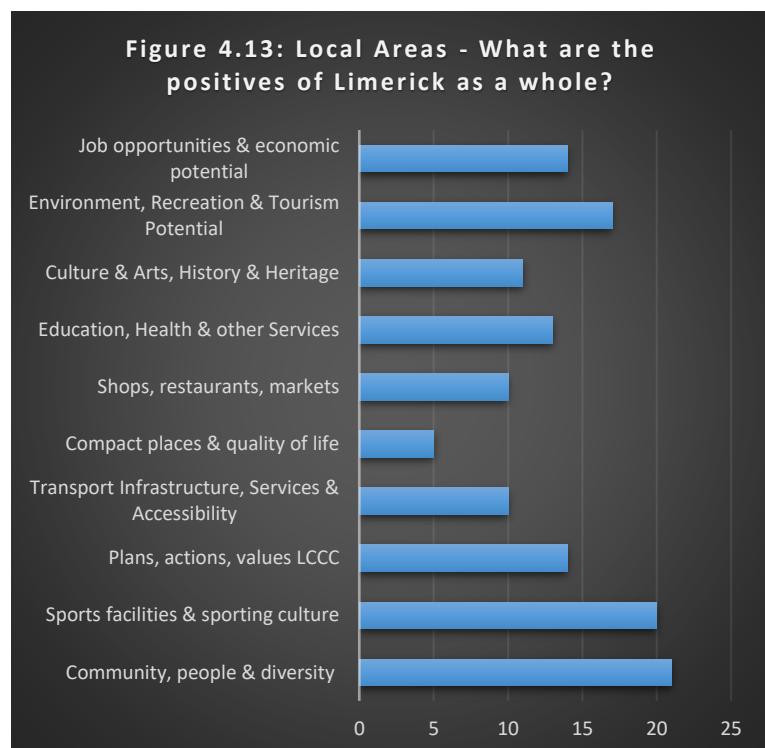
This set of questions sought to focus at a more strategic level on Limerick City and County as a whole, to get perspectives on what are the positives, the negatives and areas for improvement.

4.6.1 Perspectives from Local Areas/Communities on Limerick

The positive aspects of Limerick identified in the local area meetings covered a number of aspects of development, Limerick's physical, social, community and cultural assets and its institutions.

The issue identified with greatest frequency was community, the people of Limerick, their willingness to support causes and the greater cultural diversity and multi-cultural Limerick; followed by its sporting culture and sports facilities – including the major sports stadia in Limerick, the GAA/Tus Grounds, Thomond Park and the newly-opened rugby museum.

The quality of the environment - its rivers, the Shannon Estuary, its natural landscapes - and the recreation, amenity and tourism potential associated with this is a positive that can be harnessed for further development as well as contribute to quality of life.



Culture, arts, history and heritage of Limerick is a further asset. Recent plans and investment including housing developments underway, renewal of the city centre, funding for rural development are also seen as positive where Council-led plans are seen to reflect ambitions for Limerick. Its location in the Mid-West with good motorway connectivity and international access via Shannon airport is seen to offer advantages for Limerick. Its education infrastructure including good schools and third level institutions is considered an important strength.

In terms of the negatives of Limerick, social deprivation in the city is the most frequently cited issue, followed by deficits in the transport infrastructure, public transport services and traffic. The current lack of a Limerick-Cork motorway link and under-utilisation of Shannon Airport were referenced as well as poor public transports services into rural Limerick , traffic congestion on main routes and in

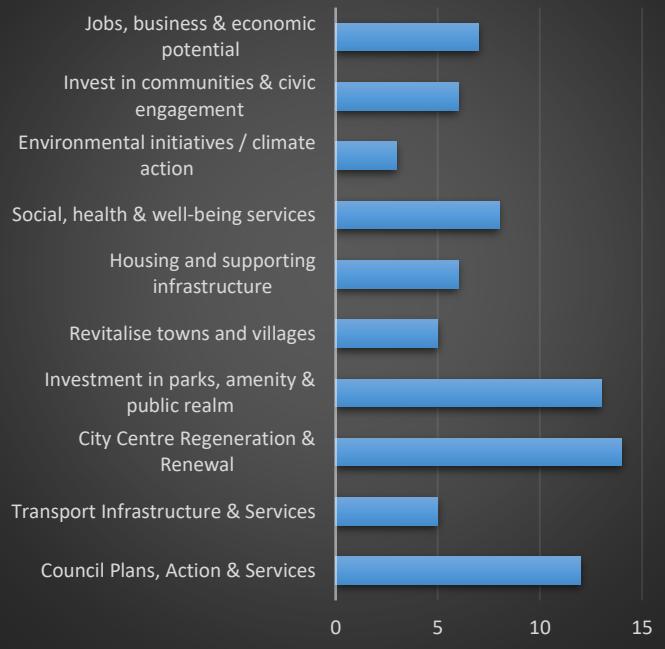


Limerick towns and villages and lack of car parking (in the city centre). The next most frequently cited issue is decline of Limerick City Centre including loss of commercial activity in the core of the city, lack of shops, poor retail offer and general deterioration. Dereliction and vacancy and littering and policing, crime and anti-social behaviour are the next most frequently cited issues. The latter includes concerns related to lack of visible Garda presence, closure of local stations, increase in drug use and drug dealing and fears for safety. Housing and support infrastructure is the next most frequently cited issue. Specific issues raised include lack

of supply for purchase or rent, costs and affordability, imbalances in some areas in the density of social housing, lack of support infrastructure (sewage and waste water capacity, water infrastructure) and difficulties arising from planning restrictions and regulations. In relation to economic potential and small businesses, specific issues referenced here include: Limerick has not developed to its tourism potential and Shannon Port is under-utilised.³¹ Small businesses need support to diversify and expand to take advantage of economic opportunities. Other issues are slow progress in delivery of plans and project implementation (e.g., city centre street works), lack of community facilities in some parts of Limerick and rural depopulation and isolation.

³¹ There are plans in place for expansion of tourism and major investment in the development of the Shannon-Foynes Port and surrounding area.

Figure 4.15: Local Areas - What is needed to improve Limerick?



Focusing on what can be improved, the action cited most frequently is city centre regeneration and renewal. This include reference to on-going investment in regeneration areas, address dereliction, completion of city centre projects, develop more quality living space and initiatives to bring back footfall to the city centre. This is followed by investment in parks, amenities and public realm with specific reference to public swimming pools, improve parks and amenity areas, further develop greenways, cycleways and pedestrian / walking routes. Specific issues raised in relation to advancing Council plans, action and services include: timely delivery of infrastructure projects, develop long-term “properly financed plan” for Limerick City and County, joined up events to build connections between

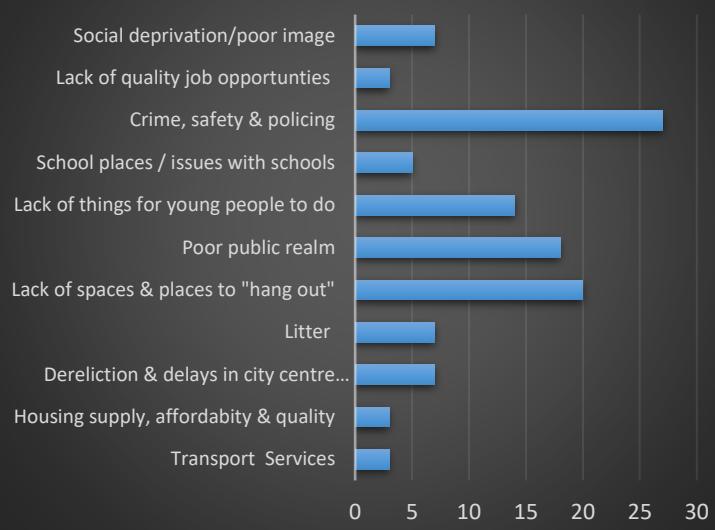
Limerick City and County, build stronger representation on Council structures and more even distribution of public investment across the city and county. The last issue is also reflected in suggestions related to revitalisations of Limerick’s towns and villages which include responses to dereliction and bringing services and commercial activities to rural towns. Investment in communities and civic engagement focuses on supporting community and voluntary groups, improving/expanding provision of community facilities and services. Issues related to jobs, businesses and economic potential focus on the distribution of jobs (lack of local jobs in some areas), support for small business development and a stronger focus on tourism development and other economic opportunities for Limerick that utilise its assets. Under social, health and well-being services, a range of specific services were identified including: access to hospital care, expand local health services and access to them, family support, addiction and homeless services.

4.6.2 Perspectives of Specific Target Groups on Limerick

Questions addressed to the specific target groups on positives, negatives and areas for improvement in Limerick as a whole again identified many of the same themes but with different emphasis on the specific issues. Again, much attention was given to Limerick City. In the case of migrants participating in the consultations, many are city-centre based.

First in relation to youth, the main positives of Limerick as a whole are: good schools, educational facilities and “great” third level colleges/educational opportunities, and shops, cafés and places to eat – mentioned with the same frequency. This is followed by culture, arts and heritage in Limerick and the current works to renew Limerick City Centre. The next most frequently cited positives are: sense of community and people in Limerick and sport and sports facilities.

Figure 4.16: Youth - What are the negatives about Limerick?



In terms of negatives, the most frequently cited issue is crime, safety and issues with policing. Young people identify drug crime, feeling unsafe, violence and assaults and Gardai “picking on youth”. Lack of spaces to “hang out” in the city centre is the next most frequently cited issue followed by issues with the public realm including lack of public realm with seating, shelter, poor integration/development of green areas. Issues with space are also connected to the lack of things for young people to do in Limerick. Social deprivation and poor image is identified with specific references to

homelessness in the city and discrimination. Issues with schools include the process of accessing school places and insufficient development of mixed gender schools. The quality of jobs is the main issue as opposed to availability of work opportunities.

In terms of areas for improvement identified by young people: city centre renewal including improved community safety and creation of a youth-friendly city is the most frequently cited area for improvement followed by development of “hang out” spaces, non-sport activities for children, youth and families (including music, art and culture and study space) and more activities/places that are free in terms of costs. Spaces and activities with no alcohol allowed is a specific issue mentioned. Other areas mentioned in order of frequency are: improved health and well-being and social supports, improved public transport services and transport connectivity across urban and rural Limerick, and addressing littering and improve the upkeep and maintenance of areas.

In relation to migrants, the issues for Limerick as a whole are reflected in their contributions related to the local area level and community life. The main areas for improvement are: public transport services and connectivity, accommodation, shops in the city centre and access to health services. Providing opportunities for migrants to connect with and get to know local people, inter-cultural events and meeting opportunities are the first set of actions needed to support engagement of new cultural communities in community life in Limerick. Improved community flows and information are also needed.

4.7 Needs and Perspectives of Older People

In the context of the preparation of a new *Age-friendly Strategy for Limerick* (2023), a survey and consultations with older people were conducted. The needs of older people identified as part of that process included many common elements identified in LECP public consultation process.

The survey with other people identified the strong demand for social, physical and artistic activities to be available and many of these have not fully resumed post-COVID. The availability of public transport in rural areas is very important for many older people in accessing services and combatting isolation. Information is a key need. Temporary closure of Citizen Information Offices and channels such as Parish newsletters during COVID-19 impacted on key sources of information used by older people. The survey found that online information seeking and Facebook is now an important source of

information for many older people, most of whom have mobile phones. While local health services, especially GP access is generally good, older people have concerns about hospital services especially if they need to access hospital in an emergency. The survey found that levels of employment and volunteering among older people in Limerick is low.

In terms of key areas of need related to themes of the age-friendly programme:

1. *Outdoor spaces and building*: access to and safety in green spaces, walkable streets, outdoor seating and accessible buildings (with lifts, stairs with railings etc.)
2. *Transportation*: accessible and affordable public transport is a key issue for people in later life impacting on participation in community life, and access to services. Transportation to hospital services / medical appointment was specifically identified. Safe walking area, walkability in towns and villages, safety from traffic and pedestrian crossings are other issues. For older persons with cars, parking close to shopping and services and “age-friendly” parking bays are specific needs.
3. *Housing*: Safe, good-quality homes that can help maintain or improve physical and mental health, well-being and social connections, and adaptations to allow older people to live independently for as long as possible are the key needs. Wrap-around community-based services for older people to allow them to live independently in their own homes is part of this.
4. *Respect and social inclusion*: respect in wider society, engagement in inter-generational activities and social inclusion are an essential part of well-being. Being consulted on their needs and opinions and their views being respected are important.
5. *Social participation*: is strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. It enables older people to feel connected, have a sense of belonging and maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships. Supporting access to activities including transport and accessible buildings/outdoor space for those with mobility issues may be required. Types of activities valued by older people are community events, arts and culture, exercise and physical activity programmes.
6. *Information and Communication*: Local media – newspapers and radio – continue to be an important source of information for older people, as well as church newsletters, shop noticeboards and word of mouth. Use of online platforms, particularly Facebook, is increasingly important. Access to digital tools and learning digital skills is important to source information, services and keep in touch with family and friends.
7. *Civic participation and employment*: while the survey found relatively low levels of participation in volunteering, the public consultations showed that many of those involved in community groups are in the older age groups. A key concern from the LECP consultations was that younger people get involved. Consistent with the LECP consultation, the main types of organisations in which older people are involved are Tidy Towns, Community Councils / associations and men’s/women’s sheds.
8. *Community support and health services*: Community support together with accessible and affordable health care services are essential for quality of life and independent living for older people. Access to such service can be a source of anxiety as people age. The main areas of concern identified were: access to GP services (becoming more difficult due to fewer GPs being available), great access to Public Health Nursing services, concerns about the short of home help services and lack of carers which is seen to result in older people entering nursing homes when they would choose to remain living at home; concerns about going to hospital especially connected to pressures on those services; and community-based services and

follow-up care post hospital discharge.

4.8 Public Consultation Process: Conclusion & Application of the Findings

The findings from the consultation process, as summarised above, were used to inform the rationale for, and definition of, the High Level Goals and Objectives of the LECP. The findings are an important part of the evidence base for the LECP. The process was designed and conducted such that it could achieve wide and inclusive public engagement. It included outreach to promote participation by social groups who not traditionally participate in such processes.

5. Economic and Community: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

A SWOT (*Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats*) Analysis is presented below. This is a summary statement, drawing on the social economic analysis, the policy review and especially the finding from the local consultation process. It is an important part of the evidence base in the development of the High Level Goals and objectives of the LECP.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<u>Education, Training & Skills</u>	<u>Education, Training & Skills</u>	<u>Education, Training & Skills</u>	<u>Education, Training & Skills</u>
Good primary & secondary schools, well distributed across urban and rural Limerick	Significant number of adults with low education across in Limerick	Higher levels of education support health & well-being & social progress	Growth in population is not matched by expansion of school capacity in some areas, resulting in long commutes & other negative impacts on communities
Higher Education Institutions located in Limerick, facilitates access to 3 rd level education	Cohort of young people with characteristics of disadvantage (especially from disadvantaged areas, Travellers) leave school early	Supply of graduates from UL/TUS/MIC & skills training consolidates economic base & will support future growth	Failures of education services in adapting quickly to a more multi-cultural school population will affect educational outcomes & cohesion
Good provision of Further Education & Training / Adult Education services, in physical centres & online	Low education levels in disadvantaged areas, particularly Limerick City & Rathkeale	Increase in students & funding to 3 rd level colleges from internationalisation will build reputation & population diversity	Specific groups (disabled, neuro-diverse) continue to experience challenges limiting their access to education & resulting in exclusion & inequalities
Skills training, upskilling /reskilling courses including apprenticeships & Continued Professional Development courses (LCETB/TUS/UL)	Gap in progression rates to 3 rd level between DEIS & non-DEIS school. Access to 3 rd level by disadvantaged groups increasing but remains low	Expansion in student numbers at 3 rd level colleges will increase attractiveness of Limerick's human capital (talent)	Failure to address school or college drop-out / regression in education during COVID-19 will result in some groups falling further behind
Alternative education options for groups at risk of early school leaving or not able to stay in mainstream school (Youthreach, Leaving Cert Applied)	Trades & apprenticeship training not as sought after as "3 rd level" & numbers remain relatively low	Local schools infrastructure will continue to support vibrant living rural & urban communities	Lagging capacity of education & training sector to meet demands for new knowledge & skills (e.g. new methods in construction/trades/ green
Low rates of early school leaving - now at national average - & high rates of progression to 3rd level education	Digital exclusion & other issues (transport) are barriers to education & training for disadvantaged groups	New schools / building upgrades will increase school capacity & make Limerick attractive for families with children	

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Highly educated and skilled workforce	Gap in retention of graduates from 3 rd level colleges in Limerick / the region when they progress to employment	“Green” skills & environmental awareness will create new opportunities for education providers	energy, Artificial Intelligence) will impact negatively on their job prospects & local economy
<u>Local Economy & Jobs</u>	<u>Local Economy & Jobs</u>	<u>Local Economy & Jobs</u>	<u>Local Economy & Jobs</u>
Significant growth in jobs in Limerick & no shortage of jobs	Uneven distribution of jobs in Limerick – concentration in certain areas & lack of jobs in other areas (some rural areas)	Limerick is cost competitive compared with other cities especially Dublin	Changes to international corporate tax reduce Ireland’s competitiveness for attracting FDI
Low overall unemployment rate	Strong reliance on a base of large enterprises, mostly multi-nationals, in high value added sectors	Improved image of Limerick will help attract investment, people & visitors	Strong competition from other areas (Dublin, other cities and areas in the state) for investment
Significant investment attracted to Limerick including new companies & existing business expansion	Skills shortages & recruitment difficulties in sectors (services, tourism, hospitality, construction, trades, retail)	Large employers in Life Science, advanced manufacturing, technology, professional services & new industries (film) will attract other companies, strengthening & expanding the local economy	R&D and Innovation more established in other centres & Limerick fails to build advantage
Highly successful large companies in Limerick offering good wages & employment conditions	Small businesses unable to compete with larger enterprises, lacking capacity for adaptation & diversification	3 rd level colleges / SFI Centres in R&D & Innovation, with links to industry, will support expansion including niche products / services development	Insufficient zoned serviced land banks of scale in places that are attractive to potential incoming manufacturing will result in FDI going elsewhere
Established high-tech sectors in ICT, Medi-Tech, Pharma, Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering, Food & Drink	Sub-supply links with larger enterprises & business networks across Limerick not well-developed	Entrepreneurial culture & spin-offs from 3 rd level colleges will promote new high potential start-ups	Failure to adapt / prepare for change in the local economic due to faster cycles of economic growth and decline in the global economy
Established economic centres / industrial parks in Plassey & Raheen	Established industrial parks have limited remaining capacity & potential for new greenfield manufacturing	Increased opportunities for SME start-up & growth using digital technologies (online sales, marketing)	Supply chain bottlenecks, cost inflation in commodities, energy, animal feed supplies impact on cost structures in industries & services, affecting trade, reducing competitiveness, stalling construction projects
Good R&D & Innovation capacity in industrial enterprises & 3 rd level institutions (SFI centres)	Deficits in business infrastructure - workspace / production units for small companies especially food production	Expansion in tourism linked to Limerick as a Gateway City to Wild Atlantic Way, rural tourism infrastructure (Limerick	
Established economic centres / industrial parks in Plassey & Raheen			

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Strong agricultural sector / system of farming & agri-industries including artisan food	Knowledge, capacity & other difficulties in achieving farm diversification	Greenway, Ballyhoura Trails), natural resources for activity tourism, internationally-renowned tourism (Adare Manor), events (Ryder Cup) & attractions (International Rugby Experience, King John's Castle, Limerick City Gallery of Art, Hunt Museum)	Unexpected international crises & episodes (pandemic) result in uncertainties and new challenges (migration, housing, health care) that impact negatively on the local economy
Strong tradition / culture of food and drinks industries & renowned markets for showcasing & selling local food (Milk Market)	Decline of local shops, movement of retail from City Centre & town & village centres & shift of retail online	Culture & the night-time economy have much scope for expansion	Public infrastructure (housing & supporting infrastructure including sewage & water services) not in place to support population growth & workforce expansion in Limerick
New and emerging sectors (film) & culture & creative industries	Tourism infrastructure including quantity & mix of tourism accommodation lacking across Limerick	Successes in artistic & creative industries (film, fashion, music, literature) can be expanded	Workforce skills not meeting employer / industry needs impacting negatively on FDI and business expansion
Developing tourism industry & activity tourism assets including Munster Vales, Ballyhoura Country, Lough Gur, Curraghchase Park, Limerick Greenway & Shannon Estuary Way	Insufficient number of indoor attractions & activities to increase visitor numbers & dwell time	EU CAP supports agriculture to adapt to green production & spin-offs (green energy), diversification, succession in farming & alternative land use	
Distinctive cultural tourism assets: City Centre built heritage including Georgian Limerick, castles, churches & heritage towns & villages (Adare, Kilmallock, Askeaton, Glin) & history & culture	Existing tourism products not connected to each other (not networked) & to other offerings (e.g., food & food tourism)	Opportunities to expand local food production, businesses & jobs, improve food security & selling (Farmers Markets, farm shops)	
	Limerick not known as a tourism destination & needs more promotion	Opportunities for investment, SMEs, social enterprise, jobs & skills development in the "green" transition (renewable energy, retrofitting buildings, circular economy)	
	Insufficient jobs in city centre, accessible to populations that live there	Shannon Estuary as a hub for renewable energy (off-shore wind), with potential to secure economic	
	High rates of unemployment & economic inactivity in social groups (Travellers, people with disabilities, from disadvantaged backgrounds)		
	Structural unemployment blackspots in disadvantaged city areas & parts of the county (Rathkeale)		

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	Barriers to access to jobs (education, qualifications, transport, poor accommodation in workplaces for people with disabilities, prejudice/discrimination)	future & competitiveness of the sub-region, job creation, investment in enabling infrastructure, increase tourism, improve quality of life & expansion of business & services (Shannon Estuary Task Force)	
<u>Accessibility & Transport</u>	<u>Accessibility & Transport</u>	<u>Accessibility & Transport</u>	<u>Accessibility & Transport</u>
Location of Limerick as a “Gateway city” of strategic importance in the national & mid-west regional context	Lack of development of routes / services at Shannon Airport	Geographic location, modes of access, distances to markets & services & travel time will support attracting investment, workers, visitors, students & people	Failure to expand routes through Shannon Airport will result in lost potential for trade, tourism & economic development
Global and national trade and tourism connectivity via Shannon Airport, Shannon Foynes Tier 1 port, Shannon Estuary and Limerick Docklands	Traffic congestion & heavy traffic through specific towns & villages	Potential to expand routes from Shannon Airport, with benefits to trade & tourism	Failure to delivery major transport infrastructure projects (rail, national roads, bypasses) will result in missed economic opportunities, poorer quality of life & negative environmental effects
Motorway accessibility to other urban centres especially Dublin & planned N20 Limerick-Cork to enhance connectivity	Road safety including traffic speeds, safe crossings for vulnerable road users, lack of traffic calming measures, dangerous roads / accident black spots in parts of the city, suburban areas, towns & villages & rural areas	Potential for commuter rail links into Limerick City, improving connectivity with suburban areas & outlying villages	Behaviours do not change sufficiently in favour of sustainable travel & use of public transport will result in not achieving climate action targets & poorer quality of life
Road & transport infrastructure developments including the N21/N69 Foynes to Limerick Road Improvement Scheme including Adare Bypass, LNDR Limerick North Distributor Route connect N18 to M7 and Newcastle West Bypass, Abbeyfeale Bypass & reinstatement of Limerick-Foynes rail for freight	Poor walkability in the city centre, towns & villages, particularly affecting vulnerable road users (children, older people, disabled people)	Potential to re-open passenger rail from Limerick to Foynes, benefitting tourism & access to jobs, especially linked to investment in Foynes Port & Shannon Estuary renewable energy	Failure to expand public transport will impact negatively on climate action targets for the transport sector
	Poor footpath connectivity within town & village centres & to outskirts	Investment in active travel will result in new / extended Greenways into urban & sub-urban areas, inter-county Greenways (Limerick-north Kerry), expanding sustainable transport,	Failure to expand public transport to rural areas will impact negatively on access to services & employment,
	Insufficient investment in public transport, low frequency of services & lack of routes in rural Limerick, lack of		

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Rail & bus connectivity to cities & bus routes to main towns & Limerick City	bus stops & shelters, services to “last mile” lacking & challenging to develop	benefitting tourism, health & well-being & the environment	particularly, for disadvantaged groups & vitality of rural settlements
Local Link services for rural populations	Lack of car parking in city centre, parts of towns/villages & disincentive to shopping/visitors	Investment in public transport will improve connectivity within Limerick & inter-county, benefitting the environment, quality of life & removing barriers to access to jobs and services, especially for disadvantaged groups.	Failure to address traffic congestion will impact negatively on attractiveness of certain towns & villages & quality of life
Street works progressing & improved traffic management in the city centre & some rural towns & villages	Poor maintenance of rural roads	Roll out of NBP & addressing connectivity blackspots will improve access to services for people & business infrastructure & services	Failure to improve walkability of city, suburban, towns & villages could impact on safety, particularly for vulnerable road users, and act as barrier to access to services, shops & social & community life
Greenways (Limerick Greenway, Castletroy Greenway) / cycle lanes & walking routes developed in the city / suburbs & some rural towns & villages	Strong reliance on the car for everyday commuting (work, school, college) & car-centred society		
Limerick amongst best counties in the state in terms of distance of populations from key public (schools, hospitals, libraries) & private services	Areas with lack of broadband / poor broadband & lack of/poor mobile phone networks (i.e., connectivity “blackspots”)		
Housing & Supporting Infrastructure			
Sufficient lands zoned for residential development, to accommodate projected population growth	Lack of housing supply across all housing types & tenures (social, private, affordable, private rental)	Planned new housing developments could accommodate projected population growth for Limerick, attract new residents & retain people in Limerick	Failure to increase housing supply to meet existing & future demand will act as a barrier to economic growth
High quality social housing developments (e.g., Lord Edward Street, Moyross & Southill), housing renovations & upgrades delivered in Limerick in recent years	Lack of capacity of water & sewage infrastructure to enable housing developments in many parts of rural Limerick towns and villages	Adoption of universal design in housing developments will accommodate varying needs of people over the lifecourse	High and increasing costs of house purchase and rents will reduce advantages of Limerick in affordability compared with other areas & competitiveness
New housing developments (private, social and affordable housing) recently delivered or currently underway	Limited housing availability for purchase or rent especially in and close to the urban area & Newcastle West	Delivery of the age-friendly homes programme & sheltered housing will	Failure to, & delays in, increasing housing supply will have negative effects including low population

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Approved Housing Bodies delivering & managing social housing developments, with support services to vulnerable tenants	<p>Lack of social housing, large numbers in social housing need & strong reliance on rent subsidy schemes (HAP/RAS) to meet social housing needs</p> <p>Housing needs of vulnerable groups not fully met – Travellers, disability housing for independent living, refugees / people arriving under International Protection</p> <p>Increase in number of adults & children homeless & in emergency accommodation</p> <p>Housing quality including poor energy efficiency of stock & over-crowding</p>	<p>enhance independent living for vulnerable groups</p> <p>Measures & financial incentives provided under “Housing for All” will increase supply overall, support purchase of housing, housing for disadvantaged social groups & support bringing derelict housing back into use</p> <p>Pro-active approach by LCCC to address vacancy & dereliction will support bringing derelict / vacant buildings and sites into residential use</p>	<p>growth, migration of young people, social & financial pressures, weak social structure in communities & generational & societal divisions</p> <p>Failure to address housing needs of vulnerable population will reinforce exclusion & result in significant social and economic costs (e.g., unable to work, cost of health care)</p> <p>Slow roll-out / delays in key strategic infrastructure projects – housing, water infrastructure & services, sewage & National Broadband Plan will act as a constraint on population growth & distribution of population growth across the county</p>
<u>Settlement structure, towns & villages</u>	<u>Settlement structure, towns & villages</u>	<u>Settlement structure, towns & villages</u>	<u>Settlement structure, towns & villages</u>
<p>Strong population growth & concentrations of employment in areas of metropolitan Limerick</p> <p>Large young population in sub-urban/peri-urban Limerick & many towns & villages</p> <p>Large number of towns & villages, with a diversity of built heritage & characteristics of place</p>	<p>High rates of commercial & residential vacancy in the city centre, county towns (Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West, Kilmallock) & some villages</p> <p>Online retail platforms, closure of “bricks and mortar” stores & loss of commercial activities (e.g., banks) have reduced footfall into city centre & towns</p> <p>Very high densities of population in Limerick City Centre, especially in</p>	<p>Policy focus on compact growth & public funding to address vacancy and dereliction create conditions for re-use of existing buildings for residential, economic and community uses & revitalise city centre, towns & villages</p> <p>Landbanks and buildings in public ownership (including those derelict / vacant) provide opportunities to redesign / re-purpose city / town & village centres for 21st Century living</p>	<p>Failure to address high level of vacancy will stall city / town centre regeneration</p> <p>Failure to attract mix of retail & commercial activities, attract businesses to rent premises in the city centre, develop the night-time economy will negatively impact on urban/town regeneration</p> <p>Failure to increase the user base of Digital Hubs and / or roll-back on</p>

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
A number of towns with good business & employment base (Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale, Adare, Croom)	Limerick City Centre Docks Area, where there are concentrations of migrants	Development of Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) & Connected Hubs in rural areas & remote working improve potential for regeneration of rural towns and villages	remote working will result in lack of impact on village / town renewal
A number of towns with different functions & good public services (library, education & training centres, disability services, recreation & amenity areas)	Uneven densities of population across Limerick city (e.g., low in regeneration areas & high in city centre areas)	Population growth including in-migration of new cultural communities with a preference for city & town living provides opportunities for social regeneration of city centre & towns	Failure to achieve a “Living City” will impact negatively on sustainable regeneration of the city
Well-maintained, attractive towns & villages	Large number of settlements, predominance of low settlement size & highly dispersed population in rural Limerick makes it difficult & costly to deliver infrastructure & services		Failure to deliver quality public realm will negatively impact on vibrancy of the city centre, town & village centres & civic, cultural and community life
Neighbourhoods in suburban Limerick developed based on compact settlements / compact growth (close to public & private services, jobs, cycleways, walkways, amenities)	Poor public realm in city centre, towns & villages including lack of civic space, seating, street lighting		Failure to resolve issues of vacancy and dereliction (ownership / legal issues, protected structures, planning regulations) will result in urban decay, cost increases & renewal not being economically viable
Some areas/towns & villages with improved public realm works completed	Poor maintenance, littering & dog fouling in city neighbourhoods, county towns & villages		Weak social structure (e.g., concentrations of older populations, socially disadvantaged, migrants), poor physical design (segregated estates, apartment blocs not integrated with other developments) & other factors will impact negatively on achieving sustainable communities
<u>Recreation, amenities & community facilities</u>	<u>Recreation, amenities & community facilities</u>	<u>Recreation, amenities & community facilities</u>	<u>Recreation, amenities & community facilities</u>
Strong sporting culture, contributing to building local pride & sense of community	Improvements / upgrades needed to enhance much of the existing sports	Opportunities to develop multi-purpose sports facilities & expand use of existing facilities in cooperation with	Inadequate sport, recreation & amenity areas will impact negatively on

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Good sports facilities including stadia – Thomond Park, TUS/Gaelic Grounds – state of the art facilities at the UL Arena, the Regional Athletics Hub Newcastle West & facilities for golfing	and recreation infrastructure including club & indoor spaces	existing sports clubs & local community groups	community quality or life and health & well-being
Good provision & distribution of playing pitches for team sports (GAA, soccer, rugby)	Poor diversity of sports facilities (e.g., poor provision for basketball, gymnastics, cricket, swimming in some parts of Limerick)	Opportunities to increase green space in city, towns & villages for recreation & play and use natural resources (rivers, lakes, waterways, landscapes) to develop outdoor recreation space. These will make local areas more liveable & improve quality of life	Lack of attention to issues of disability access & access to amenities & recreation spaces by vulnerable populations will impact negatively on social inclusion & health & well-being of those population groups
A number of quality major parks (Curraghchase), natural recreation areas (Clare Glens), town (Demesne Newcastle West) & city parks	Lack of green space, outdoor recreation space (smaller parks), indoor play areas, play & amenities for families, youth & older age groups		Lack of community facilities and amenities, particularly in areas with strong population densities & immigration, will result in a lack of community cohesion & community buildings
Community playgrounds, sensory parks & other amenities developed in recent years	Lack of sheltered play areas – e.g., in city centre – “hang out” areas for youth & of alcohol-free / low cost /free activities for families & youth		
Large number & relatively good distribution of community facilities, run by community & voluntary groups and with a strong base of activities across urban & rural Limerick	Lack of community facilities in some areas (suburban, city centre communities) & need for facilities' upgrades		
	Poor disability access, disability aids/proofing to sport & recreation space and some buildings		
<u>Community / Quality of Life</u>	<u>Community / Quality of Life</u>	<u>Community / Quality of Life</u>	<u>Community / Quality of Life</u>
Greater cultural diversity in Limerick	Large numbers (20,000) living in disadvantaged areas in Limerick city, social deprivation & social inequality in the city	Increased social diversity will enrich our culture, bring new knowledge, talents, skills & potential to expand the labour force & enterprise	Failure to meet increased demand for social care for different groups (elderly, disabled people) & other services (special education) & delays will
High percentage of people in good or very good health			

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Well-developed & active community organisations, strong community spirit, neighbourliness and attachment to local areas	Small areas of deprivation in other areas - social housing estates in towns and villages, private rental areas & "hidden" deprivation in rural areas	People currently in economic & social deprivation provide a potential source of skills, workforce and enterprise	exacerbate inequalities & impact negatively on quality of life
Generally short commuting times to work/school/college	Social groups at high risk of social exclusion & difficult to reach (migrants in / leaving Direct Provision, migrants lacking English language skills, Travellers, people with disabilities, people with mental health difficulties, older people living in isolation)	Increasing life expectancy including older populations in good health will contribute to family, community life, volunteering & the economy	Failure to deliver new community-based models of health & social care will increase financial & capacity pressures on hospital health services
High levels of community safety overall	Digital exclusion affecting certain groups – people with low education, older people, people living in rural areas lacking broadband & connectivity	Community and voluntary groups have capacity for expanding their reach, potential to diversify the volunteer base & their activities, enriching civic life and community quality of life	Failure to reduce numbers in chronic illness, change lifestyle behaviours (physical activity, substance misuse) will increase pressure on health services & worsen quality of life
Natural assets including the River Shannon, rural landscapes (mountains, waterways) for people to enjoy	Health needs & timely access to health services (primary care, hospital care) not being met for all	Potential to build on successes of voluntary and community groups in the development and running of community centres, social enterprise & services in communities	Failure to address community safety (e.g., anti-social behaviour, drug crime) will impact negatively on community cohesion & well-being
	Households in fuel & food poverty		Failure to close the digital divide & address food & fuel poverty will deepen social exclusion & inequalities
	Substance misuse (alcohol, illegal drugs) & an inadequate local service base of addiction services		Failure to build integration across diverse communities will negatively affect social cohesion
	Anti-social behaviour, drug-dealing, public order offences & crime associated with drug use (theft)		Failure to expand volunteering & community leadership will impact on sustainability of community & voluntary bodies & quality of life
	Lack of visible garda presence in local communities		Failure to improve diversity in volunteering & decision-making will limit support for and activity base of

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><u>Natural Environment & the “Green” Transition</u></p> <p>Abundance of natural resources, areas of significance for habitats /bio-diversity (river catchments, bogs, wetlands) & designated SACs/SPCs</p> <p>Appreciation of the quality of natural resources by the population & increased awareness of the need to protect these resources</p> <p>General awareness of climate crisis & need to progress climate action</p> <p>General societal support for fair & just transition</p> <p>Local community & voluntary groups engaged in delivering bio-diversity / environmental protection initiatives (Tidy Towns, European Innovation Partnerships, environmental groups active in areas with important habitats)</p> <p>Schools involved in environmental initiatives (Green Flag)</p> <p>Resources to harness & develop renewable energy, particularly in the</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment & the “Green” Transition</u></p> <p>General & rapid loss of bio-diversity</p> <p>Areas impacted by invasive species – Japanese Knotweed, hog weed, Himalayan Ash, Ash dieback</p> <p>Overplanting of conifers/spruce & non-native trees in forestry has affected natural habitats & rural landscapes</p> <p>River pollution (from industry, farming, other sources), low fish stocks & poor water quality in some areas</p> <p>Many different authorities & structures responsible for rivers, waterways & water quality & not coordinated</p> <p>Level of use of pesticides / chemical fertilisers in farm production & households (in domestic gardens)</p> <p>Flooding problems & extreme weather events, happening with greater frequency & severity, disrupt households, communities, businesses & public services impacting on safety, quality of life & high economic costs</p>	<p><u>Natural Environment & the “Green” Transition</u></p> <p>“Green transition” creates opportunities for investment (FDI/indigenous) in renewable energy generation, business & jobs</p> <p>Development of renewable energy (e.g., Shannon Estuary) will create energy security, underpin economic growth & quality of life</p> <p>Retrofitting to improve energy efficiency of buildings will provide opportunities for up-skilling/re-skilling & potential jobs including opportunities for unemployed people</p> <p>Environmental sector including circular economy (shops for re-use of goods), upcycling), provides opportunities for social & community enterprise, meeting needs for goods & services & jobs for disadvantaged groups</p> <p>Opportunities to develop bio-diversity corridors along walkways & cycleways</p> <p>Community-led / community-engaged projects delivering innovative environmental initiatives create</p>	<p>community groups & their sustainability</p> <p><u>Natural Environment & the “Green” Transition</u></p> <p>Occurrences & frequency of extreme weather events will negatively affect the economy / households / business / infrastructure & increase public costs</p> <p>Continued loss of bio-diversity & depletion of scarce resources (water) will impact negatively on quality of life & sustainable communities</p> <p>Climate change deterioration in the 2020s will require faster & deeper adaptation and mitigation measures</p> <p>Climate change action fails to achieve just transition with sectors (especially agriculture) & social groups bearing a greater negative impact, affecting buy-in and social cohesion</p> <p>Climate action measures in bio-diversity & other areas (pollution control) result in deterioration of natural resources, negatively impacting on tourism development</p> <p>Mis-match in location of jobs & where people live & slow progress with</p>

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Shannon Estuary (off shore wind) & bio-waste (agriculture)</p> <p>R&D & Innovation in 3rd level colleges & businesses with knowledge & technologies to contribute to climate change actions, "green" business & education / learning</p>	<p>Large number & % of energy inefficient buildings (public, private, community, sports facilities) & dependence on fossil fuels in the building stock</p> <p>Information gaps & knowledge deficiencies in societal & community capacity to respond to climate change</p> <p>Quantity of waste produced across all types of goods & services & sectors</p> <p>Illegal dumping, pollution & poor enforcement of penalties</p> <p>Facilities for saving scarce resources (rainwater), re-use & separation of waste materials not well developed at village/town, neighbourhood level</p> <p>Lack of Electric Vehicle charging points, distributed across Limerick</p>	<p>demonstration models that can be replicated more widely</p> <p>Great potential to engage more with schools & youth organisations to promote positive climate action measures</p> <p>EU & national funding sources are available to develop climate action initiatives at all levels - local government/agencies, businesses, communities</p>	<p>"green" transport will result in failure to achieve climate action targets</p> <p>Societal and community awareness of climate change measures remains insufficient & changes in behaviours are not achieved</p> <p>Costs of transition – e.g., retrofitting, businesses with high levels of emissions – considered prohibitive or not realistic</p> <p>Failure to expand grid capacity will restrict implementation of major projects & local economy</p> <p>Failure to alleviate energy poverty for households on low incomes will deepen inequalities & social exclusion</p> <p>Failure to increase the number & distribution of EV charging points will reduce the switch to EVs & impact negatively on climate action targets</p>

<u>Strategies, plans & institutional issues</u>	<u>Strategies, plans & institutional issues</u>	<u>Strategies, plans & institutional issues</u>	<u>Strategies, plans & institutional issues</u>
<p>A number of "anchor" institutions located in Limerick City including third level colleges (UL, TUS, MIC) & HSE University Hospitals</p> <p>Collective approach / history of cooperation between public bodies in social & economic policy areas</p>	<p>Complex policy & institutional environment, different institutional procedures & practices in different agencies make coordination difficult to achieve in practice</p> <p>Administrative boundaries are not the same across all agencies, making</p>	<p>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 focused on achieving an inclusive, resilience & sustainable "green" city and county will support a new approach to development</p> <p>Limerick Twenty Thirty sites in public ownership & developments</p>	<p>Insufficient resources (funding, staff capacity) and other pressures will result in new projects not being planned, funded nor delivered</p> <p>Complexities (e.g., site assembly, acquisitions, planning, appraisal, procurement) & delays in delivery will</p>

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
(including IDA, EI) & in emergency planning & response (HSE, An Garda Síochána, LCCC)	coordinated planning/delivery more difficult	progressing (Opera Square, in construction, Cleeves Riverside Quarter masterplan, planning) will impact positively on city centre regeneration	result in cost increases, larger-scale projects not being viable, negatively impact on capital project development & reputation
Structures for stakeholder partnerships (LCDC, CYPSC, Limerick Forum) across public, community / voluntary & private sector	Burden of administration & complexities in accessing accountability for funding	Tourism attractions under management of the Local Authority will support a strategic approach to investment and promotion of Limerick	Unexpected changes (e.g., downturn in the global economy) & deterioration in public finances could impact on plans & the local economy
Specific companies set up to drive strategic initiatives in Limerick (e.g., Limerick Twenty Thirty, Innovative Limerick, Discover Limerick DAC)	History of delays in delivery of projects & services, missed targets, escalating costs impact on public confidence in state / government agencies Some project & services' planning & delivery cross county boundaries Many sectoral plans & strategies developed / in place & a "siloed" approach	National and Regional Planning Frameworks in place & significant government funding available for regeneration and development in urban and rural Limerick Masterplan for the Shannon Estuary "Shannon Foynes Vision 2041" & "Vision 2041 Strategic Review 2022" focused on developing into a major international shipping & economic hub & harnessing renewable energy National level policies & frameworks and local programmes are in place to support social inclusion, anti-discrimination, equality and social justice	Potential changes in policy priorities could impact on delivery of planned developments in Limerick Government's balanced regional development policies are not effective in re-directing investment to, & achieving population growth & economic development in, the regions Potential for changes in the political environment & lack of political support for certain types of development Lack of capacity in community & voluntary organisations could impact on the generation of new projects, funding into local communities & delivery

6. Vision, High-Level Goals & Objectives

This section briefly sketches the background and strategic challenges, presents and Vision and High-level Goals of the LECP and then presents the Sustainable Economic Objectives, Sustainable Community Objectives and Sustainable Integrated Objectives.

6.1 Background and Strategic Issues

The framework LECP 2022-2028 identifies strategic objectives for Limerick City and County for local economic development and local community development over the next six years. The LECP needs to be flexible to respond to known challenges especially climate change – where solutions and responses at local community level need to be worked out – and unexpected challenges that will likely arise over the course of implementation. The last three years brought many unexpected challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in the Ukraine and these have had a profound impact on our communities and the economy. The experience of COVID-19 highlighted the strength of community. It brought back services to local villages and towns and showed the possibilities to live and work in the same place. Education, business, healthcare, culture and arts were delivered by expanding use of digital technologies.

Recent experience showed the vulnerability of certain economic sectors: including hospitality, tourism, construction and “bricks and mortar” retail. Labour supply, skills shortages, changing consumer patterns, increased energy costs, costs of materials / commodities and animal feeds, lack of housing supply are specific areas of challenge. Recent trends have also impacted on place - the shift to more retail online and remote working have reduced footfall into town / city centres and bring into question traditional approaches to urban regeneration reliant on large-scale retail and office workers.

Changes have adversely impacted on certain groups in society such people lacking digital skills; women and children affected by domestic violence; people experiencing rural isolation; people seeking asylum / in or leaving Direct Provision; and vulnerable people and families with complex social problems, people lacking own accommodation or homeless. Other sections of the population are known to be at higher risk of exclusion including people with disabilities, Traveller families, people with chronic health conditions and people in the criminal justice system. Some of these groups are also at high risk of discrimination.

Certain sectors and sections of the population will face greater challenges linked to climate change including agriculture and farm families, transport and people highly reliant on the car and low income households dependent on older energy systems and living in energy inefficient housing.

Local authority services, in recent years, have increasingly been called upon to respond to severe weather events including flooding, working in cooperation with other emergency services. Flood defences have been strengthened in areas where there are risks. Local authority services are actively engaged in other areas of climate change mitigation and adaptation in cooperation with other services and communities – e.g., invasive species, bio-diversity loss, water quality and river catchment area management.

At the same time, Ireland is developing its role, its reach and influence in an international setting. Internationalisation, building links with institutions, places, business and people abroad has a local dimension. Such links are important to our identity, our reputation and can bring tangible benefits to local areas and communities.

6.2 Strategic Vision and High-Level Goals

Against this backdrop, the strategic vision for the LECP is:

To create healthy resilient communities with good infrastructure and services and a sustainable resilient economy, providing quality jobs and decent incomes for people. Households, communities and businesses are supported to adapt to the “green” transition and sustainable living. Equality, civic participation and social inclusion are promoted in a diverse and multi-cultural Limerick where people and places are connected to each other. Innovation and creativity enable our communities to find solutions to challenges, while Limerick continues to build its attractiveness and reputation in the regional, national and international context.

This vision is supported by four High Level Goals:

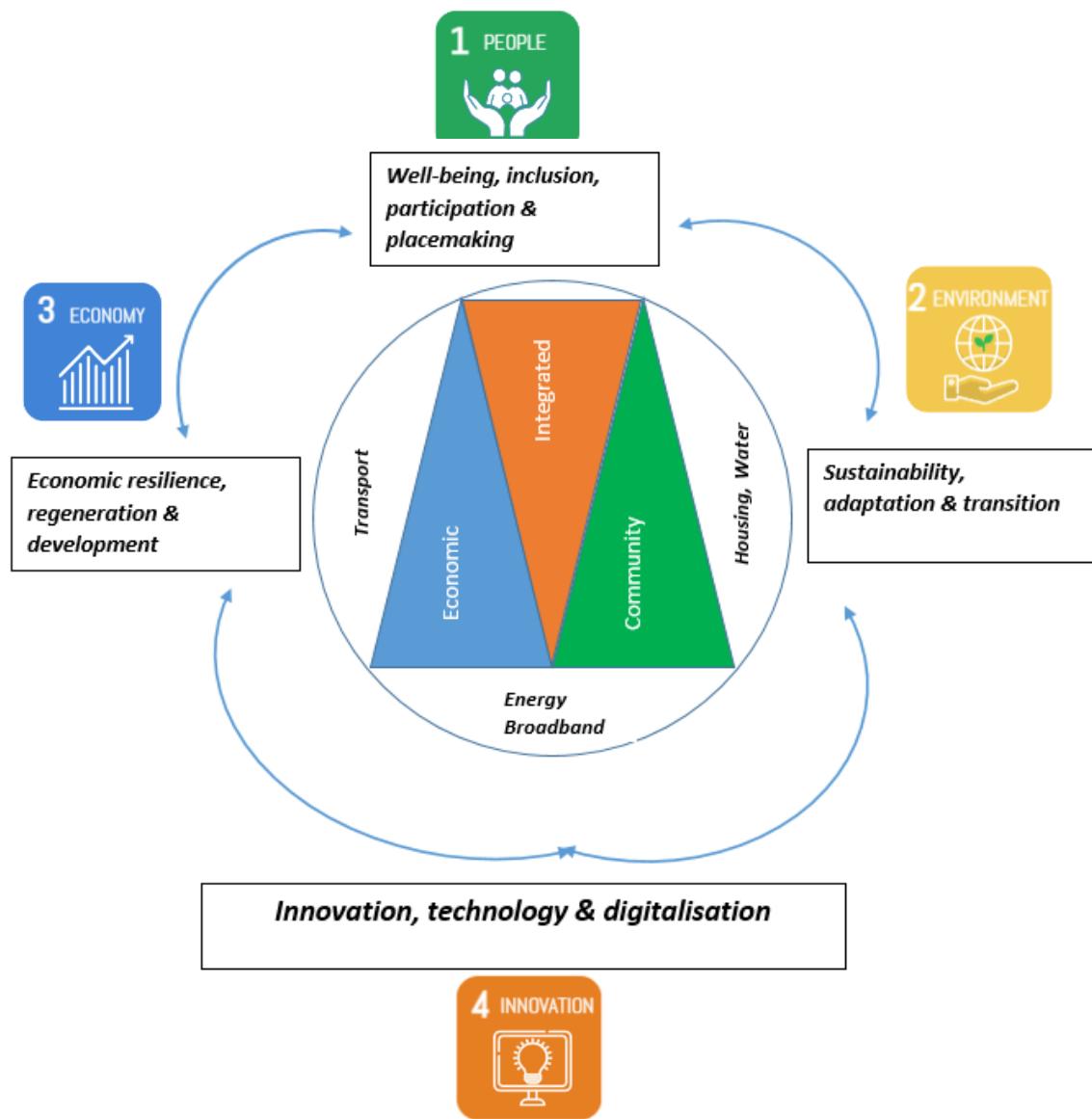
- **HLG1: People & Community: Well-being, inclusion, participation & placemaking.** To achieve health and well-being for all, progress social inclusion by reducing poverty and exclusion, progress equality, increase civic participation in our more diversified and multi-cultural society, grow civic leadership and promote placemaking to create safe and sustainable urban and rural communities in Limerick.

- **HLG2: Environment & climate action: Sustainability, adaptation & transition.** To promote sustainable communities and economy working towards carbon neutrality. This requires changes to the way we live, the way we conduct economic and commercial activities by taking measures to adapt to, and mitigate effects of, climate change. Education and training and developing skills, jobs, enterprise and investment in “green” sectors including renewable energy will support a sustainable economy, a just transition and quality of life.

- **HLG3: Economy: Economic resilience, regeneration & development.** To promote a strong and resilient local economy with a diversified base, create additional quality jobs and increase the numbers in work and access to jobs by those in economic exclusion. This Goal also seeks to achieve an even distribution of jobs and compact growth so that we have vibrant living communities in our city, towns and villages. This means bringing more investment to Limerick, building competitive enterprises, retaining and attracting talent and investing in sustainable regeneration and development of the physical fabric of the city centre and town and village settlements.

- **HLG4: Innovation: Creativity, technology & digitalisation.** To promote innovation in our economy, society and local communities to enhancing our competitiveness and quality of life. This includes promoting innovation and creativity, expanding the application of technology and digitalisation to strengthen our economy and improve access to quality services for people, taking measures to make these technologies and digital services accessible to all.


The High-Level Goals interact with and work off each other, as shown in the Figure below, reflecting the dynamic quality of the LECP as a framework plan. This framework is comprehensive in scope and adaptive to changing conditions.



The HLGs have a thematic focus – HLG1 People & Community; HLG2 Environment & Climate Action; HLG3 Economic Resilience & Regeneration; underpinned by HLG4 Innovation. Objectives and actions in the LECP cross-cut the HLGs where each HLG is relevant to Economic, Community and Integrated elements of the LECP. The relevance to each HLG is shown in presenting the Sustainable Community Development Objectives (SCDOs), Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) and the Sustainable Integrated Objectives (SIOs) in the framework LECP below.

Local objectives under the LECP are supported by main areas of government policies and core local authority functions in: Housing, Water Services and Water Infrastructure, Energy systems / Energy generation / Energy networks, Broadband / the National Broadband Plan, Transport (roads, rail, airports / connectivity infrastructure) as well as essential public social infrastructure in Housing, Health (hospital, health centre) and Education (colleges, schools). Key policies and plans at EU, national and

regional level are reviewed in *Section 2, Strategic Policy Review*. LECP objectives are also delivered under other separate strategies and action plans of the local authority and a number of these are also reviewed in Section 2, above.

6.3 Sustainable Community and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives

Sustainable Community Development Objectives (SCDOs), Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) and Integrated Objectives are presented below. These fit with Goals and Objectives at higher levels of the planning hierarchy – the *National Planning Framework, Ireland 2040* (NPF), the *National Development Plan to 2027* (NDP), the *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region* (RSES). Objectives are mapped with reference to UN Sustainable Development Goals (17 SDG) and the LECP High Level Goals. The fit with the 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) in the NPF / NDP, Regional Strategic Objectives (RSO) and Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) of the *RSES for the Southern Region* and the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028* are also shown in Appendix 2. A summary of the SEDOs, SCDOs and Integrated Objectives are shown in the Table below.

This is followed by the presentation of the:

1. Sustainable Economic Development Objectives – The Economic Plan
2. Sustainable Community Development Objectives – The Community Plan
3. Sustainable Integrated Objectives – The Integrated Economic & Community Plan

HLG	Economic SEDOs	HLG	Integrated	HLG	Community SCDOs
	E1. Labour market activation		I1. Limerick City Centre regeneration		C1. Education & learning
	E2. Entrepreneurship & micro- & Small & Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)		I2. Disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods		C2. Children, young people & families
	E3. Infrastructure & supportive business environment for SMEs		I3. Connected city & sub-urban neighbourhoods		C3. Health & well-being
	E4. Targeting sectoral challenges & diversification		I4. Town & village renewal & connected settlements		C4. Ageing well & age-friendly Limerick
	E5. Business expansion, targeting high value added sectors & business networks		I5. Culture, arts, heritage & sport		C5. Social inclusion & personal empowerment
	E6. Physical business infrastructure, investment (FDI) & connectivity		I6. Internationalisation, branding & promotion		C6. Sport, recreation & community buildings

HLG	Economic SEDOs	HLG	Integrated	HLG	Community SCDOs
	E7. Limerick as a tourism destination - Product expansion & marketing		I7. Technology & SMART strategies		C7. Societal / community awareness climate action
	E8. Cultural & creative industries		I8. Active travel/sustainable travel		C8. Civic life & social capital
			I9. Climate action mitigation / adaptation & natural resources		C9. Integration of migrants & diverse cultural & ethnic communities
			I10. Green energy /energy systems		C10. Community safety & crime prevention

6.3.1 Economic: Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs)

HLG	Economic SEDOs		
			E1. Labour market activation
			E2. Entrepreneurship & micro & Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
			E3. Physical Infrastructure & supportive business environment for SMEs
			E4. Targeting sectoral challenges and diversification
			E5. Business expansion, targeting high value added sectors & business networks
			E6. Physical business infrastructure, investment (FDI) & connectivity
			E7. Limerick as a tourism destination - Product expansion & marketing
			E8. Cultural & creative industries

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E1	<p>Labour Market Activation</p> <p><i>Support unemployed people to get jobs especially long-term unemployed people, people with disabilities, people with low education and lacking skills and work experience and people who have been out of work for a long time or are no longer looking for work (economically inactive)</i></p>
LECP HLGs	 
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>We are at a level of full-employment with no shortage of jobs in Limerick. There has been a significant increase in the number of people in work and a reduction in unemployment rates since 2016. However, we have unemployment blackspots in Limerick, as identified in the 2016 Census. While unemployment rates have gone down in these areas, in 15 of the 18 unemployment blackspots (2016), unemployment rates are still more than twice the Limerick average (8.6%) in 2022. In the most disadvantaged areas, there are large percentages of people of working</p>

	<p>age who are not in work and a higher proportion compared with the Limerick average not able to work due to permanent sickness or disability. Unemployment rates are very high for certain groups including: people with disabilities, Travellers, people with very low education, people leaving the prison system, people leaving Direct Provision with the right to work, older workers and those with skills that are no longer needed. As well as representing a loss of economic potential, unemployed and economically inactive people are at highest risk of poverty. With the right supports and access to learning, many may find jobs and get back into work, benefitting themselves, their families and contributing to the economy. Active labour market policies and social inclusion programmes target long-term unemployed, young people Not in Employment Education or Training (NEETS) and other groups with the highest unemployment and inactivity rates. Under the <i>EU Pillar on Social Rights Action Plan</i>, one of the three high level targets to 2030 is to increase the employment rate of people aged 24 to 64 years to 78%. The target agreed for Ireland is 78.2% by 2030. The national plan to address and minimise the risk of poverty and social exclusion, the <i>Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020-2025: Ambition, Goals, Commitments</i> includes as one of its seven goals, to “<i>extend employment opportunities to all who can work</i>”. Local Intreo Offices operating under the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and the <i>Mid-West Local Area Employment Service (LAES)</i>, delivered by Local Development Companies, target supports on long-term unemployed. The <i>Social Inclusion and Community Activation (SICAP)</i> programme, delivered by the Local Development Companies, targets most excluded groups, addressing barriers they face in access to employment and other aspects of exclusion.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information & job search targeting long-term unemployed - Education & training: literacy/numeracy, digital competences, lifelong learning, English language learning for migrants and skills training for work - Engagement with employers, job recruitment fairs in target areas and specific groups - Multi-lingual employment opportunities / promotion - Outreach to disadvantaged groups & support to access wider services (health, education, etc.) - Additional supports to address barriers to individuals in accessing work & retention in employment
Lead Agencies	DSP, Mid-West Local Area Employment Service, LCETB, LCDC & Local Development Companies, employers
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase employment rate (%) in Limerick</p> <p>Reduce the long-term unemployment rate (%) in Limerick</p> <p>Reduce the gap between unemployment blackspots and average labour market indicators for Limerick</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E2	<p>Entrepreneurship and micro & Small & Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)</p> <p><i>Encourage and support entrepreneurship for people of all ages and backgrounds as a route to job creation and support the start-up and business performance of micro- and small enterprises and social enterprises</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p>
	<p>This objective focuses on the “soft” supports or services to promote entrepreneurship and support micro and small & medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Micro-and small businesses (0-10 persons engaged) are important to the local economy of Limerick, accounting for over 93% of all enterprises and 25% of all jobs while SMEs (0-249 persons engaged) account for 64% of all jobs in Limerick. New business start-ups add vibrancy to the local economy. SMEs (0-249 employees) are also an important source of innovation. It is important to promote enterprise amongst young people and groups such as migrants and women so they consider it as a career option. Social enterprise is a further option. These are enterprises led by community and voluntary organisations that aren’t always viable on a for-profit basis but they provide services or products needed – for instance, services such as community cafés in disadvantaged areas, social care and environmental projects such as re-use of waste, upcycling and the circular economy. They can also create employment for unemployed people or specific groups (ex-prisoners, Travellers). Business services and supports needed by start-ups and existing micro- and small enterprises include information, advice, business planning, training in business skills and access to finance (grants/loans). Other services can assist small businesses to grow such as: support to increase sales by selling online (e-commerce, digital marketing) and to develop in export markets. Business networks for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) (0-250 persons engaged) promote exchange of information, collaboration in areas of common interest (e.g., working with education and training providers to provide skills needed by businesses), sub-supply links and expansion of sales / markets. The Limerick Local Enterprise Office (LEO) provides a range of services to local small businesses, supports access to finance and business networking. Enterprise education and training is also delivered by LCETB and in schools/third level colleges while the Local Development Companies promote self-employment and enterprise targeting unemployed and under-employed people, community groups, social enterprises and social enterprise networks.</p>

Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of enterprise as a career option - Enterprise start-up support – training, advice, access to finance - Enterprise education / skills programmes and initiatives in schools and colleges (UL/MIC/TUS) - Social enterprise development - Special initiatives to encourage migrants, women, young people to set up in enterprise - Business networks
Lead Agencies	Limerick Local Enterprise Office (LEO), LCETB, Local Development Companies, Higher Education Institutions
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the number of micro & small businesses in Limerick (0-10 persons)</p> <p>Increase in the number of persons engaged in micro & small businesses (0-10 persons engaged) in Limerick</p> <p>Number of social enterprise operations set up</p> <p>Increase in number of businesses/enterprise promoters participating in training & mentoring (LEO/LCETB)</p> <p>Increase in number of businesses developing in export markets assisted by LEO</p> <p>Increase in % female-led businesses supported by LEO programmes</p> <p>Increase in % of businesses set up by college graduates</p> <p>Increase in number of Enterprise Ireland-assisted businesses & jobs in Limerick</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E3	<p>Physical infrastructure & supportive business environment for Small & Medium-sized Enterprises</p> <p><i>Develop the physical infrastructure including workspace, ICT Hubs and technologies and build the business ecosystem (including cooperation networks) to create an excellent environment for business and innovation in Limerick</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	Why is this important?
	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises are important to the local economy. The geographic distribution or location of such enterprises across Limerick City and County is an important consideration to create local jobs and increase

	<p>business and commercial activity in the city and rural towns. Small business workspace development can involve re-use of existing buildings and contribute to reducing commercial vacancy levels. Enterprise workspace on affordable easy-in/easy-out terms for new start-ups, co-working space, production units for small companies in sectors such as food, manufacturing and larger units for upscaling businesses are required to create an infrastructure for SMEs over different stages of development. Facilities for research and development (for science-based enterprises), meeting space, exhibition/creative space and access to technology and ICT are needed to create a supportive environment for small businesses. Such business infrastructure is often combined with enterprise start-up training and accelerator programmes – e.g., offered in Third Level college in Limerick (Hartnett Enterprise Accelerator Centre at TUS Limerick Campus and Nexus Centre at UL). <i>Innovate Limerick</i> – a Designated Activity Company set up by Limerick City and County Council - has developed the <i>Engine Collaborative Centre</i> in Cecil Street in the city which offers co-working space and promotes innovation, collaboration and business networking. It works with third level colleges, industry partners and community and non-profit organisations running enterprise programmes /hubs /workspace. It cooperates with other local authorities in development and management of a network of digital hubs across Limerick, Clare and Tipperary. <i>ENGINE Hubs</i> are located in the city and areas in rural Limerick, based on different models (some private, some community operations). In the post-COVID business environment, it is appropriate to review current and future needs of local businesses for workspace, serviced sites and digital / other technologies in different locations. Co-location of enterprises in the same or complementary sectors and of larger and smaller enterprises can promote sub-supply links and networking.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workspace / co-working space for self-employed, new enterprise start-ups and expanding small businesses - Enterprise Hubs and digital services
Lead Agencies	Innovate Limerick, Limerick LEO, Limerick Twenty Thirty DAC, Higher Education Institutions in Limerick, Local Development Companies & private and voluntary / community partners
Outcome indicators	<p>Increase provision of enterprise workspace (m², number & types of unit & locations)</p> <p>Number of start-ups/micro-businesses in occupied space & jobs created</p> <p>Increased investment by upscaling / expanding businesses / jobs safeguarded & jobs created</p> <p>Impact on the number of daytime jobs in priority local areas (e.g., towns in rural Limerick)</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E4	<p>Targeting sectoral challenges and diversification</p> <p><i>Support businesses in target sectors to diversify their operations and address challenges especially skills shortages and recruitment difficulties, changing markets and higher costs and the impact of climate action measures that affect the viability and performance of businesses</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p>
	<p>Business sectors which face greater challenges and are important in terms of jobs in Limerick include retail and wholesale trade, hospitality and construction and agriculture and agri-sector. Retail and hospitality are important to bring footfall and vibrancy to our city, town and village centres. Income from farming and multiplier effects into related sectors (local food, agricultural contracting services, and supplies) make this sector particularly important to the rural economy. Types of challenges vary by sector. The main focus here is on creating the skills and addressing recruitment difficulties in targeted sectors and providing supports (information/advice, capital works/equipment) for diversification and adaptation to changing conditions. Difficulties faced by retail businesses are reflected in high commercial vacancy rates - approaching or in excess of 20% in the city and key towns. New models of retail are developing where shops combine a "bricks and mortar" premises with online sales. The potential of changing retail models for our county towns is outlined in government's <i>Town Centre First</i> policy document (2022). Recognising the importance of retail to city centre-regeneration and footfall in our city and towns, Limerick City and County Council has developed a <i>Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick (2022-2028)</i>. During COVID-19, support was provided for cafés, pubs and restaurants to develop outdoor space for their businesses. This has enhanced the ambience of streets and supported trading.</p> <p>In relation to agriculture, this sector is particularly affected by the agenda for climate action. Adaptation will require change in land use and farm management practices. Agriculture is also impacted by supply chain difficulties (animal feeds) and increased energy costs. Changes in agriculture are supported under the <i>CAP Strategic Action Plan for Ireland (2022)</i> with measures including knowledge and capacity building to support new approaches, organic farming development and renewable energy on farms. Opportunities for diversification also include rural tourism and direct sales (farm shops, local markets). Diversification of farming enterprises is a priority objective under <i>LEADER 2024-2028</i>.</p>

	<p>The construction sector is impacted by skills shortages, supply chain issues and high energy costs. <i>Building Future Skills</i>: Government's policy document, <i>The Demand for Skills in Ireland's Built Environment Sector to 2030</i> (2020) identifies the skills required by the Built Environment sector over the next decade to deliver on ambitions related to housing, infrastructural development and climate change mitigation. Challenges in the construction sector impact on major capital projects planned for Limerick. The Mid-West Regional Skills Forum has identified construction as one of the priority areas for recruitment and training of skilled workers, identifying the many pathways to enter the industry.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills training and support to recruit workers - Promotion and delivery of apprenticeships - Support to develop new products or services - Support to expand the customer base / develop new platforms, methods and outlets for sales
Lead Agencies	Limerick LEO, Limerick City and County Council, LCETB, Local Development Companies, TEAGASC, Mid-West Regional Skills Forum
Outcome Indicators	<p>Reduction in the number of unfilled vacancies in target sectors</p> <p>Increase in the number of trainees completing with qualifications in targeted sectors (LCETB)</p> <p>Number of farming enterprises diversifying into new activities</p> <p>Reduced commercial vacancy rate in city centre and key towns (%)</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E5	<p>Business expansion, targeting high value added sectors & business networks</p> <p><i>Capitalise on the R&D and Innovation capacity in industry and Higher Education Institutions located in Limerick, build business networks and develop the pipeline of talent so that businesses in advanced sectors expand and grow their workforce</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective focuses on the “soft” factors of business expansion and development – the services, knowledge and skills. Limerick has been successful in attracting foreign direct investment with some 24,500 jobs and €3.4b investment announced between April 2013 and April 2022 and further major investment announcements later in 2022 and 2023. There is a number of large multi-nationals located in Limerick, engaged in advanced R&D – such as Johnson &</i></p>

	<p>Johnson, Cook Medical, Analog Devices, Regeneron, Stryker Corporation, Eli Lilly and Edwards Life Science. There are also successful indigenous enterprises – in manufacturing, food and business services. Large enterprises, while they comprise only 0.2% of all private businesses, account for 36% of jobs in private enterprise in Limerick. Limerick's third level education institutions provide a supply of skilled graduates in knowledge economy sectors and support upskilling through graduate skills training and Professional Development Programmes. They also have advanced R&D and Innovation (RDI) capacity. Limerick Higher Education Institutions lead / host three Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Research Centres in the state working with other institutions: LERO SFI Research Centre for Software at UL, SSPC SFI Research Centre for Pharmaceuticals Bernal Institute UL, CONFIRM SFI Research Centre for SMART Manufacturing, Castletroy Digital District and a recently opened (March 2023) IDA Advanced Manufacturing Centre, Digital Manufacturing Ireland at the IDA National Technological Park Limerick. From 2020 to the present, SFI has awarded €57.3 million in research funding (including some projects with multi-annual funding up to 2026) to Limerick-based institutions. The largest award is to LERO Phase 2 €37.5 million (2021-2026). LERO's capacity comprises 300 researchers including UL and eleven (11) other academic institutions in Ireland.</p> <p>A further line of action is building networks including R&DI / university and industry links, sectoral networks such as LINC (Engineering businesses), small-firm/large firm sub-suppling networks and business clustering. Such networks consolidate existing operations in Limerick and support expansion and attraction of new investment in similar and related sectors. Smart Specialisation – which brings together stakeholders such as local communities, national and local enterprise bodies, higher education institutions and private enterprises to identify economic opportunities - can play a key role in creating clusters of industries in parts of the city and county. This builds competitive advantage, supports diversification and builds economic resilience. It also contributes to the local and regional innovation policy process, as elaborated in the <i>RSES for the Southern Region</i>.</p> <p>Limerick City and County Council, <i>Innovate Limerick</i>, Higher Education Institutions and industry partners have been working to build an innovation culture and the RD&I infrastructure and networks to support that.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation, R&D in Higher Education Research Centres and industry and technology transfer - Education, training, upskilling in skills needed by high value-added industries in Limerick - Business networks in high value added sectors – engineering, pharma, computer software, food, new sectors developing in Limerick (SportsTech)
Lead Agencies	Innovate Limerick, Limerick City and County Council, Higher Education Institutions in Limerick, Industry partners & networks

Outcome Indicators	<p>Value of new investment by large companies located in Limerick</p> <p>Numbers engaged in large enterprises in advanced sectors in Limerick</p> <p>Research funding from SFI allocated to Limerick-based institutions</p> <p>Number of graduates in STEM and other relevant disciplines from Limerick institutions</p> <p>Increase in the number of businesses engaged in business networks</p>
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Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E6	<p>Physical business infrastructure, investment (FDI) & connectivity</p> <p><i>Identity and plan for enterprise lands, serviced sites and business accommodation in strategic locations in Limerick together with the necessary strategic infrastructure – transport networks and services, utilities, digital connectivity, housing and social infrastructure</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective focuses on the “hard” physical infrastructures to attract investment by larger-scale business operations and is complementary to E5 above.</i> The focus of this objective is enterprise lands, sites and physical infrastructures. Attracting foreign companies to locate in Limerick – especially advanced manufacturing and services in the knowledge economy - has been very important in strengthening the local and Mid-West Regional economy and expanding the number of high quality jobs. <i>See objective E5.</i> These companies are an important source of innovation, make location in Limerick more attractive to other companies seeking out locations and create business and trading opportunities for SMEs. Attracting mobile foreign investment is competitive internationally and within the state as a whole. IDA Ireland’s latest strategy includes a target for 50% of companies attracted to Ireland to locate in areas outside of the Greater Dublin Region. It is important that Limerick can attract its share of such investment.</p> <p>Availability of zoned enterprise lands, serviced sites and business accommodation are key requirements. Depending on needs / opportunities, enterprise lands/accommodation can be on brownfield or greenfield sites. A review of available land in the Shannon Limerick Metropolitan Area noted that the established locations of Raheen Business Park and the National Technological Park at Plassey have limited remaining capacity to support new greenfield manufacturing. Newcastle West is also a target area for enterprise lands and associated infrastructure development. It is the only Key Town in Limerick</p>

	<p>County targeted for economic and population growth under the RSES for the Southern Region, is important as an economic hub in the west of the County, and has an established base in manufacturing.</p> <p>The Council, as the planning authority and with responsibility for local economic development, has a key role to play in attracting large companies to invest in Limerick and to support expansion of those already located in Limerick, working in collaboration with the IDA, utility companies (ESB, Irish Water), transport agencies and other partners (Higher Education Institutions and colleges). Good transport connectivity, active travel infrastructure and public transport services, high speed broadband, affordable green energy, security in energy supply are all factors that build attractiveness. Social and public infrastructures (housing, schools, healthcare) and quality of life are further important factors. The major public investment programmes of government in housing, strategic transport infrastructure, energy and broadband under-pin this objective. The development of strategic sites, especially focused on Limerick city centre, under the <i>Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan</i> (updated in 2022) include Opera Square (in construction) and Cleeves Riverside Park development (design and planning). Locations within the metropolitan area, the Port of Foynes and larger rural towns may also offer attractive locations, in keeping with zoning for such use in the <i>Limerick Development Plan</i>.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern office accommodation for commercial operations - Transport infrastructure / service improvements through Shannon Airport - Port of Foynes expansion/investment - National transport road and rail upgrades; active travel infrastructure; public transport services - Expanded housing supply – of different types – across private, affordable and social housing
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, IDA Ireland, Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce, Transport Authorities & Utilities companies
Outcome indicators	<p>FDI attracted to Limerick & investments by companies already located in Limerick</p> <p>Jobs announced linked to investments</p> <p>Additional lands / sites developed for enterprise/industry by location</p> <p>Additional business accommodation by location & take-up of space by large companies</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SED0 No. E7	<p>Limerick as a tourism destination - Product expansion & marketing</p> <p><i>Develop more things to see and do for visitors to Limerick, support a spread of sustainable tourism operations across urban and rural Limerick, and bring more visitors to Limerick all year round</i></p>

LECP HLGs	  
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Rationale	Why is this important?
	<p>Limerick is developing in city-based and rural tourism and this is an important source of job creation and income. In 2019, Limerick had 602,000 overseas visitors generating revenue of €254 million and 349,000 domestic visitors generating revenue of €51 million. Tourism and international travel were severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, visitor numbers to Limerick were still below the levels of 2019. Tourism accounted for 9.2% of private enterprises in Limerick in 2021. However, Limerick has not realised its tourism potential. Strengths that can be exploited include: Limerick is well-located in terms of motorway / main national transport routes and there is direct access for overseas visitors to the region via Shannon Airport. Major visitor attractions include: King John's Castle, the Hunt Museum, the Limerick City Gallery of Art, the Foynes Flying Boat Maritime Museum and Lough Gur. Strategic tourism infrastructure has been enhanced with recent private investment – such as the Limerick Greenway, Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails and upgrading / expansion of hotels including Adare Manor which will host the Ryder Cup in 2027. Limerick has natural and cultural assets that offer opportunities for tourism – the river Shannon / waterways, landscapes, cultural heritage, history and architectural heritage (castles, churches, railways, pre-historic site of Lough Gur) and modern culture in music, literature and arts. Festivals and events are also important in bringing visitors to Limerick – See Objective 15 Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport below. Limerick City has been designated a <i>Gateway City to the Wild Atlantic Way</i> by Fáilte Ireland and East Limerick attractions (Lough Gur) are marketed under Fáilte Ireland's <i>Hidden Heartlands</i> brand. Connection to major brands will expand the reach in marketing and promotion of Limerick to visitors. Rural operators in Limerick collaborate to promote rural tourism destination towns and villages – in the Ballyhoura Mountains and Limerick Greenway towns and villages. Sustainable rural tourism operations have been supported under the LEADER programme. Limerick City and County Council's <i>Limerick Tourism Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023</i> maps out the key areas to expand tourism in Limerick. In 2022, the Council set up Discover Limerick Designated Activity Company (DAC) as an umbrella structure for the management and marketing of specific attractions and promotion of Limerick as a tourism destination.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism infrastructure – greenways, blueways - Outdoor attractions and facilities - Indoor attractions - Rural tourist accommodation - Link tourism to festivals and events to bring visitors to Limerick - Tourism marketing and promotion

Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council / Discover Limerick DAC, Fáilte Ireland, Local Development Companies
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in number of visitors to key tourism attractions in Limerick</p> <p>Expansion in visitor occupancy of local hotels</p> <p>Increase in revenue from overseas and domestic visitors to Limerick</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E8	<p>Cultural & creative industries</p> <p><i>Support creatives to earn income from their skills and talents and build up the cultural and creative industries / businesses emerging in Limerick</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective under the Economic element of the LECP focuses on the contribution to economic activity and jobs of cultural and creative industries with the focus on film. Other objectives under the Community and Integrated elements support social, community and environmental benefits from culture and the arts and heritage.</i></p> <p>Limerick City has a profile and assets to develop as a creative and cultural city and has recently had a great deal of success in developing a film industry. This is reflected in major productions shown on Netflix and Apple TV made at facilities and / or locations in Limerick. <i>Innovative Limerick</i> has led the development of Troy Studios, offering large-scale studio space, access to film making crews and casting and the Film Skills Academy in the city, the latter in cooperation with the LCETB. It works with partners in the Irish film industry including the Irish Film Board and Screen Ireland, to develop and market Limerick as a location for film-making. It also hosts international film festivals in Limerick (Richard Harris International Film Festival, Catalyst Film Festival). Other important assets that can be harnessed for cultural and creative industries include Limerick School of Art and Design, the School of Architecture and Product Design at UL, the Irish World Music Academy and Creative Writing Centre at UL which generate a body of artistic and creative talent. Cultural and creative industries add to the attractiveness of Limerick as a place to live, to visit, as a location for investment and as a route to enterprise / self-employment and job creation. Creative skills are found within all types of industries and commercial activities including graphic design, communications, publishing, ICT services, engineering / manufacturing design and architecture. An economic impact assessment of the contribution of creative industries (in the widest sense) to the Irish economy over 10 years ago (Indecon Economic Consultants, 2011) showed an estimated contribution of €4,703.9 million, 49,306</p>

	<p>direct jobs and 78,900 total jobs in 2010. Under <i>Creative Ireland</i>, the <i>Creative Communities Economic Action Fund</i> supports local authorities and other partners including the Local Enterprise Offices and voluntary and community organisations to develop innovative projects that leverage the potential of creative industries to support local and regional economic development.</p> <p>In addition to its economic impact, culture and creativity have inherent value as artistic and cultural expression. It can build pride of place and improve quality of life and health and well-being of people and communities. This is addressed in other parts of the LECP. See Objective 15 Culture, Arts, Heritage and Sport below.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop film industry sector in Limerick - Infrastructure, creative space, venues for individual creative artists & community arts to support self-employment/business start up - Support start-up in fashion, art & design businesses
Lead Agencies	Innovative Limerick, Limerick LEO, Limerick City and County Council, Higher Education Institutions, LCETB
Outcome indicators	<p>Increase in the number of enterprises and jobs in creative and cultural industries sectors (from CSO Business Demography Series)</p> <p>Number and value of major productions at film studios in Limerick</p> <p>Number of persons completing qualifications in skills related to film</p> <p>Number of enterprises supported by LEO in creative/cultural industry sectors</p>

6.3.2 Community: Sustainable Community Development Objectives (SCDOs)

HLG	Community SCDOs
	C1. Education & learning
	C2. Children, young people & families
	C3. Health & well-being
	C4. Ageing well & age-friendly Limerick
	C5. Social inclusion & personal empowerment
	C6. Sport, recreation & community buildings
	C7. Societal / community awareness climate action
	C8. Civic life & social capital
	C9. Integration of migrants & diverse cultural & ethnic communities
	C10. Community safety & crime prevention

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objectives
SCDO No. C1	<p>Education & learning</p> <p><i>Make education and learning accessible to all over their life course, and to people from all backgrounds, keep young people in education to get a Leaving Cert or equivalent and support people that have low education and / or poor literacy to get back into learning</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective is addressed to education and learning for all especially supporting those with low education or at risk of low education into learning. While low education is a characteristic of people living in urban areas that are socially deprived, this objective is addressed to people wherever they live. The Integrated Objective related to disadvantaged city neighbourhoods is addressed to an area-</i></p>

based approach to deprivation which includes responding to educational disadvantaged in that setting.

Education levels of the population in Limerick have been increasing, consistent with the trend at national level. In 2022, 30% of adults in Limerick have a third level educational qualification (Ordinary Bachelor's qualification or above), lower than the national average (34%). Parts of Limerick have higher levels of education – e.g., sub-urban areas where just under 50% have third level qualifications. At the other end of spectrum, 10% of the adult population have at most primary education or no formal education, more or less the same as the national average, while 25% has Lower Secondary or below as their highest level of qualification, higher than the national average (23%). Educational inequalities are in evidence at an area-based level where low education is concentrated in disadvantaged communities in Limerick City and pockets of rural towns especially Rathkeale.

In relation to the population still at school, the retention of young people to complete Leaving Cert has improved significantly in Limerick. Limerick now performs at or above the state average (92.6% retained to Leaving Cert). Certain groups are at higher risk of early school leaving – Travellers and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The vast majority of young people on leaving school progress to third level education (80-84% from all Limerick schools in recent years). An increasing percentage of students from schools serving disadvantaged areas, DEIS Schools, progress to third level education (60%-66%). However, the gap in progression rates to third level education between non-DEIS and DEIS schools remains significant (20% gap).

As low education is associated with poorer outcomes for people – such as unemployment, precarious work, low incomes, poorer health, poorer child well-being – access to education and learning for those with lowest education is important in order to progress equality and social justice.

The *Adult Literacy for Life Strategy* (2021) – addressed to literacy, numeracy and digital literacy – recognises the link between unmet literacy need and social exclusion. In a fast changing society and economy, lifelong learning is increasingly important. A *Lifelong Learning Strategy* for Limerick has been agreed by key stakeholders including the local authority, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) and the third level education institutions in Limerick. Limerick has the status as a UNESCO Learning City and this fits within the wider regional objective, included in the *RSES for the Southern Region*, to develop the Southern Region as a learning region. Under the new *EU Under the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan 2030*, Member States have committed to three headline social targets. One of these targets to be achieved by 2030 is that at least 60% of all adults should participate in training every year. Ireland has set its target on this indicator at 64.2%. Ireland's *National Further Education and Training Strategy 2020-2024* (FET) aims to transform learning in communities with the approach based around three strategic pillars: (1) building skills; (2) fostering inclusion and (3) facilitating pathways, putting a strong focus on digital skills development. Apprenticeship training in trades, skills areas and services

	needed in the economy, offering opportunities to young people in particular, are also being promoted.
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult education and learning programmes - In school / out of school projects to support pupils at risk of under-achievement or leaving school without qualifications - Facilities in community settings in urban and rural areas for education and learning - Education and learning initiatives in specific areas – e.g., digital skills, climate change, English language training for migrants - Initiatives to support progression of disadvantaged groups in their education – through school, into college, in adult learning - Targeted initiatives to promote entry to apprenticeships
Lead Agencies	LCETB, Limerick City and County Council/LCDC, Local Development Companies, Schools, Colleges and Higher Education Institutions
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increased participation of adults in lifelong learning</p> <p>Increased participation in lifelong learning by those with lowest education</p> <p>Reduction in educational inequalities at an area-based level & for groups at risk</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objectives
SCDO No. C2	<p>Children, young people and families</p> <p><i>Improve the social infrastructure, amenities, recreation space and services for families, children and young people in Limerick so they can reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life. Involve young people in community life, designing amenities and services for them and in decision-making</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 4 Quality Education; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective in the LECP is addressed to children and young people, wherever they live in Limerick. Other objectives address engagement with and support for children, youth and families in area-based settings and in relation to thematic issues such as arts and culture and climate action.</i></p> <p>Just under one-quarter (23%) of the population of Limerick City and County is under 18 years and just under one-third (32%) under 25 years (2022). Certain areas – the inner and outer suburbs, some county towns, villages and outer areas of towns and villages – have a high proportion of households with young and school-going children. We have a developed infrastructure of childcare facilities and primary and secondary schools across Limerick City and County. With</p>

	<p>population growth and changing expectations, there has been a need to expand the social infrastructure (childcare facilities, schools), amenities, facilities and services for children and families in Limerick. This will continue with projected (future) population growth. Amenities including play, outdoor space, safe space, alcohol-free space in the evenings and recreation areas for children, youth and families were amongst the needs identified in the consultations for the LECP. A recent study on needs of young people in rural Limerick and consultations on the LECP found that young people want more opportunities to be involved in designing services and amenities for them and a voice in civic life.</p> <p>Child outcomes (well-being across various indicators) in Limerick are mostly in line with the national average. However, outcomes are worse for certain groups including: children living in deprived areas, in households with low work intensity, in one-parent families dependent on social welfare, Traveller children and children in homeless emergency accommodation. Children with disabilities, child carers and youth with non-binary identity face specific and additional difficulties. Children referred into and/or in the care of Tusla, children at risk of offending and referred to Garda Youth Diversion (dominated by males) and minors in the criminal justice system are particularly vulnerable. Limerick, in recent years and particularly in the last 12 months, has more children and families from migrant backgrounds. These are especially concentrated in Limerick City centre, but also in county towns and villages. A sub-group of these are asylum seekers / in the state under international protection and have experienced significant trauma.</p> <p>The mainstream government programme to promote well-being of children and youth 0-24 years in Ireland is <i>Better Outcomes: Brighter Futures</i>. This is structured around five national outcomes for children and youth: (1) active and healthy with physical and mental health; (2) achieving full potential in all areas of learning and development; (3) safe and protected from harm; (4) having economic security and opportunity and (5) connected, respected and contributing to their world. The <i>Limerick Children and Young Persons' Services Committee (CYPSC)</i> is a local inter-agency structure, led by Tusla, to promote coordination of services so that they can achieve the national outcomes set out by government for children and youth.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amenities for children and youth - Programmes to support children most at risk – Travellers, children / young people at risk of offending, migrant children - Programmes to support families with complex problems - Youth work projects - Youth in civic life and volunteering - Keeping safe, health & well-being for children and youth
Lead Agencies	<p>Limerick City and County Council, HSE Health Promotion, Tusla – CYPSC, Limerick Youth Services, Local Development Companies, An Garda Síochána (Garda Youth Diversion)</p>
Outcome indicators	<p>Increase in the number of amenities / recreation spaces for children, youth and families that are inclusive/accessible to all</p> <p>Improved access to services for children and families with higher needs</p>

	<p>Improved educational outcomes for children and young people at risk of low education (Travellers, children living in disadvantaged areas)</p> <p>Improved health & well-being outcomes for children and young people related to positive lifestyle behaviours (smoking, vaping, physical activity)</p> <p>Increased participation of young people in decision-making</p>
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Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C3	<p>Health & well-being</p> <p><i>Improve health and well-being for all taking into account all of the factors that can affect people's health. Put the infrastructure, amenities and services in place so that people can have healthy lifestyles</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 1 No poverty
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>Health and well-being is important to our society and communities and goes hand-in-hand with economic progress. Health is more than the absence of disease - it encompasses achieving each individual's potential to enjoy good physical and mental health and well-being through all stages of life. Well-being is connected to quality of life and those aspects of daily living that allow the individual to thrive. A <i>social determinants approach</i> to health takes into account all of the factors that impact on health and well-being. These include education, employment, income, quality housing, amenities and recreation facilities, health-related behaviours including nutrition, physical activity, smoking, clear air and water quality and access to health services.</p> <p>Limerick has a health profile generally in line with the national average with 80% of the population rating their health as good or very good (compared with a national average of 83%) and 11% rating their health as fair, bad or very bad (2022). The trend in Limerick and nationally is towards a reduction in the percentage rating their health as Very Good/Good and this is associated with our ageing population.</p> <p>Population health is affected by health inequalities. In the most disadvantaged areas of the city and Rathkeale (the latter with a large population of Travellers), the percentage rating their health as fair, bad to very bad (17-23%), disability rates and rates of smoking are significantly higher than the Limerick and national averages. Health inequalities in these areas are connected to social deprivation (low education, low incomes, unemployment etc.). Poorer mental health is also more prevalent in socially disadvantaged populations.</p>

	<p>Groups in the population that tend to have poorer health include Travellers, older people and people with disabilities. Poverty, lifestyle factors (poor nutrition, smoking, alcohol and substance abuse, lack of physical activity) and lack of social connection or isolation is associated with higher incidence of chronic disease including obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancers.</p> <p>The <i>Healthy Ireland Programme</i> and <i>Sláinte Care Healthy Communities</i> programme are national programmes implemented locally to promote health and well-being in local communities. Under <i>Healthy Ireland</i>, local authorities have a key role in implementation of annual programmes of health promotion, local health initiatives and small grants to community projects. <i>Sláinte Care Healthy Communities</i> is specifically addressed to reducing health inequalities targeting most disadvantaged urban areas including areas in Limerick City. The programme promotes healthy lifestyles – e.g., quit smoking, social prescribing and physical activity – and other interventions in these areas. SICAP supports health and well-being in disadvantaged communities and targets disadvantaged groups (Travellers, people with disabilities, migrants and other groups). The includes running activities for children and families, programmes in healthy nutrition, addressing food poverty, personal empowerment to improve well-being, initiatives to reduce social isolation and acting as a gateway programme to improve access to services including mental health services for people experiencing exclusion. The Limerick Sports Partnership specifically targets disadvantaged groups, running programmes in communities to increase participation in physical activity.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health promotion and services to support healthy lifestyles - nutrition, stop smoking, address drugs misuse, participation in physical activity and in community - Actions to address Food Poverty - Recreation space and amenities - Access to health services – physical and mental health services - Community-based physical and mental health programmes and services
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council/LCDC, HSE Health Promotion, Limerick Sports Partnership, Local Development Companies
Outcome Indicators	<p>Reduction in the rate of smoking</p> <p>Increased physical activity levels</p> <p>Improved access to health and well-being services</p> <p>Reduction in health inequalities on social determinants (education, employment status) & health indicators- e.g., % unable to work due to permanent illness/disability, rate of smoking % in fair/bad/very bad health</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C4	<p>Ageing well & age-friendly Limerick</p> <p><i>Put in place the infrastructure and services so that people can age well in their own homes and communities for as long as possible and involve older people in community life and decision-making</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	<p>1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 7 Affordable and clean energy; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals</p>
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p>
	<p>The population of Ireland is ageing. In Limerick, 16% of the population of the population is aged 65 years and over, up from 14% in 2016. There is a significant increase in the proportion of oldest old – people aged 80 years+. Parts of the city (Killeely/Thomondgate, Janesboro, Farranshone and Ennis Road area) and some towns and villages (Kilmallock, Glin, Foynes, Broadford, Dromcollogher) have an older population structure. There are also elderly people living in rural areas and they may be more vulnerable to isolation and poorer access to services. An ageing population requires adaptions to infrastructure (housing, paths and walkways, amenities, community facilities, transportation) and services (education, social care, health care) so that needs of older people are met. Frail elderly often require special care within their homes and communities and, if needed, in residential settings. However, older people are important consumers of products and services, typically shopping locally, contributing to tourism and travel and some remain economically active well into their older years.</p> <p>The consultation process on the LECP showed that people in older age groups are important to civic life in urban and rural communities, with many volunteers being in older age groups. Involvement in community is important in maintaining social connectedness. Older people at higher risk of poverty / exclusion include: older people on low incomes, in poor quality or unsuitable housing, in private rented accommodation, impacted by energy poverty, isolated and lacking transport, in poorer health, with disabilities/chronic co-morbidities and with poor digital literacy.</p> <p>The policy approach is to support older people to live independently for as long as possible, to promote inclusion of older people in all aspects of social, economic and community life and decision-making. <i>Age Friendly Ireland</i> is the organisation responsible for the national <i>Age Friendly Programme</i>, affiliated to the World Health Organization's [WHO] Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities. Limerick City and County Council was one of the early leaders in developing an age-friendly strategy. As part of the <i>Age-friendly Limerick Strategy</i>, an inter-agency structure to oversee strategy and planning, the <i>Age-friendly Alliance</i> and an <i>Older Person's Council</i>, to give a voice to older residents, are in</p>

	place. Older people in or at risk of social exclusion and isolated elderly are amongst the target groups of SICAP.
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age-friendly principles applied in planning and design of neighbourhoods / housing, local facilities, amenities / recreation areas, buildings, transport - Housing adaptations & supports for independent living - Education, social and cultural activities - Health and social care - Digital inclusion initiatives - Actions to address needs of vulnerable and isolated elderly
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, HSE, An Garda Síochána, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Higher Education Institutions, Limerick Chamber, Local Development Companies, Local Link and other organisations
Outcome Indicators	<p>Number of age-friendly recreation space and amenities (increase)</p> <p>Number of interventions to improve housing suitability for older people (increase)</p> <p>Improved walkability of target towns</p> <p>Participation of older people in lifelong learning</p> <p>Improved digital literacy of older people</p> <p>Improved access to services for older people</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C5	<p>Social inclusion & personal empowerment</p> <p><i>Work to build social inclusion in society, reduce poverty and support people and households who are socially and economically disadvantaged, wherever they live, to improve their life chances and well-being</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective is addressed to people living in or at risk of poverty wherever they live. We know that certain areas, especially parts of urban areas / social housing estates / former estates and parts of our larger towns have clusters of people living in deprivation. However, more people who are poor or at risk of poverty live outside of those areas. Because they aren't clustered into specific areas, they tend to be more difficult to reach and to target for support.</i></p> <p>While living standards in Ireland have improved significantly, in 2021, 11.6% of households were at risk of poverty, meaning that their income was at or below</p>

	<p>the poverty threshold of 60% of median disposable income; 13.8% of households experienced enforced deprivation where they are unable to afford two or more basic items considered the norm for society and 4% of households experience consistent poverty meaning they are both under the threshold of 60% median income and living in enforced deprivation.</p> <p>Households that are most at risk of poverty and deprivation include those headed by: people unable to work due to illness or disability, long-term unemployed, adults living alone and in one parent households with young children and people in rented housing (particularly local authority-rented and on rent-support schemes). Travellers and persons coming out of or in Direct Provision / International Protection system are also at high risk of poverty. Isolation, lack of transport and poor access to services are characteristics of rural deprivation.</p> <p>Most recent data (2022) shows that there are approximately 10,000 adults in Limerick unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability, a further 4,400 (approximately) are long-term unemployed; some 20,000 adults have only Lower Secondary education or below; there are approximately 3,900 one-parent families with at least one child under 15 years; and there are some 9,200 households in some form of social housing.</p> <p>The concept of social inclusion incorporates having sufficient means or income but also access to services and participation in society (Ireland's <i>Roadmap to Social Inclusion</i>). At EU / national policy level, under the <i>European Pillar on Social Rights Action Plan</i>, Member States have agreed a poverty reduction target. The target set by Ireland is to reduce the number in poverty by 90,000 by 2030. Under national policy, the <i>Road Map to Social Inclusion</i>, the ambition is to reduce the consistent poverty rate to 2% or less by 2025 (currently at 4%) and for Ireland to be one of the most inclusive states in the EU.</p> <p>There are many policies and programmes in place to reduce poverty – income support, education, active employment measures and health interventions. The <i>Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)</i> is the mainstream programme delivered in local urban and rural Limerick to support inclusion: it focuses on community development and one-to-one support for people in specific target groups most at risk of exclusion, and actions to support children and families that are most at risk of exclusion.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information and advice services for individuals in or experiencing exclusion to access services they need - Support to get into the workforce and earn income from employment - Group-based programmes and activities to build social inclusion and get people to participate in society - Support to groups at highest risks – e.g., Travellers, migrants, homeless people, people with mental health issues, young people not in education training or employment
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council/LCDC, Local Development Companies, Department of Social Protection, Limerick Education and Training Board, HSE

Outcome Indicators	<p>Increased participation of people in target groups at risk of exclusion in lifelong learning</p> <p>Reduction in long-term unemployment</p> <p>Improved access to services by groups at risk of exclusion</p> <p>Increased participation of people in target groups at risk of exclusion in community and social activities</p>
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Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C6	<p>Sport, recreation & community buildings</p> <p><i>Put in place sport and recreation facilities and multi-purpose community buildings in areas where such facilities are lacking and there is a community need, improve existing facilities to meet changing community needs, upgrade them to modern standards and to be more energy efficient</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable cities and communities
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>This objective is addressed to the physical facilities for sport, recreation/amenity and community buildings. Such facilities are important for social connectedness, building sense of community, supporting physical activity and they are an important aspect of quality of life for local communities. Based on the consultation process on the LECP, all groups consulted (place-based communities, young people, migrants) want expanded provision and better local access to such facilities. Inclusive meeting and recreation space accessible to all groups and ideally multi-use facilities is the appropriate model. As the population grows and in keeping with compact growth – concentrated in city neighbourhoods, towns and villages - there is need to expand the amenity and recreation infrastructure in local residential areas.</p> <p>There is large number of playing pitches – especially soccer and GAA – across Limerick and varying needs for pitch extension and improvements such as lighting, all weather surfaces, club house, changing facilities etc. Public investment in the Regional Athletics Hub Newcastle West improves provision for athletics in Limerick. There are two public swimming pools owned / part owned by the local authority and others available for public use (UL Arena, hotels and leisure centres across the city and county). The dispersed population base of Limerick and scale of investment required in public swimming pools means that these are provided for larger population catchment areas. Large parks (e.g., Curraghchase, Baggott Estate), small parks and open spaces are provided across the local authority area.</p>

	<p>However, there are significant areas of unused or passive green space that could be recreation space, natural play areas and nature areas.</p> <p>The completion of greenways (the 40km Limerick Greenway, the 1.3km Castletroy Urban Greenway) are significant amenities (as well as active travel routes) and a number of additional routes are at feasibility assessment and planning stages. Outdoor recreation trails/walkways/cycle ways in both urban and rural areas that give access to nature have also been expanded.</p> <p>Playgrounds are distributed across Limerick and include larger playgrounds managed by the local authority and community-managed playgrounds. There is a small number of MUGAs / skate parks in built-up/residential areas.</p> <p>Deficits in provision emerge with population growth in certain areas/and population shifts. There is a need for upgrading works to existing playgrounds.</p> <p>Library Services / Library branch offices across the city and county provide for cultural, educational, social and information uses offering services in the physical settings and online. They also offer meeting places for community use as well as space for cultural activities, exhibitions and other events.</p> <p>In relation to community buildings, there is generally good provision especially in disadvantaged areas of the city and rural Limerick. Community facilities are lacking in some areas – e.g., in sub-urban areas where community organisation is less advanced and in parts of the city. Many community buildings require upgrading, re-design to modernise and improve access (disability access, assistive technologies and aids for people with impairments) and to improve energy efficiency. Other buildings (schools, sports clubs) may be used by a wider public for social, community and cultural uses.</p> <p>There are public funding streams in place such as the <i>Sports Capital</i> programme, the <i>Community Centres Fund</i>, the <i>LEADER</i> programme to support new and improved facilities and CLÁR in rural areas suffering depopulation. The <i>Outdoor Recreation and Infrastructure Scheme</i> supports walkways, cycleways and access to nature in countryside areas and into rural towns/villages. <i>Sláintecare Healthy Communities</i> may support development of greenspace/amenity space within city disadvantaged communities. Within larger-developments and urban / town regeneration projects, amenity and multi-use community facilities could be part of an overall scheme of development projects (URDF, RRDF and TVRS funding streams).</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks, playgrounds, natural play areas - Outdoor and indoor sports facilities, especially multi-use facilities - Outdoor recreation infrastructure in rural areas, providing access to nature, rivers / waterways - Physical improvement works to community buildings - New multi-purpose community centres

Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Local Development Companies, Limerick Sports Partnership, Sports Clubs / sporting organisations (GAA, FAI, IRFU) and local community groups
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the number of amenity areas/recreation space (by type & locations)</p> <p>Increase in number of new sports facilities & improved sports facilities (by type & locations)</p> <p>Increase in greenspace for community use</p> <p>Increase in new multi-purpose community facilities & improved facilities</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C7	<p>Societal / community awareness of climate action</p> <p><i>Deliver awareness-raising and education for people across all age groups, backgrounds and communities on climate change and sustainability so that we have a better understanding of how we need to change our behaviour and take action to protect the environment for our own and future generations</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production; 13 Climate Action; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>The global crisis of climate change requires urgent action to change behaviour, to mitigate effects of climate change and make adaptations due to the climate change that has already occurred and cannot be reversed. Action is needed at all levels – in public bodies and institutions, businesses, communities, households and individuals. The agenda for action is wide-ranging – transport and travel, energy consumption, the food we eat and where we source it from, our buildings, consumer products and waste, nature, natural resources and biodiversity.</p> <p>Ireland is legally bound to achieve set climate action targets – i.e., a 51% reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 2030, from a baseline in 2018, and net zero by 2050. Ireland has signed up to the <i>UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)</i>. People are aware of the need for climate action but depth of understanding and what individuals, households and communities can do are lacking. Knowledge of new opportunities presenting with climate change (e.g., green energy, circular economy, local supply chains, new skills areas, jobs and businesses in the green economy) and capacity to take advantage of these opportunities are also lacking. The <i>Just Transition</i> agenda needs more attention – so that environmental sustainability is fair and inclusive and the burden does not fall disproportionately</p>

	<p>on certain groups such as people on low incomes and areas/people dependent on sectors that are worse impacted by climate change.</p> <p>Under the <i>UN SDGs</i>, Ireland's second implementation plan identifies as strategic priorities: expansion of public awareness of the SDGs and their relevance, stakeholder participation in implementation and follow-up and support to local communities and their organisations to make their own contribution to achieving the goals. Government has put in place a <i>Climate Action Fund</i> (2022) to invest in community climate action projects and education and capacity building. The programme aims to empower communities to shape and build low carbon, sustainable communities in a coherent way. Local projects that draw on creativity and the arts to build awareness of climate change and empower citizens to make behavioural change are supported in <i>Creative Climate Action II: Agents of Change programme</i> (2022). This is a joint initiative of Creative Ireland and the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. Local Climate Action Officers are in place in local authorities including Limerick. The new SICAP Programme, <i>SICAP 2024-2028</i>, includes Just Transition as a thematic area in community development while environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting theme in <i>LEADER 2023-2028</i>.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and awareness programmes on climate change, the “green” transition / environmental sustainability and integrates nature-based solutions - Capacity building of community and voluntary organisations in planning for sustainable living - Climate action awareness and initiatives for businesses / commercial operations - Local plans, initiatives and campaigns in climate action areas such as waste, circular economy, local food projects, community buildings and facilities - Local arts & creative projects addressed to climate change
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Local Development Companies, Limerick Education and Training Board, Higher Education Institutions, Public Participation Network (PPN)
Outcome Indicators	<p>Number of awareness-raising & education events for the general public and community (Increase from baseline year, 2023)</p> <p>Number of community-led climate action strategies/plans by theme/location (Increase from baseline year 2023)</p> <p>Number of community initiatives on climate action by theme/location (Increase from baseline year 2023)</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C8	<p>Civic life & social capital</p> <p><i>Develop volunteering by people across all age groups and social and cultural backgrounds, build up skills and capacity of voluntary and community organisations and support them to get involved in all aspects of community life</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	<p>3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals</p>
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p>
	<p>There is a large number of active local community and voluntary groups across urban and rural Limerick, playing important roles in communities and adding to quality of life. They bring people together, build civic spirit and pride of place, get together to do things for themselves, provide support to vulnerable groups, promote social inclusion and represent local communities and the community voice in civic and representative structures such as Council committees. Local community and voluntary groups are organised into the <i>Public Participation Network</i> (PPN) – the representative body of the sector - with the Network Secretariat supported by a Resource Worker based within the Council. Established local and community groups provide important services to their local communities – ranging from social activities for general community, older people, youth, men and women (Men's and Women's Sheds), adult education and training, health and well-being activities, digital hubs, childcare and out-of-school care, local environmental projects, Tidy Towns, local tourism projects, cultural and heritage activities and development and management of recreation space. Some groups run community enterprises providing services to local communities that can't be provided by the market and creating local employment. Many state services could not be delivered in disadvantaged communities without the involvement of the community and voluntary sector. Community and voluntary groups are important in finding solutions to current societal challenges including climate change, population ageing and migrant / refugee integration.</p> <p>Drawing on the consultation process on the LECP, local community / community spirit is the most valued aspect of community life. Local community and voluntary groups, however, face challenges and need support to address them. These include: ageing of the volunteer base, lack of volunteers, lack of diversity of the volunteer base, perceived lack of inclusiveness, skills deficits in management, fund-raising and administration, weak revenue base for operational costs and challenges of financial sustainability. Data from Census 2022 showed higher rates of volunteering in the population in local rural compared with urban communities and lower rates in disadvantaged areas, especially in the most disadvantaged areas of the city. This shows the need to focus on community development</p>

	<p>approaches which encourage and support people in these areas especially to participate in community and civic life.</p> <p>Government recognises the important contribution played by the community and voluntary sector in general, as presented in the policy document, <i>Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland 2019-2024</i>. The strategy sets out the long-term ambitions for community and local development, identifies the role of the sector in creating vibrant civic communities and democracy, and particularly their role in marginalized communities. <i>The Road Map to Social Inclusion</i> identifies the role of the sector in building inclusive communities and in supporting social inclusion. The role of the sector is identified in other areas of policy including creativity and the arts (<i>Creative Ireland</i>), social enterprise and climate action (<i>Climate Action Fund</i>).</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building for local community and voluntary organisations - Local area-based planning and community projects - Volunteering initiatives - Develop the membership base of the PPN and support its operation and mission to represent the sector - Support existing groups to develop and become sustainable
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council/LCDC, Local Development Companies, PPN
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the number volunteers in local community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Increased diversity in volunteering in local community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Number of organisations participating in the PPN</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C9	<p>Integration of migrants & diverse cultural & ethnic communities</p> <p><i>Support people from different nationalities, cultural/ethnic backgrounds and identities to feel welcome and settle in Limerick, to access the services they need, build representation and get involved in all aspects of social, economic and community life without discrimination</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	Why is this important?
	Limerick, like Ireland in general, is becoming more culturally diverse. In Census 2022, 11% of residents are non-Irish citizens. Since Census 2022, there has been

	<p>further in-migration as part of Ireland's response to arrival of people from Ukraine under Temporary Protection and International Protection from other countries. Migrant populations are concentrated in Limerick inner city, Newcastle West (mainly Polish /eastern EU states) and other rural towns. A Community Support Forum, led by the local authority, is in place to coordinate the work of all local services (public and voluntary) to displaced Ukrainian populations. Its remit will be broadened to include all persons arriving to Limerick under International Protection.</p> <p>Increased cultural diversity brings positives including enrichment from exposure to new cultures, skills and additional workers in the local economy and enrichment of civic life. It also brings challenges particularly in areas where there are existing pressures – housing, health and education. Migrants may have specific needs in areas including health, English language learning and recognition of qualifications. Integration is a two-way process of building mutual understanding and inter-cultural cooperation between migrant and host communities and taking measures to combat racism. All of these issues emerged in the consultations on the LECP. A migrant integration strategy, <i>Belonging to Limerick – Limerick City and County Integration Plan 2019-2023</i> and a Migrant Integration Working Group are in place in Limerick. In 2023, there is a newly established Limerick Migrant Integration Forum that bring together over 30 people from over 20 nationalities.</p> <p>In addition to migrants, Travellers and communities with specific identities face additional challenges including exclusion and discrimination. Travellers are a most disadvantaged group, affected by poor accommodation, low education, unemployment, poorer health, mental ill health and shorter life expectancy. Only some 1% of the population of Limerick identified as White Irish Traveller in Census 2022. The actual size of the population is greater than this and there are areas in Limerick (within urban Limerick and in towns) with relatively large Traveller populations. Linked to social deprivation, Travellers are a priority target group in many policy areas: health, education, employment, etc. Drawing on the consultations, interventions are needed to break down barriers between Travellers and the settled population, to improve representation of Travellers and to develop own organisation. The need for Traveller-led interventions in key areas – health, education and access to work – were also articulated.</p> <p>Other communities that experience exclusion, feel vulnerable in personal safety and may be affected by discrimination include LGBTQI+ people (from youth through to people in older age groups). Interventions to improve representation and break down barriers similarly are needed here.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural, social, recreational & other initiatives to promote integration of different cultural communities (migrants, Travellers) - Anti-racism campaigns - Interventions in education, health & other areas - Development of representative structures, networks and capacity building

Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Local Development Companies, HSE, LCETB and Higher Education Institutions
Outcome Indicators	<p>Number and participation in events to combat racism, anti-discrimination and/or celebrate diversity</p> <p>Increased participation of persons from different cultural/ethnic communities/other identities in community and voluntary organisations</p> <p>Increased participation of different cultural/ethnic communities/other identities in policy making structures including committees and the PPN</p> <p>Improved access to education services & education outcomes</p> <p>Improved access to health services</p> <p>Increased participation in the workforce</p>

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objective
SCDO No. C10	<p>Community safety & crime prevention</p> <p><i>Work in cooperation with public agencies including An Garda Síochána community policing and voluntary and community organisations to set up local initiatives to prevent crime and create safe and civic communities in urban and rural Limerick</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>Sense of personal safety in day-to-day life and community safety are extremely important factors in quality of life and mental health and well-being. Safety from harm, tolerance and low crime under-pin a successful local economy where businesses can operate effectively and skilled people are attracted to live and work in Limerick. Building community trust in policing is an important part of building civic communities. As well as community policing, use of technology (CCTV) can enhance community safety and prevent crime.</p> <p>Limerick City has had a negative reputation in relation to serious and organised crime. This situation was brought under control with additional policing resources, new responses from the criminal justice system and working in cooperation with local communities. There are differences in urban compared with rural crime and in policing and community responses.</p> <p>Crime statistics show that certain types of offences consistently account for the largest number of reported offences across Limerick Garda Division - thefts,</p>

	<p>public order offences, damage to property and environment, attempts / threats to assaults, harassment and controlled drugs offences. Drug-related crime and anti-social behaviour particularly affect quality of life. Certain types of crime are increasingly reported including gender-based violence / domestic violence. Cybercrime and staying safe online are relatively new aspects of crime and increasing in their incidence. Older people lacking digital skills may be especially vulnerable to cybercrime while staying safe online particularly affects children and young people.</p> <p>Certain groups in society are more at risk of being drawn into criminal activity, have lower trust in policing and / or are vulnerable as victims of crime. These include people living in deprivation, people with low education, young early school leavers, people suffering from addiction, migrants, Travellers. The <i>Joint Policing Committee of Limerick City and County Council</i> (with representation of An Garda Síochána, elected members and officials of the Council, members of the Oireachtas and community and voluntary sector) provide a forum and a plan to address community safety and policing issues in Limerick. Other inter-agency structures include representation of An Garda Síochána / the justice system (e.g., the Limerick Children's and Young Person's Services Committee, Healthy Ireland, Ukrainian Response Forum, Integration inter-agency and community level committees in the Limerick Regeneration Programme). These structures also work promote community safety and respond to challenges as part of community policing.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-agency initiatives to deal with specific issues – e.g., anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, racially-motivated crime - Local community safety and crime prevention plans - Campaigns, awareness-raising, education – e.g., road safety, cybercrime, staying safe online
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, An Garda Síochána, Local Development Companies and other voluntary bodies
Outcome Indicators	<p>Reduction in public order offences</p> <p>Improved sense of safety in city centre and other locations</p> <p>Increase in local crime prevention initiatives in local communities/targeted on specific groups</p> <p>Improved trust in policing in communities/amongst groups vulnerable to crime</p>

6.3.3 Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives

HLG	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
	I1. Limerick City Centre regeneration
	I2. Disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods
	I3. Connected city & sub-urban neighbourhoods
	I4. Town & village renewal & connected settlements
	I5. Culture, arts, heritage & sport
	I6. Internationalisation, branding & promotion
	I7. Technology and SMART strategies
	I8. Active travel/sustainable travel
	I9. Climate action mitigation / adaptation and natural resources
	I10. Green energy /energy systems

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated	Limerick City Centre regeneration
No. I1	<i>Create a living safe multi-cultural city centre with vibrant businesses, spaces and places for people to meet and green space and recreation</i>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 6 Clean water & sanitation; 7 Affordable & clean energy; 8 Decent work & economic growth; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
Rationale	Why is this important?
	Limerick City is the largest urban centre in the Mid-West Region. The economic function and vibrancy of the city are important for its rural hinterland and the region as a whole. As an economic centre, Limerick urban area – the city and suburbs - has a large daytime working population (44,600 in 2016). Over half of those working in the city and suburbs commute into the area from other locations. More needs to be done to achieve the “living city” where people predominantly live and work in the same place. Apart from public offices in the city centre, areas

	<p>which have the largest numbers of jobs are in sub-urban locations in Dooradoyle / Raheen, Castletroy / Plassey / Annacotty and Ballysimon.</p> <p>The core of the city has suffered decline, reflected in high levels of commercial vacancy (19.4% in Q3 2022). Vacancy is predominantly in older stock buildings that are not well suited to modern office or other commercial use and retail premises. Under the <i>Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan</i> (updated 2022), large-scale regeneration projects are progressing funded by government (including the Urban Regeneration & Development Fund) and loan/investment financing (European Investment Banks). These include public realm projects such as the boardwalk along the riverfront (completed) and O'Connell Street works, modern office accommodation in Garden's International (completed) and the Opera Square project, a multi-use development of public and private office space, retail/hospitality, residential, civic space and a new central library for Limerick. <i>Engine Collaborative Centre</i> and co-working space have also been developed in city centre locations by <i>Innovate Limerick</i>. Initiatives are underway to rejuvenate the housing stock in Georgian Limerick. There are challenges in delivering on this agenda connected to costs of re-development of buildings that are protected structures and considered uneconomic to private investors and families wishing to settle in the city centre. Other large-scale strategic projects are at different stages of planning and design including the Cleeves Riverside Park and the Colbert Quarter Development, the latter led by the <i>Land Development Agency</i> and will include significant residential development on brownfield /infill sites.</p> <p>City centre businesses and employment were badly impacted through increased remote working during and after COVID-19 and reduced footfall due to changes in shopping patterns – online and the longer-established pattern of shopping at out-of-town retail parks. The population of the core of the city, however, has grown in recent years especially driven by arrival of migrant populations, increased social housing in private rental accommodation (HAP/RAS) and professional workers living in the city centre. It is now a more diverse and multicultural place. While population growth and diversity are positive, trends in retail, uncertainty in commercial modern office accommodation demand and other issues bring challenges to sustained regeneration of the city centre. City centre regeneration – to make the city centre more compact (with work opportunities, close to services, shopping and recreation/amenity), more liveable and more attractive - is supported in the National Strategic Objective to promote Compact Growth under the <i>National Planning Framework Ireland 2040</i>, in the <i>Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the Southern Region</i> and in the <i>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028</i>.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opera Square including new central library for Limerick and civic space - Progress other strategic sites – Cleeves Riverside Park, Colbert Quarter, Arthur's Quay - Public realm, civic and cultural space / green space / recreation - Re-use of vacant and derelict buildings & lands - Retail, hospitality businesses in the city centre - Georgian Quarter Living Limerick Initiative

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community safety in the city centre
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council/Limerick Twenty Thirty DAC, Land Development Agency, Limerick Chamber, An Garda Síochána, PAUL Partnership
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the population in Limerick City Centre</p> <p>Increase in the number of persons both working and living in Limerick City (% of daytime working population)</p> <p>Reduction in commercial vacancy rate</p> <p>Increase in recreation/amenity/civic space</p> <p>Delivery of strategic inner city strategic projects (No. & value)</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated	Disadvantaged city neighbourhoods
No. I2	<i>Lift our disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city out of poverty and exclusion</i>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 7 Affordable & clean energy; 8 Decent work & economic growth; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p><i>This objective focuses on delivery of an integrated and targeted approach to address poverty and exclusion in the most disadvantaged area-based communities in Limerick city. An integrated and coordination approach is good practice to deal with the multifaceted and higher level / more complex needs of these areas. Flexible services designed to respond to the needs and a community development approach are required. Other objectives of the LECP, across community and economic development objectives, are also relevant to addressing the needs of these areas.</i></p> <p>There is a high level of social inequality across Limerick city. Social inequality is associated with many social ills including higher crime rates, poor health and higher mortality rates, poorer outcomes for children and young people and lack of civic spirit. Local authority housing estates in the city are the most disadvantaged areas and some parts have a profile of extreme disadvantage. There were some improvements in deprivation measures in the most disadvantaged areas recorded in Census 2022 (e.g., lower unemployment rates, improved education profile). However, as the society in general advanced with the significant upturn in the economy, the gap between these areas and the average widened since 2016. This is because the most disadvantaged areas are at a lower base and when economic opportunities expand, the average or more advantaged areas improve at a faster pace than those that are most disadvantaged. Social isolation and shut down of physical buildings and services during COVID-19 also had a worse impact on disadvantaged areas / groups where, in many respects, they fell further behind.</p>

In Limerick city in 2022, some 21,440 persons live in areas classified as Disadvantaged/Very Disadvantaged/Extremely Disadvantaged under the Pobal HP Relative Deprivation Index, an increase since 2016. Just under 60% of those (some 12,690 persons) live in areas that are Extremely or Very Disadvantaged. Disadvantage is associated with indicators including: low education, high male and female unemployment rates, lower social class based on occupations, lone parent households and overcrowded housing. The Regeneration Areas of Limerick City – St. Mary's Park and Moyross on the northside and Southill and Ballinacurra Weston on the southside – are the most disadvantaged areas (Very and Extremely Disadvantaged). Other neighbourhoods adjacent to them are also very disadvantaged or have pockets of extreme disadvantage – Ballynatty, Killeely / Thomondgate, parts of Kings Island and parts of Garryowen.

A regeneration programme for the most disadvantaged areas of Limerick City, the *Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan* has been in implementation by Limerick City and County Council for some 10 years. The current programme was due to end in 2023 but funding by central government has been extended for a further year. The programme, funded by central government at approximately €300 million over 10 years, has delivered: new housing developments and upgrades of existing housing, public realm improvements, community facilities / recreation and other physical works to improve connectivity of these neighbourhoods to the city (approximately €260 million) and a social and economic programme (€40 million). The latter involves implementation of projects in community development, services for families and youth, education and learning, training and work and health and well-being initiatives delivered by community and voluntary bodies via an annual grant scheme. Additional funding has enabled development of community centres as hubs for local service provision as well as space for education, training, youth and child and family services / activities. Progress has been achieved on many fronts – housing, estate management, community safety (CCTV), education levels, skills and access to work and expanded services at community centres.

However, based on latest evidence, deep social inequalities remain, as outlined above. Continuation of an integrated area-based approach beyond 2024 is needed over a longer-term timeframe to continue regeneration and reduce the gaps between these areas and the mainstream. Targeted funding and support programmes and connecting these areas with opportunities for education, work, cultural activities and services in the wider city are important objectives of the Council. A *Status Update of the LRFIP* has been prepared by the Council and the extension of the programme into and beyond 2024 has been proposed to government. In the *Status Update*, the vision, objectives and actions of the LRFIP remain the same. These are enshrined in the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028* while the LRFIP remains the substantive policy document for the sustainable development of the regeneration areas.

A local inter-agency committee involving senior personnel of the key public agencies and community interests, the Local Strategic Advisory and Monitoring Group, leads a coordinated and strategic approach to regeneration of the target areas and this includes setting local priorities. Mainstream policies and programmes are in place to reduce poverty – income support, educational supports, active employment

	<p>measures, family support and health interventions – and promote social inclusion in general. However, for areas that are extremely or very disadvantaged, area-based solutions are a more appropriate solution as it allows for the creation/implementation of innovative and targeted economic and social programmes together with physical interventions.</p> <p>An extension to the Limerick Regeneration Programme can accelerate the gains made across physical, economic and social pillars including significant mixed tenure housing, new connections, improved public realm, new commercial activity, increased employment, increased educational attainment at secondary and third level. Such progress would have a knock-on effect across the City as a whole.</p> <p>The <i>Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)</i> is the mainstream programme delivered to support inclusion and access to services for people in exclusion. Under the programme, disadvantaged areas are targeted for support – with a target of more than 50% of individuals supported to be residents of disadvantaged areas. SICAP is delivered in Limerick City by the PAUL Partnership working with a consortium of community partners in the disadvantaged areas.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community development to build participation in community life - Education and learning and health and well-being initiatives (Sláintecare Healthy Communities) - Family support, youth development & out-of-school services for children - Training and work initiatives - Social enterprise - Recreation/amenity/ public realm including greenspace/play areas/open parks - Community centres/community hubs - Estate management & housing maintenance including reduction of dereliction/vacancy & refurbishment - Safe communities/Community policing
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, HSE, Tusla, LCETB, An Garda Síochána, Probation Service, PAUL Partnership, Department of Housing and Local Government, Department of Justice, community organisations in regeneration areas
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the number of persons at work in regeneration areas</p> <p>Reduction in long-term unemployment</p> <p>Participation of adults in lifelong learning (increase)</p> <p>Participation in skills training for work</p> <p>Increased levels of education in adults (reduction in % with lowest education)</p> <p>Participation of adults in community organisations/volunteering</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives

Integrated	Connected city & sub-urban neighbourhoods
No. I3	<i>Build up residential neighbourhoods in the city and suburbs that are walkable, connected to each other with good public transport as well as amenities, services and accessible work opportunities so they can work as “10 minute” neighbourhoods</i>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>This objective is important to promote good quality of life in residential neighbourhoods in Limerick city and suburbs, to support adaption to climate change and create sustainable communities. Creating 10-minute neighbourhoods is one of the core objectives of the updated <i>Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan</i>. It is included in the <i>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028</i>, and in national and regional spatial planning frameworks – the compact growth objective under the <i>National Planning Framework Ireland 2040</i> and the <i>Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the Southern Region</i>.</p> <p>Compact growth means that growth in residential populations and housing is delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on in-fill or brownfield sites as opposed to creating “sprawl” and dispersed development. Concentrating development within the built-up area of settlements on sites that are better served by existing facilities and public transport is more sustainable.</p> <p>Government’s <i>Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i> (2024), replacing the 2009 Guidelines, provide guidance in relation to the planning and development of settlements and housing, expanding on higher-level strategy in the <i>National Planning Framework</i> (NPF). The Guidelines propose the application of residential densities that take into account settlement size and different place contexts within each settlement, recognising the differences between cities, large and medium-sized towns and smaller towns and villages. In cities, they propose a range of housing densities (dwellings per hectare/dph) in the different areas of the settlement (City Centre, City Urban Neighbourhoods, City Suburban / Urban Extension).</p> <p>Planning for 10-minutue neighbourhoods is the approach going forward - with recreation, amenity, green space, education, health, childcare services and work opportunities within walking or cycling distance of where people live. Good public transport services and sustainable travel networks for walking and cycling across the city are needed to enable population mobility while reducing reliance on the car. See Objective 18, Sustainable travel / Active Travel. This is supported under the <i>Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy</i> (2022). The consultations of the LECP identified that being close to amenities, recreation, shops, services and work opportunities is highly appreciated. This is especially the case with migrants, youth, people with disabilities and older people. “Walkable” neighbourhoods, public realm and space where people can meet / get to know each other create the conditions for residents to spend more time in their neighbourhoods. This helps to build civic spirit,</p>

	<p>social capital and community associations that can represent the interests of the local community.</p> <p>The socio-economic analysis identified highly dispersed living patterns in Limerick, increasing reliance on the car and associated challenges in local service delivery. Increasing housing supply within the footprint of existing urban areas and settlements is amongst the highest priorities of government. There is also significant government investment (<i>National Transport Authority</i>) in the development of sustainable travel infrastructure and expanded public transport. In consultation with local communities, new schemes are being rolled out across the greater urban area.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Masterplanning for 10-minute neighbourhoods - Neighbourhood-based community facilities & enterprise hubs - Planning of sustainable travel – cycleways, walkways - across neighbourhoods in Limerick City and Suburbs - Walkways and cycleways within neighbourhoods, to schools, crèches, places of work, public and community services - Expanded public transport services - Community development – e.g., expanding residents associations and other organisations that represent the community
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Bus Connects Limerick/Local Link/National Transport Authority, Department of Education (Schools), HSE (Primary Care), Local community organisations
Outcome Indicators	<p>Number of masterplans for 10-minute neighbourhoods</p> <p>Number of infrastructure developments in urban neighbourhoods to support 10-minute neighbourhood (by type - education, health, retail, amenity - and neighbourhood location)</p> <p>Improved walkability of neighbourhood (by location)</p> <p>Improved access to work, services, amenity via sustainable travel networks (bus, cycleways/walkways)</p> <p>Increased participation in neighbourhood-based community organisations</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated No. 14	<p>Town & village renewal & connected settlements</p> <p><i>Reduce dereliction and re-use vacant buildings and sites in town / village centres to create living vibrant villages and towns with shops, services, quality public realm and work opportunities. Make our rural villages and towns more sustainable by connecting nearby settlements with safe walking routes, cycleways and public and / or community transport and support holistic rural development led by local communities</i></p>
LECP HLGs	

UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
Rationale	Why is this important?
	<p>The regeneration and development of our towns and villages is most important to strengthen our rural economies and create sustainable rural communities. Limerick has a large number of rural settlements. This is dominated by a pattern of few large towns and many smaller towns and villages that are highly dispersed. The profile and development needs of the settlements show much diversity. This means that different approaches and actions are needed to support their renewal and development. A “one size fits all approach” won’t work. Local plans informed by analysis of the development needs and opportunities and engaging local stakeholders is the appropriate approach.</p> <p>Specific needs are influenced by where the settlement is located in the territory and factors including proximity to transport networks and location of employment. Development potential is influenced by other factors including demographic and social characteristics, built infrastructure, service base / function, history and cultural and heritage resources. The sustainability of rural areas including open countryside is strongly connected to the renewal and vibrancy of rural settlements.</p> <p>Outside of Limerick Metropolitan Area, Newcastle West is the largest town with a population of 7,209 (2022) and the only town in rural Limerick with a population of 5,000 and over. This is followed in order of population size by Abbeyfeale (2,206), Kilmallock (1,761), Caherconlish (1,569), Murroe (1,432), Croom (1,256), Askeaton (1,236), Rathkeale (1,231) and Adare (1,224). Newcastle West, with an industrial and service base, has the largest daytime working population of the towns in rural Limerick. Newcastle West is the only Limerick Key Town identified in the <i>Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)</i> and the <i>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028</i>. It is targeted for population growth (to 8,607 or 30% from the 2016 population level by 2028) and economic expansion as a strategically-located urban centre / economic hub in the west of the County with significant influence in a sub-regional context.</p> <p>Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale, ‘though structurally weak, are important economic centres with more daytime jobs compared with the number of residents of the towns at work. Enterprise Hubs, run by voluntary/community organisations or private operators, have been developed in a number of towns and are under the umbrella of the Engine Network of Hubs, coordinated by <i>Innovate Limerick</i>.</p> <p>Data for Limerick as a whole show a pattern of cross-commuting the city and county to work and home, reflecting mismatches in terms of where people live and where they work. This highlights the need to create economic opportunities, develop services and amenities to allow people to live and work in the same area.</p> <p>Limerick is amongst the counties with a high commercial vacancy rate (16.9% Q3 2023) where many towns and villages are blighted by vacancy/dereliction linked to closure of shops, pubs and commercial activities in the core. Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West are locations with highest vacancy rates in Limerick and Munster (at 22.1% and 21.6% respectively, in Q3 2023). As well as vacancy, a longer-standing trend is the shift in population, especially family-based households with children, from the</p>

	<p>core of towns and villages to the outskirts and into rural areas. This trend has also increased reliance on the car as the main mode of everyday transport. This is unsustainable in the face of challenges presenting with climate action. Improving public and community transport services and sustainable / active travel routes in rural Limerick is a further element of the approach. See Objective 18, Sustainable travel / Active Travel.</p> <p>Creating living, socially and economically sustainable rural towns and villages is a key objective of <i>Our Rural Future</i> and of the <i>National Policy Framework Ireland 2040</i>, the <i>Regional Economic and Spatial Plan for the Southern Region</i> and the <i>Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028</i>. Regeneration and development of towns and villages out from the core is the objectives of government's <i>Town Centre First</i> Policy. This approach is based on having a "Town Centre First" Plan developed with multi-stakeholder involvement including local businesses and the community. Under the <i>Town Centre First Framework</i>, a Town Centre First Plan has been completed for Abbeyfeale, has commenced for Rathkeale while Kilmallock and Askeaton are the next towns in order of priority for such Plans. Town Teams comprising key stakeholders from public agencies, businesses and community and led by the local authority, are in place for Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale. Priority towns for the set-up of Town Teams are Newcastle West, Kilmallock, Askeaton and Cappamore.</p> <p>Funding streams are in place to support the <i>Town Centre First Framework</i> including the <i>Rural Regeneration and Development Fund</i> (RRDF) for transformative projects of scale, the <i>Town and Village Renewal Scheme</i>, investment in enterprise hubs/digital hubs under <i>Connected Communities</i> and measures to renew vacant buildings and sites for residential/and new housing development under government's <i>Housing for All</i> Action Plan.</p> <p>In relation to rural villages, the SMART Villages concept is a key approach to be delivered as part of the new <i>LEADER programme</i>, working with a community-led local development approach. With a large number of smaller settlements in Limerick, the future sustainability of villages, offering local services, economic and social opportunities lies in cross-village / cross-settlement links, shared resources / shared services and cooperation, supported by public and community transport and sustainable travel connections. Adopting a place-based approach to rural development to meet specific needs, empowering rural communities to design and deliver actions and involving young people in decision-making are all identified in <i>Our Rural Future</i>. The <i>LEADER programme</i> is a key funding stream focused on building community capacity and supporting community-led local development.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Masterplans for key towns based on the Town Centre First approach - Re-use of vacant and derelict buildings and sites for housing, economic, tourism and community use - Public realm plans, public realm works, civic and cultural space - Green areas, amenity and recreation space - Inter-settlement sustainable travel infrastructure and public and community transport services - SMART village plans & number of villages involved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local models of shared services including childcare, elderly care / facilities / sport & recreation / enterprise / economic services / tourism
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Limerick LEO/Innovate Limerick, Local Development Companies, LCETB, HSE, Local Link, community and voluntary groups
Outcome indicators	<p>For targeted towns including Town First locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in commercial and residential vacancy in town / village cores • Increase in population in town / village cores by household family cycle • Increase in work opportunities <p>Public realm plans approved/in implementation/delivered</p> <p>New or enhanced amenity/recreation/community space</p> <p>Models of SMART villages in implementation (See Objective I7 Technology and SMART strategies)</p> <p>Increase in public/community transport routes and services for towns and villages</p> <p>Increase in active travel routes within and across settlements (See Objective I8 Active travel/Sustainable travel)</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated No. I5	<p>Culture, arts, heritage & sport</p> <p><i>Preserve and build pride in our culture, heritage, history and sport in Limerick, support people and communities to get more involved in them and promote them as a way to improve our social, community and economic well-being</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>Culture, arts, heritage and sport are part of our identity; they bring enjoyment and enrich the lives of individuals and communities. Activities in all of these areas can bring economic opportunities as well as social, health and well-being and community benefits. The economic value of sport is reflected in Limerick in the internationally-renowned UL Centre of Excellence in Sport, Munster Rugby and the developing business in sports analytics (SportsTech).</p> <p>Sport and the arts, culture and heritage can promote social inclusion, build community pride and community spirit and provide therapeutic interventions to promote positive mental health and social inclusion. Arts, culture and sport provide opportunities for young people, people with disabilities and vulnerable groups to</p>

	<p>participate in social life. Arts and creativity are also a vehicle to promote awareness and participation in climate action measures.</p> <p>Limerick has a strong sporting tradition and profile across different area of sport – GAA, rugby, soccer, hockey, swimming, river-based sports, athletics and outdoor activities. Based on findings from the consultations, sport is considered a positive aspect of community life in Limerick.</p> <p>Arts, culture and heritage have a strong profile in Limerick – in terms of history, architecture / built environment, music, literature and other forms of arts. Limerick has significant cultural infrastructure and resources including venues for music, theatre and other production, from large to small scale; cultural venues for visitors such as the Hunt Museum, King John's Castle, Limerick City Gallery of Art; programmes of festivals and events; internationally renowned art and design centres (Limerick School of Art and Design, Product Design at UL); architecture in the School of Architecture UL and music and dance (Irish World Music and Dance Academy at UL). It has numerous community-based arts projects (e.g., Dance Limerick, Music Generation, The GAFF, the Honey Fitz at Lough Gur, Friar's Gate Theatre Kilmallock etc.).</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community arts projects especially focused on social inclusion (disadvantaged groups, people with disabilities, other groups) - Creative projects to build awareness and promote climate action - Festivals and cultural events drawing on history, literature, creative arts - Marketing and promotion of culture, arts & sport - Cultural venues, infrastructure and space - Arts and sport as a therapeutic intervention
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, GAA/IRFU/FAI, Limerick Sports Partnership, Higher Education Institutions, LCETB, Limerick Youth Services, Local Development Companies and other voluntary and community organisations
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increased number of festivals and events & participation in those events</p> <p>Increased participation in sport targeting excluded groups</p> <p>Increased participation in creative arts (music, art, drama, etc.). targeting excluded groups</p> <p>Improved outcomes for people participating in sport and arts-based therapeutic interventions</p> <p>Increase in business activity and employment in cultural and creative industries (See E8 Cultural & creative industries above)</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated No. 16	Internationalisation, branding & promotion

	<i>Build up the international profile of Limerick, expand our role in global development issues and humanitarian aid and promote Limerick as an attractive and welcoming place for people to live, to work, to visit, to study and for cultural activities</i>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
Rationale	Why is this important?
	<p>Limerick is building its reputation as a successful and attractive small city in an international context. The Council, in particular, and other public sector partners (Fáilte Ireland, the IDA, Limerick's third level educational institutions) engage in promoting Limerick as a great place to live, to work, to invest in, to visit and to come to study.</p> <p>Internationalisation of Limerick is consistent with objectives for the Mid-West Region to promote balanced regional development, attracting a greater share of Foreign Direct Investment to regions outside of Dublin. It contributes to a strong economy in other ways by expanding markets for the sale of products and services of businesses located in Limerick.</p> <p>Limerick City and County Council's brand – <i>Atlantic Edge European Embrace</i> – reflects its ambition to advance internationalisation; Limerick is being promoted as a <i>Gateway City</i> to the <i>Wild Atlantic Way</i> bringing more visitors to the county and sub-region; the Council is engaged with mobilising the <i>Global Limerick Diaspora</i>; the Council and other public and voluntary and community organisations are involved in <i>EU Cooperation Networks</i> (Interreg, Urbact, Horizon Europe) and international partnerships in different thematic areas (energy, climate action, migration). As well as expanding our reach, our reputation and bringing investment and visitors, international links provide opportunities to exchange information and bring new knowledge to Limerick. Programmes such as ERASMUS / ERASMUS+ provide opportunities for young people to study and train in other EU countries, broadened their horizons, knowledge and skills base. Limerick is also playing its role in global development issues – e.g., FairTrade – and in responding to Ireland's international commitment to host and support re-settlement of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers - Ukrainian, Afghan and other nationalities arriving in Ireland under international and temporary protection.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development aid and humanitarian interventions - Engagement in EU Cooperation Networks and exchanges (public bodies, community and voluntary bodies, young people) - International trade missions, events and international digital trade platforms - Engage with the Limerick Global Diaspora
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Higher Education Institutions in Limerick, Local Development Companies, Limerick Youth Services

Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in the number and funding from EU Cooperation projects involving LCCC/local partners</p> <p>Increase in the number and diversity of international promotional activities (types, purpose, locations)</p> <p>Model initiatives that show benefits to Limerick of international cooperation</p>
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Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated No. 17	<p>Technology and SMART strategies</p> <p><i>Find new solutions to challenges we face and use technology and digital / online services to improve social, community and economic well-being, taking measures to make access to technology and digital services inclusive</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>Global and societal challenges presenting in 21st Century Ireland and the pace of change require that public bodies, businesses, community and voluntary sector organisations and communities themselves look to find new ways of doing things and solutions to societal challenges. New technologies especially the expansion of digital technologies create new opportunities, improve access to services, better utilise scarce resources and support innovation.</p> <p>SMART Cities, SMART Towns and SMART Villages promote innovation in local settings. The “SMART” concept centres on strategies that solve problems with technology especially digital tools. However, it goes beyond technology to include local knowledge, resources and working collaboratively to improve economic, social or environmental conditions. SMART strategies can be about improving access to services – for instance, using technology to enable people with disabilities to participate in education, work and social life; supporting older people to age well in place; developing mobility solutions for those with impairments and creating new forms of agile transport. SMART strategies in the local setting can also focus on eliminating waste, shortening local supply lines, expanding local food markets, reducing energy use and expanding energy generation from renewal sources. Applications can also draw on citizen science to report on issues such as biodiversity, invasive species, needs for repair of infrastructure, impact of severe weather events locally, etc.</p> <p>The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a shift to digital services. There has been significant investment by government in improving the digital infrastructure in our cities, towns and villages to support online delivery of education, training,</p>

	<p>enterprise and other services – i.e., enterprise hubs, co-working space, remote e-working space, health and community service hubs. In Limerick City and County Council, application of digital technologies to Council functions and services is the role of the Digital Services Team. In 2022, local authority Broadband Officers – one in each local authority – were appointed to support the roll out of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) across their areas, acting as a single point of contact for the successful NBP contractors and telecoms companies. They are also tasked with developing and implementing a digital strategy to encourage take-up of high speed connectivity across all groups in the population. Data from Census 2022 and a study of digital exclusion in Limerick show that all sections of society have not benefitted from the shift to digital. Groups affected by digital exclusion and at high risk of being left behind include: people with low education, older people, areas of social deprivation and isolated rural areas. It is important to work within a framework of digital inclusion and solutions that can work for all.</p> <p>The shift to digital, technological advancement and innovation are amongst the policy priorities to create a competitive and smart Europe which is resilient and socially inclusive. Under Ireland's <i>National Resilience Plan</i>, prepared as part of the economic recovery package for the EU post-COVID, one priority is addressed to "<i>accelerating and expanding digital reforms and transformation</i>". The new <i>European Regional Development Fund</i> and Operational Programmes under the Irish Regional Assemblies include as a priority SMART Cities, SMART Regions supporting innovation, digitalization and economic transformation. The LEADER programme 2023-2028 will support the preparation of SMART Village concepts and plans.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SMART City, Digital City and SMART Village concept - E-hubs, enterprise hubs, health and service hubs in urban and rural communities - Libraries as information centres for businesses, community, schools, health services - Skills and capacity development programmes for people in all age groups for the digital age. - e-health initiatives
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Higher Education Institutions, LCETB, HSE, Local Development Companies
Outcome Indicators	<p>Reduction in households with no internet connection / focused on rural and disadvantaged areas</p> <p>Number of SMART City, SMART Town and SMART Village strategies developed</p> <p>Number of models of digital / technology applications in local community settings / for specific groups / addressed to problem areas implemented</p> <p>Number of models of technology / digital applications replicated</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
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Integrated	Active travel/sustainable travel
No. I8	<i>Deliver active travel / sustainable travel initiatives in the city, suburbs and towns and villages (cycleways, walkways, paths) and improve public and community transport services so that we can reduce our reliance on the car and promote the living city, living towns and living villages initiatives</i>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate Action
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>Transport is amongst the sectors that has a strong negative impact on Green House Gas emissions that are damaging to the environment. Sectoral emissions ceilings agreed by Government set the required level of abatement to be achieved in the transport sector by 2030 at 50%. This is challenging in view of the strong reliance on the car for everyday travel and on transport vehicles that use fossil fuels. Data from Census 2022 for Limerick show no significant shift to active / sustainable travel for everyday commuting to work, school, college or childcare since 2016. Specifically: in 2022, 13.8% commute by walking or cycling (down from 16% in 2016), 62% commute by car (down from 68% in 2016), 7% use public transport (same as 2016) while 7% work mainly from home (up from 3% in 2016). Under Government's Climate Action Plan 2024, the approach in transport policy to work to achieve the change and reduced emission required applies the framework: Avoid (reduce journeys and fuel use) Shift (to sustainable/active travel) and Improve (increase use of Electric Vehicles, improve charging Infrastructure). With reference to modal Shift, the Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) set out require a 50% increase in daily active travel journeys, a 130% increase in daily public transport journeys and a 25% reduction in daily car journeys. Dispersed living patterns in rural settlements and open countryside, where alternative transport options are not developed, and the significant numbers in the workforce that commute to work make this a challenging issue to address.</p> <p>Planning for, and achieving, compact growth within the built-up settlements can support modal shift towards active travel (safe accessible cycleways and pathways) including inter-urban and intra urban cycling networks and better public transport services. A number of objectives in this LECP seek to support / promote compact growth – inner city regeneration (Objective I2), regeneration of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Objective I3) the 10-minute neighbourhood (Objective I4), renewal of towns and villages and connected settlements (Objective I5) – so that people can live, work, access services and engage in recreation in the same place. These objectives need to be under-pinned by active / sustainable travel (cycleways, pathways, safe crossings) and better public transport services. The need for improved public transport services (additional routes, improved frequency and reliability) was raised in the consultations by communities and by groups most dependent on public / community transport (youth, disabled people, migrants). Connected neighbourhoods across the urban structure – as outlined in the <i>Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Transport Strategy (2022)</i> - and inter-settlement connectivity need to</p>

	<p>be supported by improved transport connections and integrated multi-modal travel solutions. Transport connectivity can improve access to services, promote greater efficiency – for instance through shared resources and shared services across settlements – and contribute to improved quality of life for rural residents. See Objective 17, Technology and SMART Strategies. Transport infrastructure including sustainable travel options and public transport are factors that influence location decisions of larger companies attracted into the region/Limerick under Foreign Direct Investment (See E6 Business Infrastructure, investment & connectivity).</p> <p>Other issues to be addressed include the need to reduce congestion in our cities, towns and village centres, reduce the need for car parking especially in places that could be utilised as civic, cultural or recreation space, improve design of pathways and crossings to improve mobility options for people whose mobility is impaired and to improve safety in general for cyclists, pedestrians and all categories of users (school children, parents using strollers, older people, shoppers, visitors). All of these issues were raised in the community consultations on the LECP.</p> <p>There is significant public investment in sustainable travel in urban and rural areas, funded by the <i>National Transport Authority (NTA)</i>, with a key role played by local authorities. The increase in the capacity of active travel teams in local authorities has helped deliver significant new and improved cycling and walking infrastructure (walking, cycling and greenway infrastructures) through the <i>NTA's Active Travel Programme</i>. Programmes include: <i>Safe Routes to School</i>, <i>CycleConnects</i> (intra-urban) and <i>National Cycle Network</i> (inter-urban). In relation to public and community transport, the <i>NTA's Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Programme</i> is delivering new rural bus services in towns and villages (new routes, frequency enhancements, route extensions) while passenger numbers on the network of <i>Connecting Ireland</i> and <i>Local Link</i> bus services are growing. In addition to infrastructure and services, much work needs to be done to promote walking and cycling as an alternative to the car and to achieve the behavioural change in society and communities to buy-in to this agenda.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redesign of roads to create segregated cycle lanes, improve footpaths, pedestrian routes / crossings, catering for needs of vulnerable road users - Footpaths / cycleways / greenways for access to schools, shops, play and amenity areas - Network of connected routes for active travel users – cycle networks, greenways – that offer alternative to the car - Planning / feasibility for connecting rail links across the metropolitan area - Promotion of walking and cycling, promote behavioural change and campaigns in schools, colleges, large employers - Expansion of public and community transport services (routes & services) - Electric Vehicle Charging points in sites across the city and county
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Bus Connects (National Transport Authority), Local Link, Local Development Companies, Community & Residents Associations, Schools & Colleges

Outcome Indicators	<p>Number of additional active travel routes ready to progress to implementation</p> <p>Number of additional active travel routes implemented (by length & locations)</p> <p>Increase in public transport routes & services from rural towns to larger centres for education, work, services (target areas)</p> <p>Improved walkability of local neighbourhoods (walkability audits of target areas)</p> <p>Increase in public / community transport routes across rural settlements (target areas) – Objective I8 Active travel/sustainable travel</p> <p>Reduced use of car for everyday travel to work, school, college, childcare</p> <p>Increased use of active travel for everyday travel to work, school, college, travel</p>
Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated No. I9	<p>Climate action mitigation / adaptation and natural resources</p> <p><i>Deliver actions and local initiatives that protect bio-diversity and our natural environment and resources – habitats, landscapes, rivers and lakes, air quality</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	<p>3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate Action; 15 Life on Land; 14 Life Below Water</p>
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p> <p>The natural environment is irreplaceable and necessary to sustain life. There is greater understanding in society on the urgency for action to mitigate effects of climate change and to adapt to the changes in our climate that have occurred. Already, there has been significant loss of bio-diversity. This needs to be halted and reversed as far as possible. As part of the transition to sustainable living, some sectors / areas of activity / traditional practices will be impacted worse by change – e.g., farming, transport.</p> <p>The key areas of action in natural resources relate to quality of water in our rivers and lakes, air quality, noise from transport and other activities, impact of land management and farming practices on life on the land, impact of severe weather events, how we appreciate and manage nature and natural settings, as well as light pollution / dark skies. This objective is relevant to public agencies, community organisations, sectoral associations, education and research institutions, business and commercial interests. Groups like Tidy Towns, community tourism organisations, schools, local businesses and farmers / groups of farmers play an important role in protecting, preserving and enhancing the natural environment and bio-diversity.</p> <p>These issues are reflected in key government framework policies including the <i>National Planning Framework Ireland 2040</i> (e.g., in National Strategic Objectives to promote transition to a low carbon climate resilient society and sustainable management of water, waste and other environmental resources).</p>

	<p>At EU level, the <i>European Green Deal (EGD) for the European Union</i> (EU) is a statement of the European Commission's commitment to tackling climate and environmental-related challenges. EGD priorities include: "<i>Fresh air, clean water, healthy soil and biodiversity</i>". The new <i>EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework for Ireland 2022-27</i> includes a programme for environment and climate action open to a wide range of stakeholders including local authorities, non-governmental organisations and community groups. The new <i>CAP Strategic Plan for Ireland</i> (2022) includes incentives and programmes to work with nature, adjustment to more environmentally-friendly farming practices, renewable energy on farms and participation by farms (individually and in cooperation projects) in measures to improve bio-diversity, climate, air and water quality outcomes. <i>Sustainable Development, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</i> is a specific theme in the <i>LEADER Programme 2024-2028</i>. It includes an objective to protect natural resources and enhance bio-diversity. Natural resources, protecting and enhancing bio-diversity will also be addressed in forthcoming local authority-led climate action plans and supported under the <i>Climate Action Fund</i>. The Fund includes co-funding support for innovative projects under the <i>EU-LIFE programme</i>.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Habitat protection and creation of new habitats, landscapes, hedgerows, bio-diversity of plant and animal life - Greening urban areas, towns and villages - Control of invasive species - Monitoring and protection of river basins/river catchments in cooperation with landowners & water quality management - Air quality and noise monitoring - Dark Sky and similar initiatives - Sustainable Water Management Systems (SuDS), local initiatives in water storage, rainwater harvesting, ponds and wetlands development - Environmentally-friendly farming practices
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Office of Public Works, Environmental Protection Agency/Water Bodies/River Catchments, Local Development Companies, Teagasc, IFA/ICMSA, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, community and voluntary groups including European Innovation Partnerships
Outcome Indicators	<p>Increase in community initiatives in natural resources' protection/environmental quality/biodiversity</p> <p>Uptake of funding for community initiatives in natural resources protection/management/bio-diversity</p> <p>Models for local community natural resources management (e.g., EIPs)</p> <p>Models for farm-based environmental/natural resources/bio-diversity protection or enhancement</p> <p>Models for nature-based solutions to climate change</p>

Policy Framework	Integrated Sustainable Development Objectives
Integrated	Green energy /energy systems
No. I10	<p><i>Accelerate the shift to “green” energy, make our buildings more energy efficient, harness our natural resources to generate energy and expand economic opportunities and improve quality of life as part of the transition</i></p>
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 7 Affordable and clean energy; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production; 13 Climate Action
Rationale	<p>Why is this important?</p>
	<p>Improving energy efficiency of our buildings and outdoor facilities and shift to renewable energy sources are a key component of climate action measures needed to meet Ireland’s targets for Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030. This applies to all categories of buildings/facilities - commercial, public, domestic, community, sports complexes, civic outdoor space, street lighting. Wars in Europe and increased energy costs have brought the need to shift to renewables into focus and to address security of supply. The shift to “green” energy creates new opportunities – for economic development, education and skills, job creation as well as improvements to health and quality of life from warmer, better quality and energy efficient buildings.</p> <p>In relation to energy efficiency of domestic buildings in Limerick, only 5% have an “A” Building Energy Rating (BER); the most common rating is “C” (40% of domestic buildings in the city and 38% in rural Limerick/the former county) while 6% of domestic buildings in the city and 8% in rural Limerick have the worst energy rating, “G”. Use of fossil fuels as the main space heating source is at 78% of households in Limerick (2022 Census). However, approximately one-quarter of households have at least one renewable energy source installed (2022 Census).</p> <p>Households most at risk of energy poverty are: older people, people living alone, people with mobility difficulties, lone parent families with children, farmers and agricultural workers and migrants. The current situation shows the need for programmes to retrofit and improve the energy efficiency of our buildings and to take measures in tandem to address energy poverty.</p> <p>The Mid-West region has significant renewable energy resources – the River Shannon, wind power, bio-fuels. Initiatives to harness such sources are being promoted and expanded. The work of the Shannon Estuary Task Force identified the advantages and opportunities for the Estuary area to develop into a major international shipping and economic hub with a focus on renewables (Atlantic Offshore wind). Investment in Shannon-Foyne Port, supporting infrastructure (rail, road) and green energy are presented in the <i>Masterplan, Shannon-Foyne Vision 2041 and Vision 2041 Strategic Review</i> (2022). Delivery of this strategic green energy project in the Estuary would enhance energy security in the region. Community energy projects have also been developed in Limerick including the EU-supported <i>+CityxChange</i> project in Limerick’s</p>

	<p>Georgian Quarter which aims to create an energy community generating more electricity than it needs.</p> <p>The transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy is reflected across international policy frameworks especially in the <i>UN Sustainable Development Goals</i> and the EU policy and financial framework 2022-2027. Creating “<i>a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe</i>” is one of the key EU policy priorities for 2022-2027. Priority actions under the <i>European Green Deal</i> include: Renovated, energy efficient buildings, cleaner energy and cutting-edge clean technological innovation and future-proof jobs and skills training for the transition. A “new green deal” is also included in the current programme for government, <i>Our Shared Future</i>, in the <i>National Recovery and Resilience Plan for Ireland</i> (Priority 1, “<i>advancing the green transition</i>”) and Regional Operational Programmes supported by the European Regional Development Fund (priority action achieving: “<i>low carbon and climate resilience including investment to increase energy efficiency in housing, helping families at risk of energy poverty, whilst contributing to the green and fair transition</i>”). The <i>Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024 for the Mid-West Region</i> includes actions to support decarbonising industry by developing the Shannon Estuary as a renewable energy hub and other renewable and sustainable energy initiatives as well as upskilling small businesses for transition to a low carbon sustainable economy. The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) has set up Green Innovation Campuses including at the Roxboro Limerick, and offers a range of course in green skills – in particular, Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) training with an NZEB Centre of Excellence set up for the region.</p>
Action Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress from work of the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce - Renovations / retrofitting of buildings to improve energy efficiency - Public lighting, recreation spaces and amenities to shift to renewable energy sources - Enterprise and job creation in the green energy sector - Community energy initiatives - Local initiatives to address energy poverty
Lead Agencies	Limerick City and County Council, Shannon Foynes Port Company, Higher Education Institutions, LCETB, Limerick Chamber, Local Development Companies, Limerick LEO
Outcome Indicators	<p>Improved energy efficiency of buildings (based on BER audits)</p> <p>Reduced percentage of households using fossil fuels as main space heating source</p> <p>Increase in percentage of households with renewable energy sources installed</p> <p>Increase in enterprises and jobs in green energy sector</p> <p>Model community projects in green energy</p>

7. Implementation Arrangements

This section describes the principles and the approach to implementation of the LECP.

7.1 Principles Underpinning the LECP

The development, implementation and reviews of the LECP apply the following principles:

1. **Public sector equality and human rights duty:** meaning that the local authority is committed to eliminating discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and protection of human rights to whom services are provided and staff of the local authority. The principle is articulated in *Limerick City and County Council's Corporate Plan*.
2. **Inclusive participation in the preparation of the LECP** Framework Plan and Implementation Plans and reviews including consultations with groups that are not traditionally involved in such processes. This was an important element of the preparation of the LECP Framework. In the roll-out of the public consultation process, a wide representation of local communities, interests and groups in society (including young people, migrants and people with disabilities) was achieved through a mix of online consultation and workshops. The findings from the consultation process are summarised in Section 4. This approach will be continued over implementation.
3. **Collaborative partnerships** with representatives of organisations across the public, voluntary and community sector and business and sectoral interests (e.g., environment, farming community, rural and urban). A collaborative approach is reflected in the membership of the LECP Advisory Working Group and the role of the LCDC and the Economic and Enterprise SPC in overseeing the Community and Economic elements of the LECP respectively.

7.2 Defining the Approach & Scope of the LECP

Collaboration/partnership and inter-agency coordination define the approach applied in the LECP. All of the objectives of the LECP under the Economic, Community and Integrated Plan involve agencies working together. The focus is on objectives and actions led by or where there is a key role for the local authority.

The LCDC and the Economic and Enterprise SPC are the structures engaged in strategy and coordination of objectives and actions in the LECP supported by the LECP Advisory Group. There is a number of inter-agency structures in place that support coordination in areas covered by the LECP, such as the Children and Young Person's Services Committee (led by Tusla), the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum (led by LCETB/HEIs), the Migrant Integration Steering Group (Local authority-local development sector led), Limerick Age-friendly strategy (Age-friendly Alliance), the Joint Policing Committee (local authority-led), the Local Strategic Advisory and Monitoring Group of the Limerick Regeneration Programme (local authority-led) and the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan (across local authorities in the region). There are also advisory structure, such as the Limerick Forum, that inform and provide feedback from sectoral interests on Council plans, strategies and major projects. While all of these are relevant to, and referenced in, the LECP, any detailed plans and strategies of these structures are not reproduced within the LECP as this would duplicate the work in existing arrangements.

There are many sectoral strategies / plans within own functions/services of the local authority – housing, economic and spatial plan for Limerick City, tourism, climate action, culture and arts, enterprise. Similarly, the detail of these is not reproduced within the LECP as this would duplicate action and reporting on sectoral plans.

Strategic investments of government in infrastructure such as transport, housing, broadband, energy networks, education and health are all foundational elements of the LECP as they improve conditions for local economic development and quality of life. Strategic infrastructure investment projects are not detailed in the LECP as decision-making on those are beyond the local level.

The Framework LECP provides the overarching strategy at local level. It can be described as an umbrella plan for other local plans (area-based and sectoral plans, many overseen by inter-agency structures). The focus of the LECP is on objectives and actions:

- With a clear local economic and community dimension especially where actions are community-led and community interests are well-represented.
- That achieve added value through collaboration and involve agencies and local partners working together.
- That support an integrated approach to local development – for instance, linking solutions to dereliction and vacancy to creating enterprise and jobs in specific locations, service hub or community space in town / village centres.
- Are referenced in the LECP as they are an essential part of the foundations for local development (e.g., transport infrastructure/services, broadband).

LECP actions in Implementation Plans do not report on “business as usual” services, as this would duplicate action plans and reporting in existing programmes. They concern key actions that add value/are important strategically to local economic and community development and involve collaboration or inter-agency coordination.

7.3 Lead Agencies & Local Coordination

A new element of the LECP in 2024-2028 compared with the previous LECP (2016-2021) is the preparation of two-year Implementation Plans. There is a stronger emphasis on implementation of actions in this LECP and follow-up on these through engagement with other agencies and support actions within the local authority's own functions. The key agencies and areas for action are identified under each of the objectives in the LECP Framework Plan. Specific actions, lead agencies and potential sources of funding under the Objectives will be identified in the rolling two-year Implementation Plans. The structures to support delivery of actions and reporting on implementation of the LECP are:

- The LCDC on the Community Plan and elements of the Integrated Plan
- The Economic and Enterprise SPC on the Economic Plan and elements of the Integrated Plan

The structure of the LECP Advisory Steering Group will be retained to advise on the preparation of the Implementation Plans and progress reporting on/review of Implementation Plans.

As the role of the local authority has expanded in local economic and community development, into new areas of services (migrant integration, health and well-being, social inclusion) and areas that require strong engagement with communities – e.g., placemaking, communities in climate action, sustainable / active travel - there is a need to achieve greater coordination/integration **within** Council services and functions. This will be promoted in LECP Implementation Plans by setting up an internal coordination/reporting structure across Council Directorates. The overall coordination and reporting on LECP Implementation Plans will be assigned to support staff in the Economic Directorate and the Rural Culture and Community Development Directorate.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation of the LECP

The monitoring and evaluation approach and framework are set out in this section.

8.1 Purpose & Role of Monitoring and Evaluation

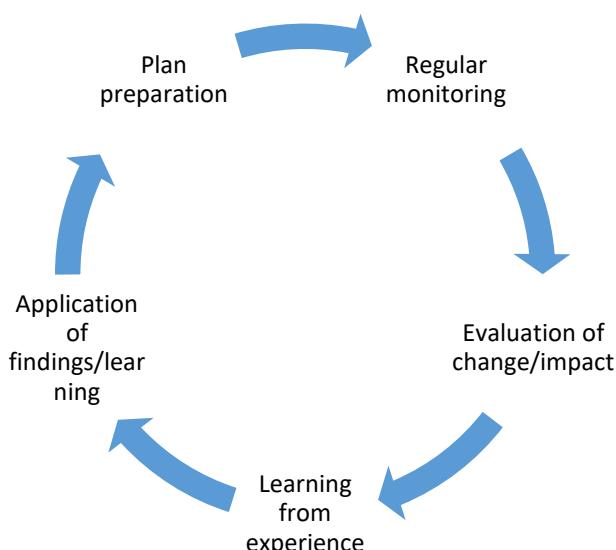
The purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to bring accountability to LECP implementation and support decision-making on local objectives and actions to be delivered under the Plan.

Monitoring and evaluation are connected but different tasks.

- Monitoring establishes whether the plan is on-track. It involves regular progress reporting on delivery of actions in the Implementation Plan, finance (funding) and outputs / Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) achieved. Monitoring is a formal reporting process back to the oversight structures and local stakeholders. As well as reporting on effectiveness in delivery (or otherwise) within timescales planned, monitoring informs decision-making and whether adjustments need to be made in the Plan. For various reasons, some planned actions may no longer be relevant while other actions may need to be accelerated or prioritised.
- Evaluation examines whether and the extent to which the Plan is achieving the objectives – what change has been achieved because of the Plan - drawing on the outcome indicators specified. This applies to the six-year LECP Framework Plan. If the expected outcomes are not being achieved, evaluation should examine why this is the case – for instance, because conditions and needs changed, due to unanticipated barriers /constraints or changes in policy. Evaluation can be conducted at different stages – e.g., at mid-term stage of the Framework LECP and / or at the final stage /post LECP implementation (2028).

The monitoring and evaluation framework is part of a cycle of planning, implementation, progress reporting (monitoring), identifying what has been achieved or the impact (evaluation), learning from the experience and applying that learning in subsequent plans.

Figure 7.1: The Cycle of Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation



8.2 Approach to Monitoring & Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation framework in the LECP is developed with reference to the baseline local conditions and needs – the evidence base for the LECP – as set out in the socio-economic analysis (Section 3) and the findings of the consultation process (Section 4). This was done as part of the LECP preparation. The evidence base for the LECP is summarised in the SWOT analysis - Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (Section 5). The LECP is also developed with reference to the mainstream policy frameworks at national, regional and local level (Section 2). Achieving consistency with other Plans is a further consideration in setting out the outcomes and in evaluation – i.e., is the LECP contributing locally to higher level plans and objectives and can we say what the LECP is contributing.

A key challenge in evaluation in practice is to be able to show the contribution of any specific plan – in this case the LECP – to the changes observed (e.g., a reduction in unemployment, an increase in levels of education, an increase in Foreign Direct Investment, increase in the numbers in employment). The evaluation approach needs to be realistic and take into account that a local plan, like the LECP, is delivered in a complex policy context, in conditions of an open economy and where the local environment is affected by regional, national and global influences. External factors and unknowns at the planning stage can have a significant impact on delivery and achievements or impact.

The LECP focuses on the local economic and community aspects of development and the added value of collaboration and the integrated/coordinated approach. The LECP is also an umbrella plan for other local plans and strategies. Local plans/strategies that are relevant to the objectives of the Limerick LECP – such as the *Social Inclusion and Community Development Programme (SICAP)*, *LEADER*, the *Local Enterprise Office, Limerick 2030* – also have implementation plans and Key Performance Indicators specified. There is consistency (and some overlap) between the indicators specified in other local plans and the LECP. The expectation is that all of these plans will contribute to development, as reflected in the changing county-level socio-economic profile and of priority locations for development within the local authority area – e.g., Limerick City Centre, Limerick's disadvantaged neighbourhoods, rural towns and villages.

The approach to setting the outcome indicators in the Framework LECP is to specify intermediate outcomes in some objectives – such as increased provision of enterprise workspace, increased participation in lifelong learning – and some final outcomes – such as increased number of enterprises and jobs in micro-enterprises (0-10 persons engaged), reduction in long-term unemployment in Limerick's unemployment blackspots. The LECP could contribute to such outcomes but the lead will be a specific service of the Council such as the Local Enterprise Office in relation to micro- and small business development, or one of the local partners, such as the LCETB, in relation to skills training and participation in lifelong learning, the Regional Employment Services/Local Development Companies and Department of Social Protection in relation to long-term unemployment. Impact on high level indicators such as reduction in long-term unemployment, reduced social inequalities result from a wider set of factors and a multi-agency effort.

In relation to change indicators (impact), statistical data are not generally available in real time. There is a timelag in annual datasets from CSO (e.g., Business Demography Series) while CSO Census data, which is needed to map change at local level, is at five to six-year intervals. Other datasets relevant to LECP objectives are reported more regularly such as monthly (Live Register reporting the numbers registered for unemployment assistance/benefits) and quarterly (GeoDirectory which can be used to track changes in residential and commercial vacancy). These will be used as appropriate in reporting on the KPIs in the LECP.

In order to measure impact locally, it is necessary to set appropriate benchmarks for comparison. Many factors can impact on development over the time period of the LECP – such as an economic downturn which would impact on employment growth and unemployment rates across the state in general. Use of the national average is an appropriate benchmark for comparison of indicators of development in Limerick County as a whole, as applied in the socio-economic analysis for this LECP. In specific areas, where Limerick has ambitions to make more significant progress over the next six years, achieving an impact that is better than the national average (e.g., higher population growth rate, lower unemployment rate) would be a significant measure of achievement. At local / community level, it is important to measure impact on more disadvantaged areas within the city and county by examining whether there is a reduction in gap between these areas and the Limerick average on key indicators (e.g., unemployment rates, commercial vacancy rates, levels of education, health status).

As well as quantitative indicators of achievement, it is appropriate to use qualitative methods to examine impact on local communities and social groups. Qualitative methods of investigation will provide insights into quality of life, access to services, involvement in community life, social inclusion – all issues prioritised in the LECP. This could involve hosting workshops in local settings and with specific groups, continuing the approach applied in the preparation of the Framework LECP.

In a number of objectives in the Framework LECP, the outcome may be a new model of local action, for instance, application of a SMART village concept (LEADER) or a local community climate change initiative or an approach to town centre regeneration that could be scaled up or replicated in other areas. As well as progress reporting on actions implemented and KPIs, monitoring and evaluation will include production of case studies of local economic and community action that demonstrate innovation, good practice and support wider replication. These can also be used in communications/promotional activities on local economic and community development.

8.3 Structures & Arrangements for Reporting

The LECP Advisory Steering Group, the LCDC and the Economic and Enterprise SPC are the key inter-agency structures that have overseen the preparation of the Framework LECP. These structures will continue to play a role over implementation in monitoring and evaluation, receiving progress reports and providing feedback on them. Mid-year and end of year monitoring reporting on Implementation Plans is envisaged. Reporting at the end of the second year of the Plan (2024-2025) will inform the production of the subsequent Implementation Plan (2026-2028).

The collation of monitoring data on implementation – actions implemented, funding / investment and outputs - will be the responsibility of Council support staff within the Rural, Culture and Community Development Directorate and the Economic Directorate of the Council. They will liaise with the lead service of the Council or external lead agency in reporting on delivery of actions in the Implementation Plans and tracking indicators for the specific objectives. They will collate this information for presentation to the LCDC, the Economic and Enterprise SPC and the LECP Advisory Steering Group, reporting twice yearly.

In relation to evaluation, it is envisaged that this will happen at the end of the time period of the LECP (post 2028). The most relevant statistical impact indicators at local level, from the next Census (2028), will not be available until after 2028. The terms of reference of a final evaluation and arrangements for completing it will be agreed with the LCDC/SPC and the LECP Advisory Steering Group.

8.4 Indicators

A set of high level indicators to measure progress and impact in the LECP will be coordinated with those used for the *Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028*. These local plans must be consistent with

each other and there is overlap in relevant indicators. At the level of the city and county, a Dashboard of indicators for tracking progress and level of development at the county level, relevant to both Plans, will be developed (within constraints of timeliness of availability of certain statistical data).

The key baseline and update indicators for the LECP, all of which are relevant to the *Limerick Development Plan* are shown below.

Group	Indicator	Source	Spatial Scale
1	Population Number	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Population density (people/area)		
	Cultural / ethnic composition including Travellers	CSO	SA & ED
	Old age/ Youth dependency ratios	CSO	SA & ED
2	Education level: % low, % 3 rd level	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Education field of Study (Science, engineering, health etc.)	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Retention rates to Leaving Cert	Department of Education	County level
	Progress to CAO application Post-Primary Schools: DEIS/Non-DEIS	www.schooldays.ie	School level/County
	Graduates from 3 rd level colleges/retained in Limerick/region	HEA/Graduate Outcomes Survey	Institution/County /Region
	Participation of adults in lifelong learning/upskilling / training	LCETB/SOLAS HEA (Springboard)	Limerick & Tipperary/Region / County
3	Income Deprivation Index	HP Pobal	ED
	Household income	CSO	ED
4	Health status: % in good/very good, % in fair/bad/very bad	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Smoking rates	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Disability rates & Carers	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Volunteering rates	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
5	Household composition: living alone, families/one parent families	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Rate of Traveller Children	CSO	County
	Child welfare/child protection referrals	Tusla	Region / Mid-west
	Garda Youth Diversion referrals	GYD Annual Report	County
	Hospital admissions/discharge rates children	HSE	County
	Breast feeding rates	HSE	County
6	Employment/Unemployment: monthly	Live Register	SW Office/ City & County
	Unemployment / Long-term unemployment rates	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Principle Economic Status (student, employed, unemployed, carer, retired, unable to work / disability)	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Employment rate	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Industry of employment (manufacturing, construction, services, etc.)	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Social class	CSO	SA & ED
7	Employment centres: Daytime working populations	CSO SAPS, POWSCAR	ED
	Nighttime population	CSO SAPS, POWSCAR	ED
	Commuting flows	CSO	Region
	Commercial vacancy rates: city, towns	GeoDirectory	County/city/key towns
8	Active enterprise & persons engaged: size structure & industry sector	CSO Business Demography	County
	% share specific sectors: retail, agriculture, tourism, cultural & creative industries	CSO Business Demography	County

	Oversees & domestic visitors to Limerick	CSO	County
	Visitors to tourist attractions	OPW/Fáilte Ireland	Site/County
	FDI value & IDA client companies in Limerick	LCCC/IDA	County
	SFI Research Awards (€) to Limerick Institutions	SFI Open Data	Institution/County
9	Households reliant on fossil fuels (%)	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Households with renewable energy source installed	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	BER energy ratings on domestic buildings	CSO	County
	Usual means of everyday transport: car, bus/rail, active travel	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Commuting time	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Working from home	CSO	SA & ED
	Daytime population: % living & working in the same area	POWSCAR & SAPS	ED
	Households with internet connection	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
10	Housing stock	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Vacant dwellings	CSO SAPS	ED
	Housing tenure (Renting Private/public, owner occupied)	CSO SAPS	SA & ED
	Social & affordable housing stock	LCCC	County/MD
	Social housing provision, need & homeless	LCCC	County
	Average house price / rental costs	CSO RPPI	Eircode
	Housing commencements	DHPLG	County
	New dwelling completions	CSO / Eircode	County
	Vacant Land	Copernicus	SA & ED
11	Proximity measures (airport, post office, city centre, motorway)	GIS/CSO	ED
	Passengers through Shannon Airport	CSO	Airport/Region
12	Crime rates: by types of offences	CSO	Garda District

APPENDIX 1: SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS TABLES

Table 1: Dependency Ratios Limerick and the State 2011, 2016 and 2022

	Limerick			State		
	2011	2016	2022	2011	2016	2022
Total Dependency Ratio	48.2	52.4	53.5	49.3	52.7	53.2
Young Dependency (0-14 yrs) Ratio	30.2	31	28.9	31.9	32.3	30.1
Old Age Dependency (65+ yrs) Ratio	18	21.4	24.6	17.4	20.4	23.1

Table 2: Electoral Division in Limerick Inner City with High % of Migrants, 2022

Electoral Division Name	Area	Total Pop	% Non- Irish birthplace	% Non-Irish nationality	Born in rest of the world as % of Total Pop	Born in rest of world as % non-Irish birthplace	% adults with 3rd Level Education
Dock A	Steamboat Quay, Mount Kenneth, O'Curry St.	3016	54.94	45.42	30.90	56.2	26
Dock B	Pery's Sq.,/ Barrington's St./ Joseph St./Hartstong St.	1251	40.77	34.05	17.83	43.7	29
Dock C	Wolf Tone St./O'Connell Ave	1114	20.74	15.62	10.41	50.2	39
Dock D	Dock Rd/Courtbrack/Summerville Ave.	755	32.98	22.65	16.56	50.2	55
Shannon A	Bishop's Quay/Howley's Quay/Harvey's Quay	1231	60.52	55.56	29.16	48.2	38
Shannon B	William St./Catherine St./Glentworth St./Mallow St.	1234	52.27	45.14	30.71	58.8	23
Glentworth A	Parnell St., Sexton Street, Colbert Station	639	24.73	18.47	11.58	46.8	17
John's C	Georges Quay/Mary St.	489	33.54	31.49	11.45	34.1	19
Custom House	Arthur's Quay, Patrick's St., Michael St., Watergate	887	52.09	47.69	21.08	40.5	15
Market	St. John's Sq./Cathedral Place/Sean Heuston Place/Old Windmill St.	2239	51.85	44.89	24.03	46.3	24
Total		12855	46.53	39.53	23.25	50.0	

Table 3: Persons 15 years and over whose education has ceased: Highest level of educational qualification (Census 2016 & 2022)

Electoral Division (ED) Name	Area	Pop 15+, education ceased 2022	% No Formal/Primary 2022	% Lr Sec & below 2022	% Lr Sec 2016	% Ord Bachelors & Upwards 2022
Ballynancy	part of Moyross & Ballynancy	1,893	27.7	50.1	60.7	7.1
Galvone B	O'Malley Park / Keyes Park Southill	433	28.9	49.4	64.6	4.6
Glentworth C	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Ave, Greenmount	374	28.9	51.6	60.6	6.4
John's A	St. Mary's Park	496	32.9	61.5	75.6	1.8
John's B	Lee Estate, Assumpta Park, Kings Island	814	19.3	34.5	46.9	12.3
Killeely A	Killeely / Hennessy Ave, Hogan Ave, Quarry Rd.	993	28.8	50.7	61.0	6.4
Killeely B	Killeely / Thomondgate / High Road, Brown's Quay, Cross Rd	679	15.8	34.8	49.2	13.3
Prospect A	Ballinacurra Weston (part), Lord Edward Street, Rosbrien	691	20.8	38.4	51.1	10.3
Prospect B	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Rd., Lenihan Ave	412	24.0	48.1	50.0	11.2
Rathbane	John Carew / Kincora Park Southill	1,167	23.0	45.9	53.3	6.0
Singland A	Garryowen, St. Patrick's Rd., Singland	1,156	18.0	43.9	51.5	10.4
St. Laurence	Mulgrave Street, Limerick Prison	792	20.2	49.5	48.6	13.0
Rathkeale Urban	Rathkeale	1,030	32.9	51.4	52.9	9.8
Limerick City & County		138,250	10.3	24.8	29.6	30.1

Table 4: Education Infrastructure & Provision: Academic Year 2023/2024

Level	Details	No. of schools	No. of Pupils/Students
Primary		133	22,350
	City-based Schools	24	6,647
	County-based Schools	110	15,728
	Special Schools	8	598
	DEIS Schools	37	6,056
	DEIS schools in the city	17	3,829
	DEIS schools in the county	20	2,227
	Up to 50 pupils	20	567
Secondary		28	17,473
	Urban catchment area*	17	11,141
	Rural Limerick	11	6,332
	DEIS Schools	8	4,046
	Urban catchment DEIS	6	3,061
	Rural Limerick DEIS	2	985
Third Level 2022/2023 (HEA)		3	35,970
	UL		17,645
	TUS: Midlands and Mid-West		13,335
	Mary Immaculate College		4,990
	Graduates each year Limerick Colleges		10,000

Source: Department of Education Statistics (2024) for schools, Higher Education Authority Statistics (2024) for Third Level

Note: the "urban catchment area" includes a number of schools in outer suburbs and rural Limerick towns including: Castletroy College, Mungret Community College, Salesian College Pallaskenry, Colaiste Chiaráin Croom

Table 5: Health & Well-being Indicators for Disadvantaged Areas in Limerick City (Sláintecare Healthy Communities Areas) Rathkeale Census 2022

Electoral Division (ED) Name	Area	Total Pop 2022	Pop 15 years & over	% in Fair/Bad/Very Bad Health	% with a Disability	No. smoking daily/occasionally	% aged 15 years & over smoking
Abbey C	Old Clare St. Pennywell	670	563	10.9	22.4	108	19.2
Abbey D	Pennywell, Flood St., Keane St., Downey St. Claughan	1477	1267	18.4	29.0	278	21.9
Ballinacurra B	part of Ballinacurra Weston / Greenfields	1353	1178	18.9	33.7	250	21.2
Ballynancy	part of Moyross & Ballynancy	3030	2377	19.8	34.1	747	31.4
Galvone A	Kennedy Park, Janesboro	1432	1195	18.2	32.8	282	23.6
Galvone B	O'Malley Park / Keyes Park Southill	739	556	21.9	33.2	169	30.4
Glentworth A	Parnell St., Sexton Street, Colbert Station	641	549	17.3	29.8	133	24.2
Glentworth B	Colbert Ave, Marian Drive, Marian Ave.	1218	1039	19.2	33.7	240	23.1
Glentworth C	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Ave, Greenmount	555	444	19.8	32.4	119	26.8
John's A	St. Mary's Park	747	580	21.4	38.7	224	38.6
John's B	Lee Estate, Assumpta Park, Kings Island	1038	932	16.3	25.0	145	15.6
Killeely A	Killeely / Hennessy Ave, Hogan Ave, Quarry Rd.	1455	1155	23.2	38.4	365	31.6
Killeely B	Killeely / Thomondgate / High Road, Brown's Quay, Cross Rd	890	767	18.2	30.1	158	20.6
Prospect A	Ballinacurra Weston (part), Lord Edward Street, Rosbrien	1061	920	18.5	30.4	212	23.0
Prospect B	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Rd., Lenihan Ave	647	511	21.3	29.8	169	33.1
Rathbane	John Carew / Kincora Park Southill	1848	1432	19.9	33.1	425	29.7
Singland A	Garryowen, St. Patrick's Rd., Singland	1651	1372	18.1	30.7	341	24.9
St. Laurence	Mulgrave Street, Limerick Prison	988	876	16.5	36.7	343	39.2
Rathkeale Urban	Rathkeale	1408	1144	22.0	30.4	275	24.0
	Limerick City & County	209536	170062	11.1	22.6	27996	16.5

Table 6: Families and Children: Families and lone parent families by age of children: Cross-section of Disadvantaged EDs in Limerick

ED Name	Area	All families with children, No. of families	One parent families, No. of families	One parent as % of families	All families with any children under 15, No. of families	One parent with any child under 15 as % of families with children under 15
Abbey C	Old Clare St. Pennywell	63	33	52.4	42	47.6
Ballynenty	part of Moyross & Ballynenty	571	324	56.7	305	56.1
Galvone B	O'Malley Park / Keyes Park Southill	137	84	61.3	74	62.2
John's A	St. Mary's Park	164	118	72.0	85	68.2
Prospect B	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Rd., Lenihan Ave	109	62	56.9	58	55.2
Rathbane	John Carew / Kincora Park Southill	352	197	56.0	195	52.8
Singland A	Garryowen, St. Patrick's Rd., Singland	295	146	49.5	132	45.5
Abbeyfeale	Abbeyfeale	486	141	29.0	275	23.3
Askeaton West	Askeaton	218	61	28.0	126	24.6
Croom	Croom	281	70	24.9	155	20.0
Kilmallock	Kilmallock	377	111	29.4	214	20.6
Newcastle West Urban	Newcastle West	990	288	29.1	648	20.4
Patrickswell	Patrickswell	283	85	29.3	131	23.7
Rathkeale Urban	Rathkeale	222	85	38.3	122	28.7
Limerick City & County		34348	8811	25.7	19734	19.6

Source: CSO Census (2022)

Note: "All families with children" include couples with children and lone parents with children. The detailed categories reported in the census are broken down by number of families where all children are under 15 years, families where all children are over 15 years and families with children both under and over 15 years. "All families with any children under 15" is the number of families with children where all children are under 15 years and families where children are both under and over 15 years.

Table 7: Mainstream Service Provision for Children and Families in Limerick 2020/21

Service	Details	No. of facilities	Capacity/No. of Places	Enrolment, No.
Early Learning & Care & School Age Childcare Services (2020/21)		191		
Childcare facilities:		174	4,880	3,904
	City	53		
	Former County	122		
	% Community	27%		
	% Private	74%		
Family Resource Centre:		4		
	City – Northside & Southill	2		
	County: Croom & Hospital	2		

Source: ELC, SAC & Childcare facilities: Pobal Annual Early Years Sector Report (2020/21)

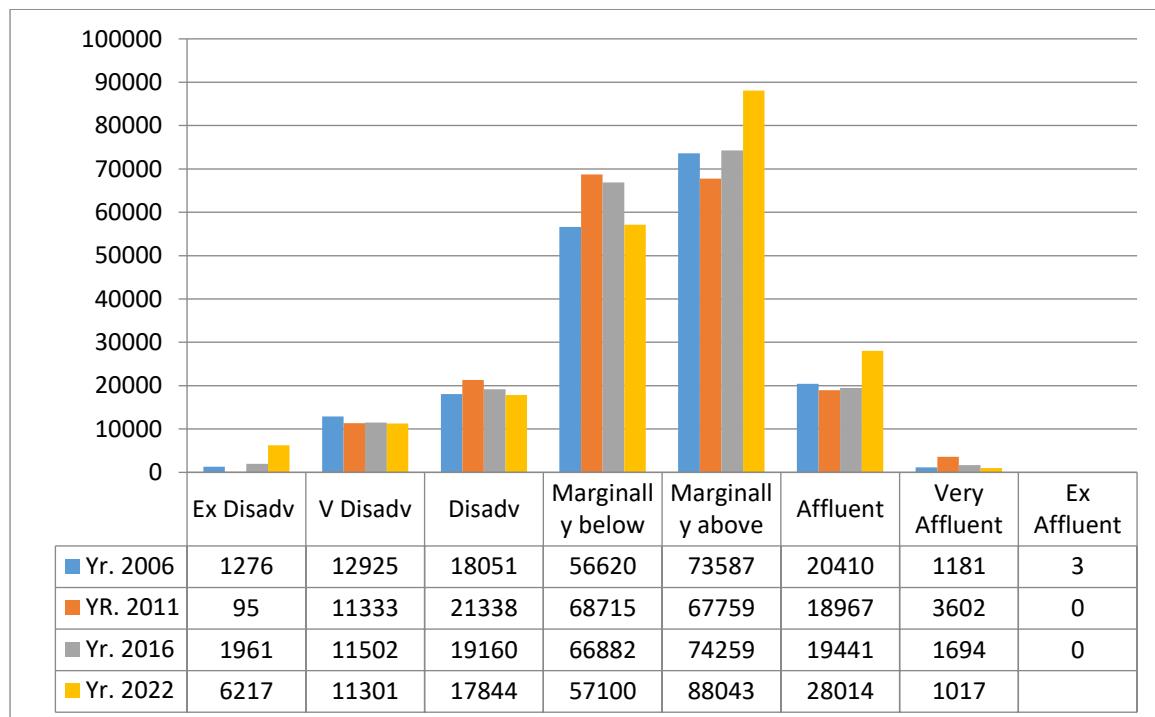
Table 8: Employment & Unemployment Indicators based on Principal Economic Status for Limerick's Unemployment Blackspots 2016, 2022

Electoral Division (ED) Name	Area	Pop 15-64 years 2022	% at work 15-64 2022 (estimate)	% unemployed 2022	% unemployed 2016	% unable to work due to permanent sickness/disability 2022
Abbey C	Old Clare St. Pennywell	484	55.0	19.1	41.9	9.6
Ballynancy	part of Moyross & Ballynancy	1864	45.1	23.5	43.6	13.3
Custom House	Arthur's Quay, Patrick's St., Michael St., Watergate	713	66.3	12.4	27.3	8.6
Dock A	Steamboat Quay, Mount Kenneth, O'Curry St.	2360	62.5	14.8	30.7	6.8
Galvone B	O'Malley Park / Keyes Park Southill	450	38.2	27.1	45.0	20.5
Glentworth A	Parnell St., Sexton Street, Colbert Station	460	53.9	17.3	33.7	11.8
Glentworth C	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Ave, Greenmount	343	51.6	21.3	40.2	14.6
John's A	St. Mary's Park	468	34.2	33.6	58.3	19.7
John's B	Lee Estate, Assumpta Park, Kings Island	694	56.1	20.3	31.4	11.8
Killeely A	Killeely / Hennessy Ave, Hogan Ave, Quarry Rd.	917	44.1	24.3	38.8	15.8
Killeely B	Killeely / Thomondgate / High Road, Brown's Quay, Cross Rd	592	54.9	20.7	31.1	10.7
Prospect A	Ballinacurra Weston (part), Lord Edward Street, Rosbrien	746	41.3	22.6	33.1	12.2
Prospect B	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Rd., Lenihan Ave	415	46.0	25.1	40.7	14.5
Rathbane	John Carew / Kincora Park Southill	1121	47.1	23.4	33.8	12.6
Shannon B	William St., Catherine St., Glentworth St., Mallow St.	1050	60.7	20.8	27.5	6.5
Singland A	Garryowen, St. Patrick's Rd., Singland	1141	51.4	19.6	33.6	13.8
St. Laurence	Mulgrave Street, Limerick Prison	689	39.9	46.5	39.2	10.6
Rathkeale Urban	Rathkeale	881	50.6	17.7	31.1	11.7
Limerick City & County		136474	66.4	8.6	14.4	5.8

Table 9: Persons aged 15 years and over resident in Limerick at Work by Industry 2022-2016

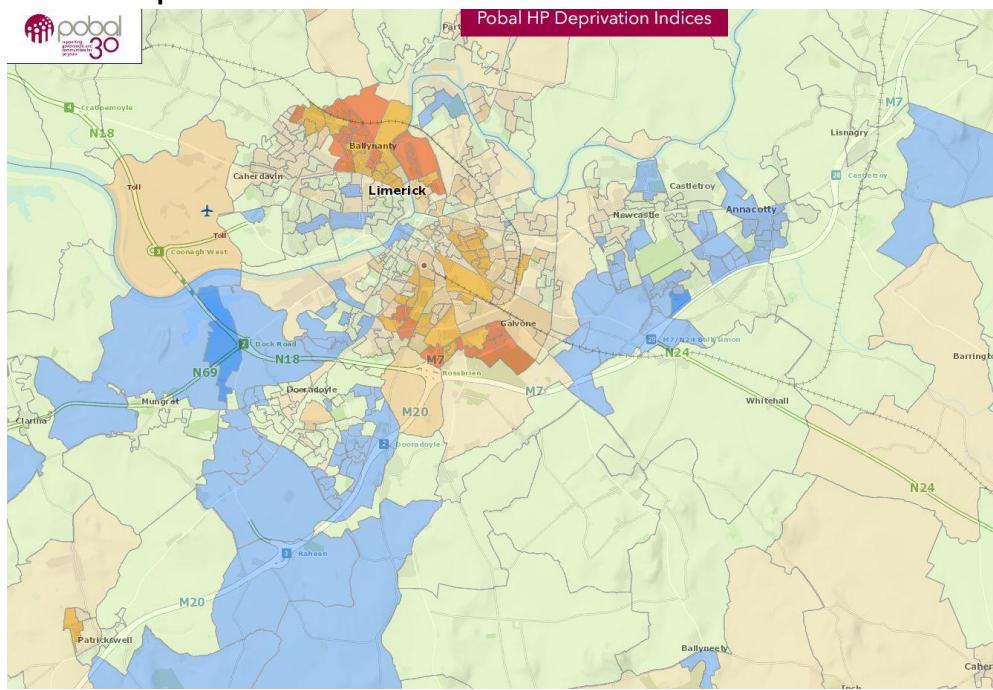
	2022				2016	2016-2022	
	Males	Females	All: M&F	%	All: M&F	No. Change	% Change
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	3,456	464	3,920	4.3	4,263	-343	-8.0
Building and construction	4,234	344	4,578	5.1	3,702	876	23.7
Manufacturing industries	9,823	3,718	13,541	14.9	11,506	2,035	17.7
Commerce and trade	9,760	8,556	18,316	20.2	16,529	1,787	10.8
Transport and communications	4,965	1,950	6,915	7.6	5,652	1,263	22.3
Public administration	1,921	2,194	4,115	4.5	3,376	739	21.9
Professional services	6,742	16,799	23,541	26.0	19,278	4,263	22.1
Other	8,217	7,480	15,697	17.3	12,879	2,818	21.9
Total	49,118	41,505	90,623	100.0	77,185	13,438	17.4

Graph 1: Limerick City and County - Number of persons living in Small Areas as Classified under the Pobal HP Relative Deprivation Index, 2006-2011-2016-2022



Source: Pobal HP Deprivation Index for Small Areas

Map 1: Limerick City & Suburbs: Map of Relative Affluence & Deprivation at Small Area Level: Pobal HP Deprivation Index 2022



Map 2: Limerick: Map of Relative Affluence & Deprivation at Small Area Level: Pobal HP Deprivation Index 2022

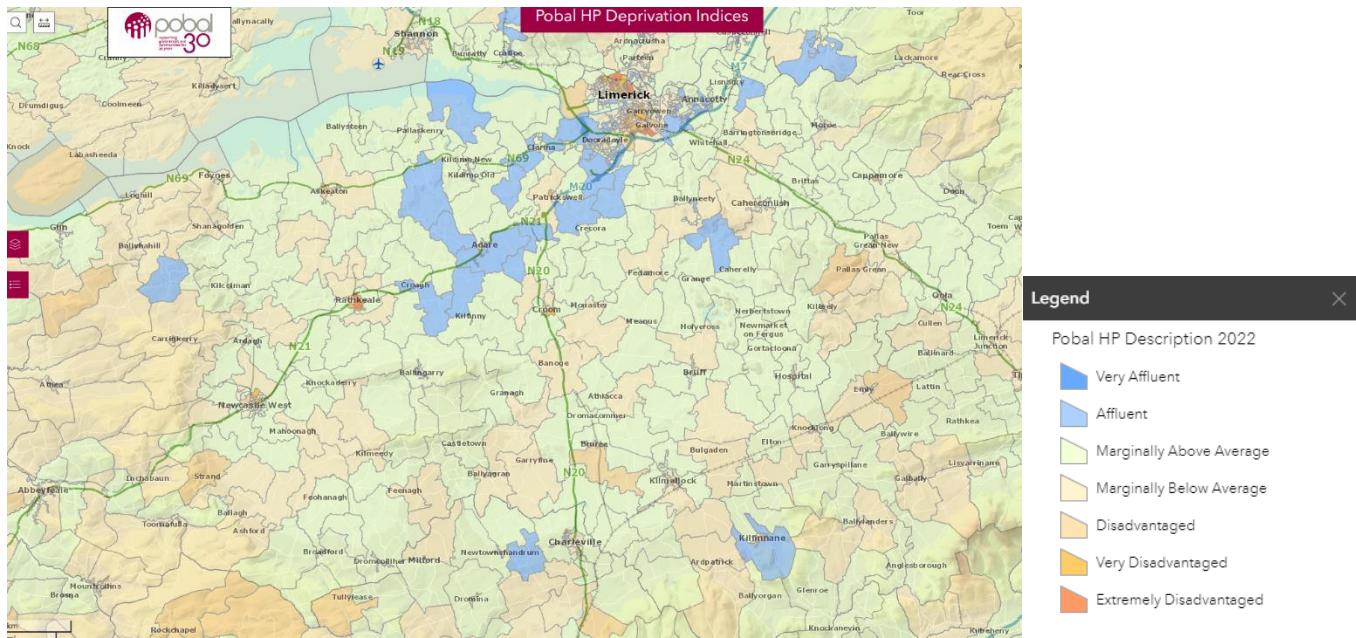


Table 10: Pobal HP Relative Disadvantage Index 2016-2022 – Top 20 Most Disadvantaged Electoral Divisions

ED Name	Area	Pop 2022	Relative Index 2022	Absolute Index 2022	Classification 2022	Relative Index 2016	Absolute index 2016	Change in Relative Index 2016-2022
John's A	St. Mary's Park, City	747	-44.92	-41.73	Extremely Disadvantaged	-31.9	-35.7	-13.01
Galvone B	O'Malley Park/Southill, City	739	-33.24	-31.68	Extremely Disadvantaged	-28.1	-31.7	-5.12
Killeely A	Killeely / Hennessy Ave, Hogan Ave, Quarry Rd.	1,455	-29.61	-28.02	Very Disadvantaged	-22.5	-26.7	-7.10
Ballynatty	Part Ballynatty/Part Moyross	3,030	-28.64	-27.13	Very Disadvantaged	-23.4	-27.6	-5.20
Glentworth C	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Ave, Greenmount	555	-27.73	-26.67	Very Disadvantaged	-23.9	-28.2	-3.80
Prospect B	Ballinacurra Weston (part)/Hyde Rd., Lenihan Ave	647	-26.89	-25.42	Very Disadvantaged	-20.5	-24.7	-6.35
Rathbane	Southill/Carew/Kincora Park	1,848	-25.65	-24.72	Very Disadvantaged	-21.0	-25.2	-4.64
Rathkeale Urban	Rathkeale	1,408	-23.01	-21.89	Very Disadvantaged	-17.9	-21.7	-5.08
St. Laurence	Mulgrave St. environs	988	-22.38	-21.62	Very Disadvantaged	-14.3	-18.7	-8.08
Singland A	part Garryowen	1,651	-21.18	-20.65	Very Disadvantaged	-18.9	-23.2	-2.32
Abbey D	Pennywell, Flood St., Keane St., Downey St. Cloughan	1,477	-20.38	-19.85	Very Disadvantaged	-15.9	-20.3	-4.43
John's B	Lee Estate/Assumpta Park, Kings Island	1,038	-20.18	-19.74	Very Disadvantaged	-16.6	-21.0	-3.55
Prospect A	Ballinacurra Weston (part), Lord Edward Street, Rosbrien	1,061	-18.06	-18.21	Disadvantaged	-19.1	-23.3	1.06
Galvone A	Kennedy Park, Janesboro	1,432	-17.95	-17.73	Disadvantaged	-14.4	-18.8	-3.55
Killeely B	Killeely / Thomondgate / High Road, Brown's Quay, Cross Rd	890	-17.44	-17.63	Disadvantaged	-17.4	-21.8	-0.07

Glentworth B	Colbert Ave, Marian Drive, Marian Ave.	1,218	-16.22	-16.17	Disadvantaged	-14.0	-18.1	-2.26
Ballinacurra B	part of Ballinacurra Weston / Greenfields	1,353	-12.58	-12.43	Disadvantaged	-12.7	-16.6	0.11
Abbey C	Old Clare St. Pennywell	670	-10.55	-11.68	Disadvantaged	-13.1	-18.4	2.53
Askeaton East	Askeaton	626	-10.38	-10.73	Disadvantaged	-8.0	-12.0	-2.35
Glentworth A	Parnell St., Sexton Street, Colbert Station	641	-10.35	-11.35	Disadvantaged	-10.3	-15.6	-0.02
Limerick City & County		209,536	-0.83		Marginally Below Average	-1.31		0.48

APPENDIX 2: LECP OBJECTIVES & OTHER PLANS

Policy Framework	Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
SEDO No. E1	Labour Market Activation
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services; 5 A strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation & skills
RSES	RSO 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; RSO 5 A Strong Economy; RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 187 Education and Training; RPO 188 Regional Skills For a; RPO 189 Further Education and Training; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Healthy City Initiatives; RPO 159 Role of Transport in Enabling Access for All
LDP 2022-28	ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 026 Tackling Unemployment; Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; ECON 027 Social Enterprise; SF 01 Social Framework Strategy
SEDO No. E2	Entrepreneurship & micro- & small & medium-sized enterprises
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
RSES	RSO 5 A strong economy; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 60 Social Enterprise; RPO 64 Facilitate new business formation, growth & industrial re-organisation; RPO 65 Attracting oversea Entrepreneurs and maintaining Irish Entrepreneurs; RPO 67 Enterprise and Innovation Support
LDP 2022-28	SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 026 Tackling Unemployment; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working
SEDO No. E3	Infrastructure & supportive business environment for SMEs
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
RSES	RSO 5 A strong economy; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 60 Social Enterprise; RPO 64 Facilitate new business formation, growth & industrial re-organisation; RPO 65 Attracting oversea Entrepreneurs and maintaining Irish Entrepreneurs; RPO 67 Enterprise and Innovation Support

LDP 2022-28	IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 026 Tackling Unemployment; ECON 033 Enterprise Incubator Units; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working
No. E4	Targeting sectoral challenges & diversification
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 5 Gender Equality; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
RSES	RSO 5 A strong economy; RSO 10 A Healthy & Learning Region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 44 Common Agricultural Policy; RPO 50: Diversification; RPO 55 Retail; RPO 58 Bio-economic and Rural Areas; RPO 63 Skills and Talent; RPO 75 Anticipating Economic and Structural Changes; RSO 187 Education and Training; RPO 188 Regional Skills Fora; RPO 189 Further Education and Training
LDP 2022-28	ECON 016 Night Time Economy; ECON029 Office Development, ECON 014 Casual Trading; ECON 046 Festivals; ECON 013 Rural Retail; ECON 042 Limerick Food Strategy; ECON 043 Limerick Food Destination; CGR 020 Town and Village Renewal; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages
SEDO No. E5	Business expansion, targeting high value added sectors & business networks
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
RSES	RSO 5 A strong economy; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 51 Economic Clusters and Ecosystems; RPO 52 Multinational Corporation (MNCs) and Indigenous Industry Connections; RPO 68 Regional Investment; RPO 187 Education and Training; RPO 188 Regional Skills Fora; RPO 189 Further Education and Training
LDP 2022-28	CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages CGR 020 Town and Village Renewal
SEDO No. E6	Business infrastructure, investment (FDI) & connectivity

LECP HLGs	 
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	1 Compact Growth; 5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 6 High Quality International Connectivity; 3 Enhance Regional Connectivity; 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
RSES	<p>RSO 5 A strong economy; RSO 2 Enhanced regional accessibility; RSO 6 High quality international connectivity</p> <p>RPO 52 Multinational Corporation (MNCs) and Indigenous Industry Connections; RPO 140 International Connectivity; RPO 141 Regional Freight Strategy; RPO 142 Ports; RPO 143 Ports and Airports; RPO 144 Port Infrastructure; RPO 145 Ports and Harbour Strategy for the Southern Region; RPO 146 High Quality International Connectivity – Ports; RPO 147 Economic Opportunities of Ports; RPO 149 Airport Strategy for the Southern Region; RPO 150 High Quality International Connectivity – Airports; RPO 166 Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi-Modal Connectivity to Metropolitan Areas and Economic Corridors; RPO 168 Investment in Regional and Local Roads; RPO 170 Rail</p>
LDP 2022-28	ECON 010 Networks; ECON 11 Inter Urban Links; ECON 017 Strategic Employment Locations City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Munget and Annacotty; ECON 018 Specific Site Requirements; ECON 19 Employment Locations County Limerick; ECON 20 Location of Industry or Enterprise in Brownfield Sites; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 022 Learning Region; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 024 Further and Higher Education Institutions; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 029 Office Development; ECON 028 Smart City; Objective IN01 Climate Proofed infrastructure; TR01 Climate Proofed Transport Infrastructure; CGR 01 Prevention of Urban Sprawl; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; CGR 020 Town and Village Renewal; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; IN 013 Energy and Gas Networks; IN 015 Electricity Grid Development; IN 016 Gas Development; TR017 Limerick to Foynes Line; TR 025 Inter-city, Regional and Commuter Services; TR026 Bus Transport Infrastructure; TR027 Shannon Airport; TR028 Port and Docks; TR029 N/M20 Cork to Limerick; TR030 Foynes to Limerick including Adare Bypass; TR031 Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale Road Scheme; TR032 Cahir to Limerick Junction; TR033 Motorway Network Arterial Roads; TR038 Improvement to Regional and Local Roads; TR039 National Roads; TR041 Strategic Regional Roads; R05 Limerick - Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy.
SEDO No. E7	Limerick as a Tourism Destination - Product expansion & marketing
LECP HLGs	  
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; 7 Amenity and Heritage;
RSES	<p>RSO 5 A Strong Economy; RSO 11 Inclusive International Region</p> <p>RPO 53 Tourism; RPO 54 Tourism and the Environment; RPO 140 International Connectivity; RPO 194 Arts, Heritage and Culture; RPO 193 Collaborative Regional Partnerships</p>
LDP 2022-28	TR027 Shannon Airport; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 043 Limerick Food Destination; ECON 045 Tourism; ECON 046 Festivals; ECON 047 Shannon Tourism

	Masterplan; ECON 048 Greenways; ECON 049 Tourism Facilities and Environmental Sensitive Areas; ECON 050 Facilities and Amenities incidental to Tourist and Recreation Attractions and Scenic Views; ECON 051 Clustering of Tourist Facilities; ECON 052 Location of Tourism Accommodation; ECON 053 Digital Innovations to support tourism; ECON Inter Urban Links; ECON 010 Networks
SEDO No. E8	Cultural & creative industries
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 7 Amenity and Heritage
RSES	RSO 5 A Strong Economy; RSO 11 Inclusive International Region RPO 191 Cultural and Creative Sectors; RPO 194 Arts, Heritage and Culture; RPO 193 Collaborative Regional Partnerships
LDP 2022-28	CSQ 01a & 01b Colbert Quarter; LEDP 01 Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership; ECON 032 Cultural and Creative Industries; SCSI 031 Art and Cultural; SCSI 034 Cultural Audit; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; IN 03 ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 045 Tourism; ECON 046 Festivals; ECON016 Night-time Economy

Policy Framework	Sustainable Community Development Objectives
SCDO No. C1	Education & learning
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services
RSES	RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 177 Childcare, Education and Health Services; RPO 181 Equal Access; RPO 183 Digital Strategies; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 187 Education and Training; RPO 189 Further Education and Training; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Healthy City Initiative
LDP 2022-28	IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; ECON 023 Education and Skills; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 011 Location of Schools; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 013 Further and Higher Education Facilities; ULCC 01 UL City Campus; RA 01 Regeneration's Opportunity Areas; SF 01 Social Framework; EF 01 Economic Framework Strategy
SCDO No. C2	Children, young people and families
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 4 Quality Education; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services
RSES	RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 177 Childcare, Education and Health Services; RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 185 New School Facilities; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 189 Further Education and Training; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Health City Initiatives;
LDP 2022-28	IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; ECON 023 Education and Skills; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 011 Location of Schools; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04 Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; SCSI 14 Childcare Facilities; SCSI 015 Healthcare Facilities; SCSI 018 Active City Initiative; SCSI 019 Protection of lands zoned for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities; SCSI 021 Improve Open Space Provision; SCSI 022 New City Amenity Areas; SCSI 027 Playgrounds; SCSI 031 Art and Culture; CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm
SCDO No. C3	Health & well-being
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 1 No poverty
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services

RSES	RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 177 Childcare, Education and Health Services; RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Healthy Cities Initiatives
LDP 2022-28	SCSI 016 Health Care Facilities; SCSI 017 Age Friendly Strategy; SCSI 018 Active City; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; ECON 023 Education and Skills; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 011 Location of Schools; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04 Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; SCSI 14 Childcare Facilities; SCSI 019 Protection of lands zoned for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities; SCSI 021 Improve Open Space Provision; SCSI 022 New City Amenity Areas; SCSI 027 Playgrounds; SCSI 031 Art and Culture; SQ 01b Colbert Quarter; RA 01 Regeneration's Opportunity Areas; SF 01 Social Framework; M01 Moyross; MK 01 St. Mary's Park and King's Island; BW 01 Ballinacurra Weston; OK 01 O'Malley Park and Keyes Park; KC 01 Kincora and Carew Park; Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm
SCDO No. C4 Ageing well & age-friendly Limerick	
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 3 Good health & well-being; 7 Affordable and clean energy; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services
RSES	RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 182 Ageing Population; RPO 183 Digital Strategies; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Healthy Cities Initiatives
LDP 2022-28	SCSI 017 Age Friendly Strategy; SCSI 016 Health Care Facilities; SCSI 018 Active City; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; ECON 023 Education and Skills; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04 Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; SCSI 019 Protection of lands zoned for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities; SCSI 021 Improve Open Space Provision; SCSI 022 New City Amenity Areas; SCSI 031 Art and Culture; CGR 01 Prevention of Urban Sprawl; CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm
SCDO No. C5 Social inclusion & personal empowerment	
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to quality education and health services

RSES	RSO 11 Inclusive international region; RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RPO 186 Lifelong Learning; RPO 187 Education and Training; RPO 189 Further Education and Training; RPO 190 Lifelong Learning and Healthy City Initiatives
LDP 2022-28	Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; ECON 027 Social Enterprise; SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; SCSI 019 Protection of Lands for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds and Facilities; SCSI 021 Protection of Open Space; SCSI 022 New Amenity Areas; SCSI 023 Sports and Recreational Facilities Strategies; SCSI 019024 Limerick Sports Partnership Plan 2018 – 2021; CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04 Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm
SCDO No. C6	Sport, recreation & community buildings
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable cities and communities
NPF / NDP	7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage; 5 A Strong Economic Supported by Enterprise Innovation and Skills
RSES	RSO 10 A Healthy & Learning Region RPO 198 Sport and Community Organisations, RPO 199 Larger Sports Projects
LDP 2022-28	Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; SCSI 019 Protection of Lands for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds and Facilities; SCSI 021 Protection of Open Space; SCSI 022 New Amenity Areas; SCSI 023 Sports and Recreational Facilities Strategies; SCSI 019024 Limerick Sports Partnership Plan 2018 – 2021; CGR 01 Prevention of Urban Sprawl; CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04 Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; SCSI 031 Art and Culture; SCSI 016 Health Care Facilities; SCSI 018 Active City; SCSI 037 Library Service; SCSI 030 Water-based Sports; SCSI 029 Trails, Hiking and Walking Routes; SCSI 028 New Amenity Walkways; SCSI 039 Community Gardens and Allotments
SCDO No. C7	Societal / community awareness climate action
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production; 13 Climate Action; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society
RSES	RSO 8 Low Carbon, Climate Resilient & Sustainable Society

	RPO 87 Low Carbon Energy Future; RPO 88 National Mitigation Plan and National Adaptation Framework; RPO 89 Building Resilience to Climate Change; RPO 90 Regional Decarbonisation; RPO 107 Regional Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015-2021; RPO 108 EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy
LDP 2022-28	Objective TR O7 Behavioural Change Measures; Objective TR O8 Walking and Cycling Infrastructure; Objective TR O9 Limerick Cycle Network; Objective TR O10 Limerick Regeneration Areas Sustainable Travel Infrastructure; Objective TR O11 Enhanced Public Transport; Objective TR O12 Limerick BusConnects Programme; Objective TR O15 Transport Interchange; Objective TR O16 Rail Network; Objective TR O18 Park and Ride Facilities; Objective TR O19 Park and Stride Facilities; Objective TR O20 Car Clubs/Car Sharing; Objective TR O21 Electric and Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles; Objective TR O25 Inter-city, Regional and Commuter Services; Objective TR O26 Bus Transport Infrastructure; Objective IN O1 Climate Action in Infrastructure Planning; Objective IN O12 Surface Water and SuDS; Objective IN O13 Energy and Gas Networks; Objective IN O17 Waste Management and the Circular Economy; Objective IN O18 Waste Infrastructure; Objective CAF O1 Compliance with Higher Tier Climate Legislation and Guidance; Objective CAF O2 Partnership with Service Providers; Objective CAF O3 Sustainable Development; Objective CAF O4 Climate Proofing; Objective CAF O5 Energy Efficiency in Existing Development; Objective CAF O6 Energy Efficiency in New Developments; Objective CAF O7 Near Zero Energy Buildings; Objective CAF O8 Renewable Energy Objective; Objective CAF O9 Achieving Climate Resilience; Objective CAF O11 Nature Based Solutions; CAF O12 Urban Greening; Objective CAF O14 Energy Generation; Objective CAF O15 Local Energy Production; Objective CAF O16 Circular Economy; Objective CAF O17 Low Energy Building Materials; Objective CAF O18 Energy and Emissions Balance; Objective CAF O19 Decarbonising Zones; Objective CAF O26 Bio Energy; Objective CAF O27 Renewable Energy Production; Objective CAF O35 Community Based Energy Initiatives; Objective CAF O39 Carbon Capture; Objective CAF O38 Emerging Technologies; Objective CAF O20 Flood Risk Assessments; Objective CAF O21 Identified Flood Risk; Objective CAF O23 Flood Relief Schemes; Objective CAF O24 Minor Flood and Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Schemes; Objective CAF O25 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SCDO No. C8	Civic life & social capital
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to Quality Education and health Services
RSES	RSO 7 Diversity, Language, Culture & Heritage Enhancement; RSO 11 Inclusion International Region RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 181 Equal Access
LDP 2022-28	SF O1 Social Framework Strategy; Objective SCSI O3 Community Hubs; Objective SCSI O4 Ten - Minute Neighbourhood; Objective SCSI O7 Smart Towns and Villages; Objective ECON O28 Smart City; ECON 022 Learning Region; ECON 046 Festivals; CGR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm

SCDO No. C9 Integration of migrants & diverse cultural & ethnic communities	
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to Quality Education and health Services
RSES	RSO 7 Diversity, Language, Culture & Heritage Enhancement; RSO 11 Inclusion International Region RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 181 Equal Access
LDP 2022-28	SF O1 Social Framework Strategy; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; IN 03 Broadband; ECON 023 Education and Skills; Objective EF O1 Economic Framework Strategy; Objective SCSI O3 Community Hubs; Objective SCSI O4 Ten - Minute Neighbourhood; Objective SCSI O31 Art and Culture; ECON 046 Festivals; CGR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; Objective EF O1 Economic Framework Strategy; Objective ECON O22 Learning Region; Objective ECON O23 Education and Skills; Objective ECON O26 Tackling Unemployment; Objective SCSI O5 Multi-Use of Facilities
SCDO No. Community safety & crime prevention C10	
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 5 Gender equality; 10 Reduced inequalities; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	10 Access to Quality Education and health Services
RSES	RSO 7 Diversity, Language, Culture & Heritage Enhancement; RSO 11 Inclusion International Region RPO 179 Diverse and Socially Inclusive Society; RPO 180 Volunteering and Active Citizenship; RPO 181 Equal Access
LDP 2022-28	CGR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; Objective SF O1 Social Framework Strategy; Objective PF O1 Physical Framework Strategy;

Policy Framework	Sustainable Integrated Development Objectives
Integrated No. I1	Limerick City Centre regeneration
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 6 Clean water & sanitation; 7 Affordable & clean energy; 8 Decent work & economic growth; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
NPF / NDP	1 Compact growth; 5 A strong economy supported by enterprise innovation & skills; 8 Transition to a low carbon & climate resilient society; 9 Sustainable management of water, waste & other environmental resources
RSES	<p>RSO 1 Compact growth; RSO 3 Strengthened rural economies and communities; RSO 9 Sustainable, planned & infrastructure-led development; 7 Diversity, Language, Culture and Heritage Enhancement</p> <p>RPO 10: Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas; RPO 34 Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development; RPO 35 Support for Compact Growth; RPO 203 Revitalisation of Historic Cores; RPO 204 Public access; RPO 205 Built Heritage; RPO 206 Architectural Heritage; RPO 207 Archaeological Investigation</p>
LDP 2022-28	<p>Objective UCA01 – UCA 05 Urban Character and Objectives: Objective CGR 010 Revitalisation; Objective LL01 Laneways; Objective CRQ01 Cleeves Riverside Quarter; Objective ULCC 01 UL City Campus; Objective AQ 01 Arthur's Quay; Objective ES 01 Ellen Street Car Park; Objective LDA 01 Land Development Agency; Objective CSQ 01 Colbert Quarter; Objective RQ 01 Regeneration Opportunity Areas; Objective SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; Objective EF Economic Framework Strategy; Objective PF 01 Physical Framework Strategy; Objective ECON 01 City Centre; Objective ECON 014 Casual Trading ; Objective ECON 015 Active Street Frontages; Objective ECON 016 Night Time Economy; Objective ECON 017 Strategic Employment Locations – City and Suburbs; Objective ECON 020 Location of Industry or Enterprise on Brownfield Sites; Objective ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; Objective ECON 022 Learning Region; Objective ECON 023 Education and Skills; Objective ECON 024 Further and Higher Education; Objective 025 Clustering and Innovation; Objective ECON 028 Smart City; Objective ECON 029 Office Development, Objective ECON 032 Cultural and Creative Industries; Objective ECON 033 Enterprise Incubator Units; Objective ECON 045 Tourism; Objective ECON 052 Location of Tourism Accommodation; Objective IN02 Digital Connectivity; Objective IN03 Digital Innovation Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area; Objective IN04 Broadband; Objective SCSI 01 Community Facilities; Objective SCSI 02 Accessibility of All; Objective SCSI 03 Community Hub; Objective SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; Objective SCSI 05 Multi-use of Facilities; Objective SCSI 06 Strategy on Community Facilities; Objective SCSI 08 Place-making for the Community; Objective SCSI 031 Art and Culture; SCSI 034 Cultural Audit; EH013 Blue Green infrastructure Strategy; EH036 Preservation of Archaeological Heritage; Objective EH 037 Preservation of unrecorded/newly discovered Archaeological Heritage; Objective EH 038 Protection of the setting of Archaeological Monuments; Objective EH 042 Town Defences and Layout; Objective EH 043 Industrial Heritage; Objective 45 Raise Public Awareness and Encourage Active Participation; Objective 052 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH); Objective EH 053 Architectural Conservation Areas; Objective</p>

	CGR 02 Place-making Universal Design and Public Realm; Objective CGR 04 Active Land Management; Objective CGR 05 Vacant Site Levy; Objective CGR 06 Derelict Sites.
Integrated No. 12	Disadvantaged city neighbourhoods
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger; 3 Good health & well-being; 7 Affordable & clean energy; 8 Decent work & economic growth; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
NPF / NDP	1 Compact growth; 10 Access to quality education and health services NDP: Housing and sustainable urban development, education health & childcare
RSES	RSO 1 Compact growth; RSO 9 Sustainable, planned & infrastructure-led development; RSO 10 A healthy & learning region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region RPO 34 Regeneration, Brownfield and Infill Development
LDP 2022-28	Objective CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; Objective CGR 04 Active Land Use Management; Objective LDA 01 Land Development Agency; Objective CSQ 01 Colbert Quarter; Objective RQ 01 Regeneration Opportunity Areas; Objective SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; Objective EF Economic Framework Strategy; Objective Revitalisation; Objective BM 01 The Bays Moyross; Objective M01 Moyross; Objective MK01 St. Mary's Park and King's Island; Objective BW01 Ballinacurra Weston; Objective OK 01 O'Malley Park and Keys Park; Objective KC01 Kincora and Carew Park; Objective LEDP 01 Limerick Enterprise Development Park; Objective HO 01 Social Inclusion; Objective 013 Provision of Social and Affordable Housing, Objective ECON 03 District Centre; Objective ECON 05 Local Neighbourhood Centre; Objective 017 Strategic Employment Locations Limerick City and Suburbs; Objective ECON 022 Learning Region; Objective ECON 023 Education and Skills; Objective ECON 024 Further and Higher Education; Objective 026 Tackling Unemployment; Objective ECON 27 Social Enterprise; Objective ECON 028 Smart City; Objective ECON 032 Cultural and Creative Industries; Objective ECON 033 Enterprise Incubator Units; Objective ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working; Objective IN02 Digital Connectivity; Objective IN03 Digital Innovation Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area; Objective SCSI 01 Community Facilities; Objective SCSI 02 Accessibility of All; Objective SCSI 03 Community Hub; Objective SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; Objective SCSI 06 Strategy on Community Facilities; Objective SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; Objective SCSI 011 Location of Schools; Objective SCSI 013 Further and Higher Education Facilities; Objective SCSI 0 14 Childcare Facilities; Objective TR05 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy; Objective TR06 Delivering Modal Shift; Objective TR07 Behavioural Change Measures; Objective TR08 Cycling and Walking Infrastructure; Objective TR09 Limerick Cycle Network; Objective TR010 Regeneration Areas Sustainable Transport Infrastructure; Objective TR01 Enhance Public Transport; Objective TR012 Limerick BusConnects Programme; Objective TR015 Transport Interchange; Objective TR022 Micro-Mobility; Objective TR 035 Connecting Limerick's Southside; Objective TR036 Limerick Northern Distributor Road; Objective IN02 Digital Connectivity; Objective IN03 Digital Innovation Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area; Objective IN04 Broadband; Objective IN05 Telecommunication Support

Integrated No. I3		Connected city & sub-urban neighbourhoods
LECP HLGs		
UN SDGs	3	Good health & well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
NPF / NDP	1	Compact growth; 10 Access to Quality Education and Health Services NDP: Housing and sustainable urban development, education health & childcare
RSES	RSO 1 Compact growth; RSO 3 Strengthened rural economies and communities; RSO 9 Sustainable, planned & infrastructure-led development; RPO 10: Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas; RPO 31 Sustainable Place Framework; RPO 151 Integration of Land Use and Transport; RPO 152 Local Planning Objectives; RPO 176 10 minute city and town concepts	
LDP 2022-28	Objective TR05 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy; Objective TR06 Delivering Modal Shift; Objective TR07 Behavioural Change Measures; Objective TR08 Cycling and Walking Infrastructure; Objective TR09 Limerick Cycle Network; Objective TR010 Regeneration Areas Sustainable Transport Infrastructure; Objective TR01 Enhance Public Transport; Objective TR012 Limerick BusConnects Programme; Objective TR015 Transport Interchange; Objective TR022 Micro-Mobility; Objective TR 035 Connecting Limerick's Southside; Objective TR036 Limerick Northern Distributor Road; Objective IN02 Digital Connectivity; Objective IN03 Digital Innovation Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area; Objective IN04 Broadband; Objective IN05 Telecommunication Support; Objective TR 016 Rail Network; Objective TR018 Park and Ride Facilities; Objective TR019 Park and Stride Facilities; Objective TR 038 Improvements to Regional and Local Roads; Objective TR044 Link Roads; Objective UCA01 – UCA 05 Urban Character and Objectives: Objective CGR 010 Revitalisation; Objective LL01 Limerick Laneways; Objective IN03 Digital Innovation Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area; Objective SCSI 01 Community Facilities; Objective SCSI 02 Accessibility of All; Objective SCSI 03 Community Hub; Objective SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; Objective ECON 028 Smart City	
Integrated No. I4		Town & village renewal & connected settlements
LECP HLGs		
UN SDGs	3	Good health & well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate action
NPF / NDP	1	Compact Growth; 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; 10 Access to Quality Education and Health Services
RSES	RSO 1 Compact growth; RSO 3 Strengthened rural economies and communities; RSO 9 Sustainable, planned & infrastructure-led development; 7 Diversity, Language, Culture and Heritage Enhancement RPO 11: Key Towns; RPO 22 Newcastle West; RPO 26 Towns and Villages; RPO 29 Rural Settlement Networks; RPO 31 Sustainable Place Framework; RPO 153 Capacity of Inter-Urban Road Connections; RPO 157 Local Transport Plans ; RPO 158 Intra-regional Rural Connectivity; RPO 159 Role of Transport in Enabling Access for All; RPO 176 10 minute city and town concepts; RPO 177 Childcare, Education and Health Services; RPO 203 Revitalisation of Historic Cores; RPO 204 Public access; RPO 205 Built Heritage; RPO 206 Architectural Heritage; RPO 207 Archaeological Investigation	

LDP 2022-28	<p>Objective TR01 Climate Proofed Transport Infrastructure; TR08 Walking and Cycling Infrastructure; TR 09 Limerick Cycle Network; TR011 Enhanced Public Transport; TR015 Transport interchange; TR016 Rail Network; TR017 Limerick to Foynes Line; TR 025 inter-city, Regional and Commuter Services; TR026 Bus Transport Infrastructure; TR018 Port and Docks; TR029 N/M20 Cork to Limerick; TR030 Foynes to Limerick including Adare Bypass; TR031 Newcastle West and a21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme; TR032 Cahir to Limerick Junction; TR033 Motorway Network Arterial Roads; TR041 Strategic Regional Roads; CGR 011 Key Town Newcastle West; CGR 012 Newcastle West Local Area Plan; CGR 013 Level 3 Towns; CGR 014 Scale of Development in Level 3 Towns; CGR 015 Requirements for Development within Level 4 Settlements; CGR 016 Local Area Plans in Level 4 Settlements; CGR 017 Development within Level 5 Settlements; CGR 018 Scale of Growth Level 5 Settlements; CGR 019 Development in Level 6 Settlements, CGR 01 Prevention of Urban Sprawl; CGR 020 Town and Village Renewal; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; CGR 04 Active Land Management; CGR 05 Vacant Site levy; CGR 06 Derelict Sites; CGR 010 Revitalisation; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; IN 09 Public Waste Water; IN 013 Energy and Gas Networks; IN 015 Electricity Grid Development; ECON 09 Newcastle West; ECON 011 Inter Urban Links; ECON 012 County Towns and Villages; ECON 013 Rural Retail; ECON 014 Casual Trading Areas; ECON 015 Active Street Frontages; ECON 020 Location of Industry or Enterprise in Brownfield Sites; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 026 Tackling Unemployment; ECON 029 Office Development; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; ECON 033 Enterprise Incubator Units; ECON 034 Rural Remote Working Hubs; ECON 041 Home-working/E-working; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working</p>
Integrated No. 15	Culture, arts, heritage & sport
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good health & well-being; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 10 Reduce inequalities; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	7 Enhanced Amenity and Heritage; 5 A Strong Economic Supported by Enterprise Innovation and Skills
RSES	<p>RSO 7 Diversity, Language, Culture & Heritage Enhancement; RSO 10 A Healthy & Learning Region; RSO 11 Inclusive international region; RPO 192 Cultural Policies and Objectives; RPO 193 Collaborative Regional Partnerships; RPO 194 Arts, Heritage and Culture; RPO 198 Sport and Community Organisations, RPO 199 Larger Sports Projects</p>
LDP 2022-28	<p>Objective HO11 Social Inclusion; SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; SCSI 019 Protection of Lands for Open Space and Recreation; SCSI 020 Protection of Sports Grounds and Facilities; SCSI 021 Protection of Open Space; SCSI 022 New Amenity Areas; SCSI 023 Sports and Recreational Facilities Strategies; SCSI 019024 Limerick Sports Partnership Plan 2018 – 2021; CGR 01 Prevention of Urban Sprawl; CGR 02 Town and Village Renewal; CGR 03 Urban Lands and Compact Growth; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; SCSI 04 Ten-Minute Neighbourhood; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 010 Educational Facilities; SCSI 012 Multi-use of School Facilities; SCSI 04</p>

	Community Facilities; SCSI 02 Accessibility for All; SCSI 03 Community Hubs; TR 04 Universal Design; GCR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; SCSI 031 Art and Culture; SCSI 018 Active City; SCSI 037 Library Service; SCSI 036 Limerick Museum; SCSI 035 Limerick Museum Service; Limerick City Gallery of Art Strategy; SCSI 030 Water-based Sports; SCSI 029 Trails, Hiking and Walking Routes; SCSI 028 New Amenity Walkways; SCSI 039 Community Gardens and Allotments; ECON Festivals
Integrated No. I6	Internationalisation, branding & promotion
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 10 Access to Quality Education and health Services
RSES	RSO 5 A Strong Economy; RSO 11 Inclusive International Region RPO 73 International Branding of the Region and Reputation
LDP 2022-28	ECON 045 Tourism; ECON 046 Festivals; CGR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; ECON 016 Night-time Economy; ECON 022 Learning Region; CSI 031 Art and Cultural; IN 02 Digital Connectivity; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; IN 03 Broadband IN 05 Telecommunication Support; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation;
Integrated No. I7	Technology & SMART strategies
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure; 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions; 17 Partnership for the Goals
NPF / NDP	5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; 3 Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; 10 Access to Quality Education and health Services
RSES	RSO 2 Enhanced Regional Accessibility; RSO 5 A Strong Economy; RSO 6 High Quality International Connectivity RPO 133 Smart Cities; RPO 134 Smart Cities and Smart Region; RPO 135 High Quality High Capacity International Digital Transmission; RPO 136 National Broadband Plan; RPO 137 Mobile Infrastructure; RPO 138 Digital Strategies
LDP 2022-28	IN 02 Digital Connectivity; ECON 028 Smart City; SCSI 07 Smart Towns and Villages; IN 03 Broadband; IN 05 Telecommunication Support; ECON 021 Knowledge Economy; ECON 023 Education and Skills; ECON 025 Clustering and Innovation; TR01 Shannon Airport: ECON 041 Home Working/E-Working; Objective SF 01 Social Framework Strategy; Objective EF 01 Economic Framework Strategy; Objective ECON 033 Enterprise Incubator Units; Objective ECON 034 Rural Remote Working Hubs; Objective SCSI 03 Community Hubs; Objective SCSI 04 Ten - Minute Neighbourhood; Objective SCSI 031 Art and Culture

Integrated No. I8		Active travel/sustainable travel
LECP HLGs		
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate Action	
NPF / NDP	4 Sustainable Mobility; 8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; 2 Enhanced Regional Accessibility	
RSES	<p>RSO 7 Low Carbon, Climate Resilient & Sustainable Society; 4 Sustainable Mobility</p> <p>RPO 91 Decarbonisation in the Transport Sector; RPO 92 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure; RPO 139 Low Carbon International Connectivity; RPO 160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility; RPO 162 Multi-Modal Travel Integration; RPO 164 Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies; RPO 171 Bus; RPO 172 Rural Transport; RPO 174 Walking and Cycling; RPO 201 National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors</p>	
LDP 2022-28	<p>CGR 02 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm; TR 06 Delivering Modal Split; Objective TR 07 Behavioural Change Measures; Objective TR 08 Walking and Cycling Infrastructure; Objective TR 09 Limerick Cycle Network; Objective TR 010 Limerick Regeneration Areas Sustainable Travel Infrastructure; Objective TR 011 Enhanced Public Transport; Objective TR 012 Limerick BusConnects Programme; Objective TR 015 Transport Interchange; Objective TR 016 Rail Network; Objective TR 018 Park and Ride Facilities; Objective TR 019 Park and Stride Facilities; Objective TR 020 Car Clubs/Car Sharing; Objective TR 021 Electric and Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles; Objective TR 025 Inter-city, Regional and Commuter Services; Objective TR 026 Bus Transport Infrastructure</p>	
Integrated No. I9	Climate action mitigation / adaptation and natural resources	
LECP HLGs		
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 13 Climate Action; 15 Life on Land; 14 Life Below Water	
NPF / NDP	8 Transition to Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; 9 Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and Other Environmental Resources	
RSES	<p>RSO, Low Carbon, Climate Resilient & Sustainable Society</p> <p>RPO 111 Water Resources; RPO 112 Water Quality; RPO 113 Floods Directive through to RPO119 Flood Relief Schemes; RPO 121 Effective Collaborative to Implement River Basin Management Plans and Water Framework Directive; RPO 123 River Basin Management Plan and Spatial Planning; RPO 124 Green Infrastructure; RPO 125 Biodiversity; RPO 127 Invasive Species; RPO 128 All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015-2020; RPO 129 Landscape; RPO 130 Air Quality; RPO 131 Noise; RPO 132 "Dark Sky" Parks and Reserves; RPO 201 National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway and Blueway Corridors; RPO 200 Green Infrastructure and Recreation; RPO202 Natural heritage, Biodiversity and Built Heritage Assets</p>	
LDP 2022-28	<p>Objective CAF O1 Compliance with Higher Tier Climate Legislation and Guidance; Objective CAF O2 Partnership with Service Providers; Objective CAF O3 Sustainable Development; Objective CAF O4 Climate Proofing; Objective CAF O5 Energy Efficiency in Existing Development; Objective CAF O6 Energy Efficiency in New Developments; Objective CAF O7 Near Zero Energy Buildings; Objective CAF O8 Renewable Energy Objective; Objective CAF O9 Achieving Climate Resilience;</p>	

	Objective CAF O11 Nature Based Solutions; CAF O12 Urban Greening; Objective CAF O14 Energy Generation; Objective CAF O15 Local Energy Production; Objective CAF O16 Circular Economy; Objective CAF O17 Low Energy Building Materials; Objective CAF O18 Energy and Emissions Balance; Objective CAF O19 Decarbonising Zones; Objective CAF O26 Bio Energy; Objective CAF O27 Renewable Energy Production; Objective CAF O35 Community Based Energy Initiatives; Objective CAF O39 Carbon Capture; Objective CAF O38 Emerging Technologies
Integrated No. I10	Green energy /energy systems
LECP HLGs	
UN SDGs	3 Good Health and Well-being; 7 Affordable and clean energy; 11 Sustainable cities and communities; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production; 13 Climate Action
NPF / NDP	8 Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society; 5 A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills
RSES	RSO, Low Carbon, Climate Resilient & Sustainable Society RPO 95 Sustainable Renewable Energy Generation; RPO 98 Regional Renewable Energy Strategy; RPO 99 Renewable Wind Energy; RPO 44 Common Agricultural Policy; RPO 105 Clean Electric Heat Technologies and District Heating; RPO 106 Future Proofing and Retrofitting; RPO 109 Bio-Energy Implementation Plan
LDP 2022-28	Objective CAF O1 Compliance with Higher Tier Climate Legislation and Guidance; Objective CAF O2 Partnership with Service Providers; Objective CAF O3 Sustainable Development; Objective CAF O4 Climate Proofing; Objective CAF O5 Energy Efficiency in Existing Development; Objective CAF O6 Energy Efficiency in New Developments; Objective CAF O7 Near Zero Energy Buildings; Objective CAF O8 Renewable Energy Objective; Objective CAF O9 Achieving Climate Resilience; Objective CAF O11 Nature Based Solutions; CAF O12 Urban Greening; Objective CAF O14 Energy Generation; Objective CAF O15 Local Energy Production; Objective CAF O16 Circular Economy; Objective CAF O17 Low Energy Building Materials; Objective CAF O18 Energy and Emissions Balance; Objective CAF O19 Decarbonising Zones; Objective CAF O26 Bio Energy; Objective CAF O27 Renewable Energy Production; Objective CAF O35 Community Based Energy Initiatives; Objective CAF O39 Carbon Capture; Objective CAF O38 Emerging Technologies

APPENDIX 3: MEMBERSHIP OF LECP ADVISORY GROUP, LOCAL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, ENTERPRISE & PLANNING SPC

LECP Advisory Group Membership:

Name	Organisation
Aileen Magnier	An Garda Síochána
Barry Murphy	Irish Farmers' Association
Brian Thompson	Public Participation Network / Economic SPC
Bridie Collins	Economic SPC (Chairperson)
David Studer	Tusla
David Tobin	Public Participation Network
Eddie Ryan	Economic SPC
Eugene Quinn	Jesuit Refugee Service
Fiona O'Grady	Limerick Youth Service (LYC)
Jennifer Moroney-Ward	Paul Partnership/ Migrant Integration Steering Group
James McCarthy	Department of Social Protection
Jimmy Browne	Technological University of the Shannon
Kerstin Mey	University of Limerick
Mark Tiernan	Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC)
Michael Collins	Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)
Mike Cantwel	Local Enterprise Office
Niamh Wallace	Health Service Executive (HSE)
Paraic Rattigan	Regional Enterprise Plan
Sandra Heelan	An Garda Síochána
Sean Golden	Limerick Chamber
Siobhan Heaney	Kilmeedy Community Development Group
Triona Lynch	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB)

Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) Membership

Name	Organisation
Councillor Stephen Keary	Elected Member
Councillor Brigid Teefy	Elected Member
Councillor Michael Collins	Elected Member
Councillor Joe Pond	Elected Member
Stephane Duclot	Limerick City and County Council
George O'Callaghan	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
Michelle Lynch	Health Services Executive
Pádraig Casey	Ballyhoura Development Company
Jennifer Moroney Ward	PAUL Partnership
Shay Riordan	West Limerick Resources
Maurice O'Connell	Public Participation Network

David Tobin	Public Participation Network
Vacant	Public Participation Network
Linda Ledger	Public Participation Network
James Prior	Public Participation Network
Fiona O'Grady	Limerick Youth Service
Dee Ryan	Limerick Chamber
Barry Murphy	Irish Farmers' Association

Economic Development, Enterprise & Planning SPC Membership:

Elected Members	Sectoral representatives
Bridie Collins (Chair)	Michael Joyce
Eddie Ryan	Development/Construction
James Collins	Seán Golden
Joe Pond	Eoghan Carr
Martin Ryan	Aidan Gleeson
Catherine Slattery	Declan Hehir
Daniel Butler	Brian Thompson
John Egan	Madeleine Lyes
Liam Galvin	Vacancy
Stephen Keary	Social Inclusion
Michael Murphy	
Olivia O'Sullivan	
Jerome Scanlan	
Emmett O'Brien	
Saša Novak Uí Chonchúir	
John O'Donoghue	

APPENDIX 4: STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC PLAN SOUTHERN REGION



Statement on the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

The Regional Assemblies' role in the LECP process is set out under Section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 (amending Section 66C of the Local Government Act 2001), in particular Section 66C 2(c) and 3(c), which states that the consideration of an LECP by the Regional Assembly shall relate to its consistency with (i) the core strategy and the objectives of the development plan of the local authority concerned, (ii) any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) or, as appropriate, Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) that may apply, and (iii) between the economic and community elements of the Plan.

The Limerick LECP was considered by the members of the Regional Assembly at their meeting of 12th April 2024 where it was agreed:

1. To commend the work of Limerick City and County Council and the Limerick LCDC in the development of the LECP and
2. In accordance with Section 44 of Local Government Reform Act 2014 (amending Section 66C of the Local Government Act 2001), the Regional Assembly are satisfied that the Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan has demonstrated consistency with:
 - (i) the core strategy and the objectives of the Development Plan
 - (ii) The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region
 - (iii) between the community and economic elements of the LECP

Subject to the recommendations as follows:

- References to the **National Development Plan 2018-2027** on Page 8 should be amended to **National Development Plan 2021-2030** (which is the updated National Development Plan).
- Reference to the **Governments Climate Action Plan** on page 19 should be updated to reflect the **Climate Action Plan 2024** which was published December 2023 (which is the third annual update to the 2021 Climate Action Plan).



- Under Section 2.8 where summarising the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), and in the Objectives, specific reference should be made to the designation of **Newcastle West as a Key Town** and its role as set out in the RSES and Limerick City and County Development Plan 2022-2028.
- For objective E5 (Business expansion, targeting high value added sectors & business networks) it would be appropriate to include a reference within this objective to the principle of **smart specialisation** and the role it could play in supporting clusters of key industries within the City and County. See Section 4.2 (Economic Strategy).
- For Objective C1 (Education & learning) reference should be included to **Limerick's status as a UNESCO Learning City**, and wider regional objective to **develop the Southern Region as a learning region**. (See Strategic Objective 10 and RPO 190 of the RSES).
- For Objective I3 (Connected city & sub-urban neighbourhoods), reference should be included to **compact growth** in the main text of this objective, while the principles of compact growth should be emphasised further within the supporting text. The specific importance of compact growth and higher residential densities in Limerick City as set out in the recently published **Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines**, should also be referenced.