

GALWAY COUNTY LOCAL ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY PLAN 2024-2030



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Galway County Local Economic &
Community Plan 2024 – 2030

Gaillimhe Plean Áitiúil
Eacnamaíochta agus Pobail 2024 - 2030



Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Áitiúil
Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Local Community
Development Committee

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1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE LECP

The purpose of the Galway County Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set a framework, objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of Galway County. The LECP acts as the primary mechanism at the local level to bring forward relevant actions arising from national and regional strategies and policies that have a local remit.



The LECP acts as an enabling framework to support Local Government and other key stakeholders to collaboratively ensure that their initiatives, programmes and projects support an improved quality of life for people living and working in Galway County.

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 requires that the economic elements of the LECP should be developed by the local authority Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Economic Development and Enterprise and that the community elements of the LECP be developed by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC).

Figure 1.1 outlines the interactions between the various stakeholders involved in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the LECP.

1.1 How is the LECP structured?

The LECP for 2024-2030 consists of two parts:

- The overall LECP framework detailing the High-Level Goals and Sustainable Community and Economic Objectives as well as consideration of outcomes and high-level indicators for the 6-year LECP period.
- An Implementation Plans which detail the inputs, actions and resources required for that implementation plan period as well as relevant specific key performance indicators to facilitate evaluation.

Figure 1.2 outlines the structure of the strategic framework and implementation plans as part of the LECP process:

Figure 1.1 Stakeholders involved in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the LECP

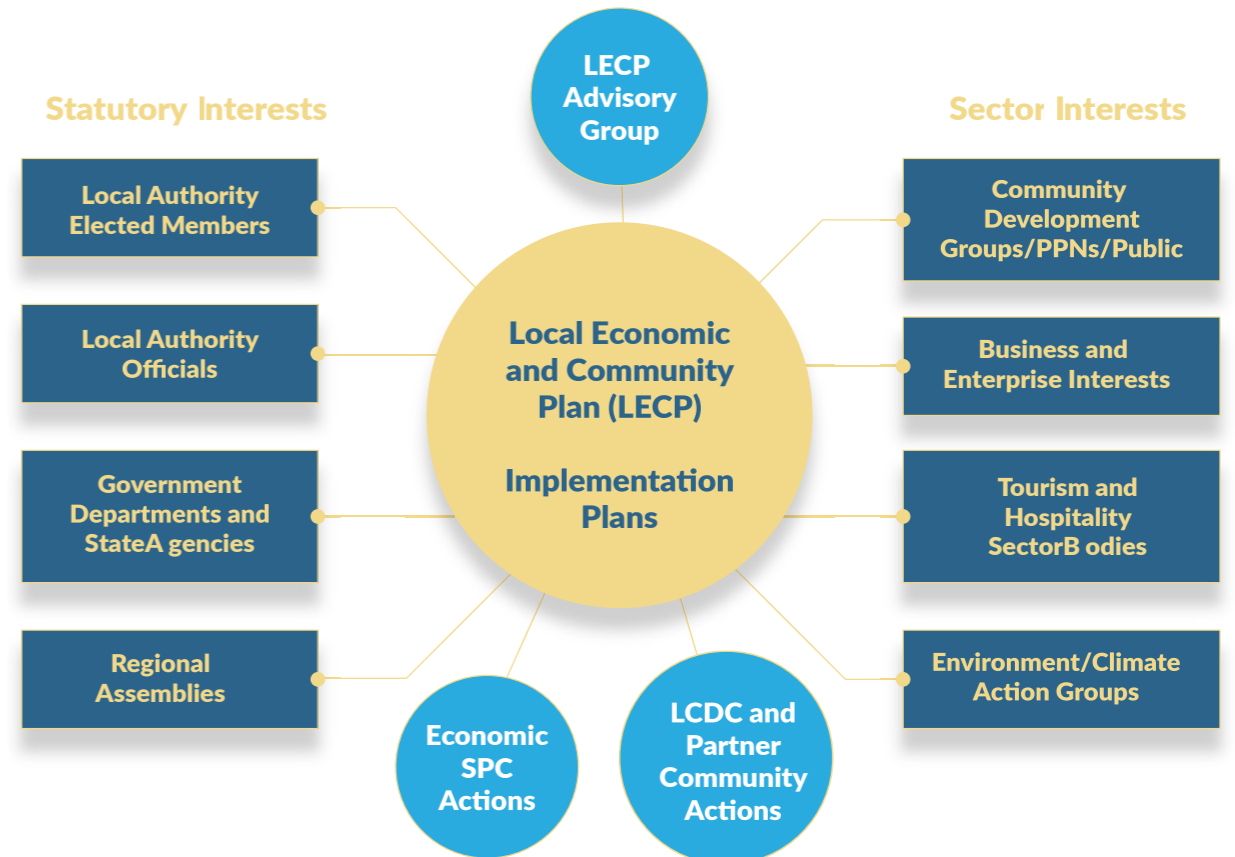
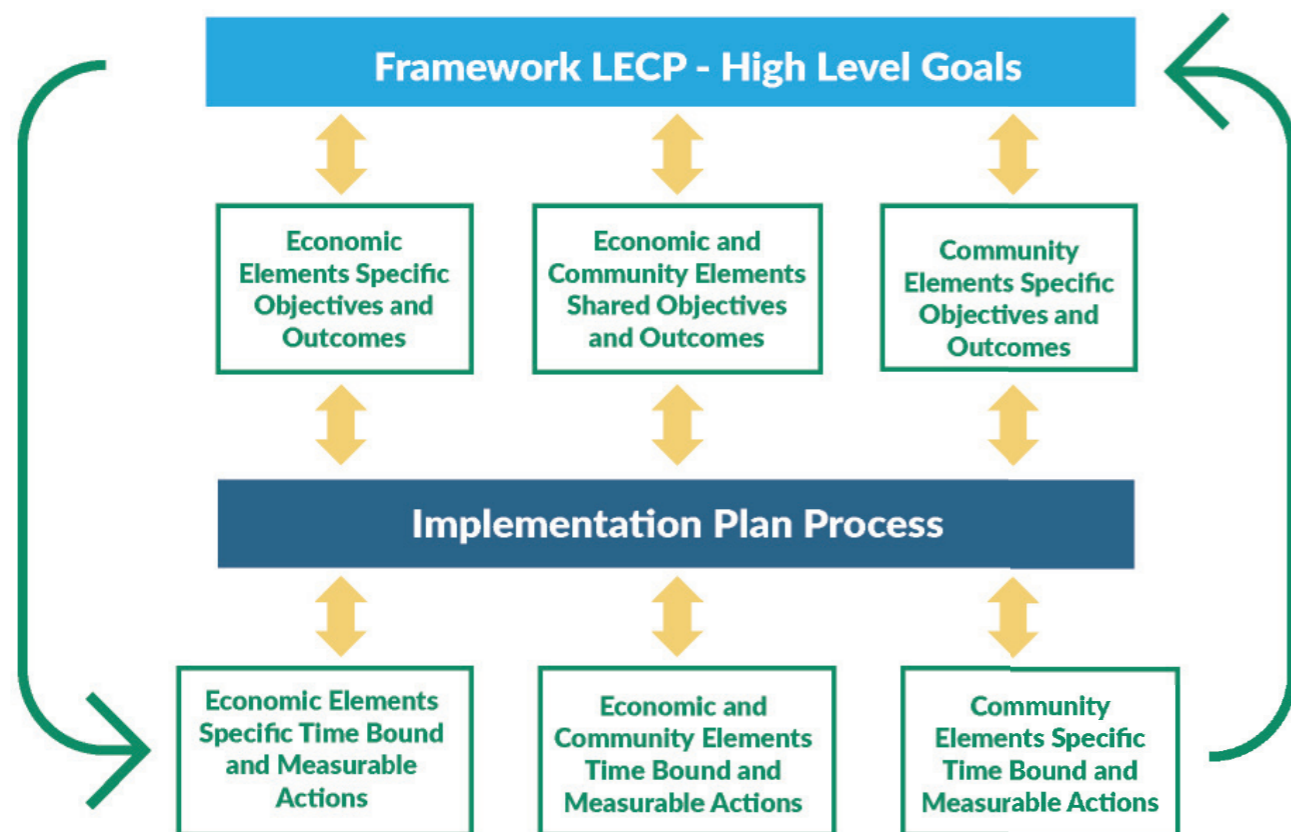


Figure 1.2: LECP Framework



1.2 What was the process for developing the LECP?

Figure 1.3 outlines the stages which culminated in the adoption and publication of an LECP for the period 2024 –2030.

1.3 What is the purpose of this document?

This document, called the Framework LECP, is intended to provide the rationale and evidence-base for the Implementation plan. This document will:

- Explain what an LECP is and who will deliver the actions in it.
- Describe how the LECP was developed and prepared
- Provide a snapshot of economic and community statistics in Galway
- Provide an overview of key findings from public consultation.
- A SWOT analysis informed by findings from research and public consultation.
- Present the six High-Level Goals that will guide the LECP over the next six years.

- Provide a detailed outline of the objectives and actions under each High-Level Goal.
- Explain how the LECP will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Figure 1.3: LECP Development Process

Stage 1: Preparation	Socio-economic Analysis	Socio-economic Statement and High-Level Goals based on Socio-economic Analysis	Preparation by Advisory Group. Sign off by SPC and LCDC
Stage 2: Public Consultation	Public Consultation on High-Level Goals	Revision of Statement based on consultation	Preparation by Advisory Group. Sign off by SPC and LCDC
Stage 3: Develop Objectives and Outcomes	Develop detailed objectives and outcomes	Preparation by Advisory Group. Sign off by SPC and LCDC	Final Draft to MDs and RAs for input
Stage 4: Finalise Plan	SPC and LCDC to adopt final draft reflecting MD and RA input	LA to approve final draft	Submission to Minister and Published by LA
Stage 5: Implementation	Implementation Plans	Consideration of available Resources	Ongoing flexible implementation
Stage 6: Monitoring and Evaluation	KPIs to address proposed outcomes	Ongoing data collection including case studies	Implementation report

2.0 VALUES, PRINCIPLES & CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

Guided by the LECP Guidelines 2021 and current inclusive engagement best practice, the LECP is underpinned by several specific Values, Principles & Cross-Cutting Priorities. The values, principles and cross-cutting priorities have informed all parts of the LECP development process.

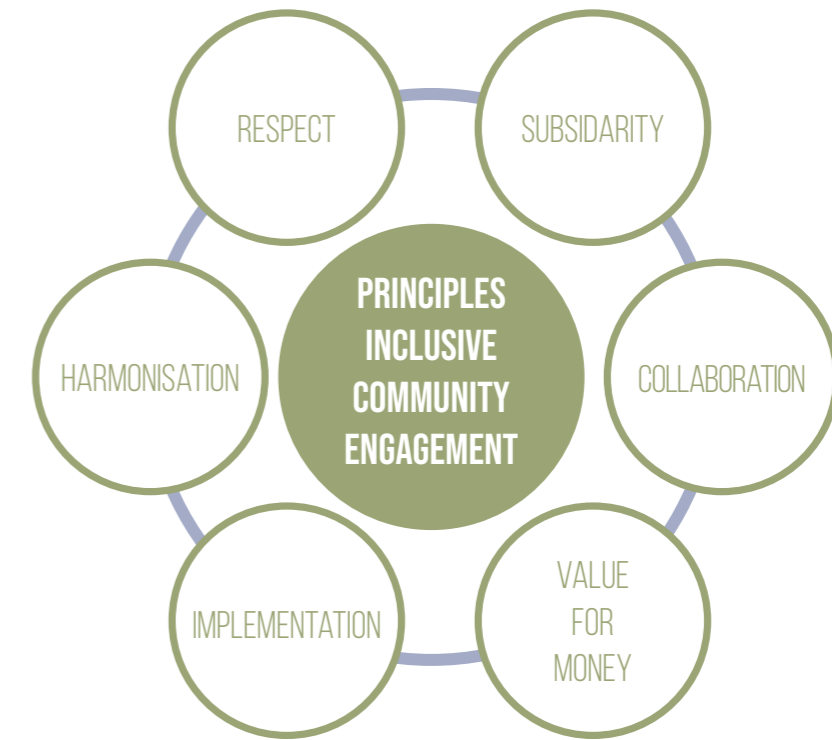


Figure 2.1 Principles inclusive community engagement

2.1 What values underpin the development of the LECP?

The following is a list of the fundamental values that influence the course and contents of Galway County's LECP:

- **Social Justice** and the belief that everyone is entitled to equal economic, political and social rights.
- **Empowering Communities** by increasing knowledge, skills, consciousness and confidence to enable them to become critical, creative and active participants in society.
- **Sustainable Development** is a commitment to allow development to take place to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is a continuous, guided process of

economic, environmental and social change aimed at promoting the well-being of citizens now and into the future.

- **Active Participation** of all stakeholders, including citizens and non-citizens. This is essential to ensure that any policies and programmes targeted at communities are effective and successful.
- **Human Rights, Equality and Anti-Discrimination** involves promoting these values in society and committing to addressing the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by many groups.
- **Social Inclusion** prioritises the needs of communities experiencing social or economic exclusion, including rural isolation, and addressing the root causes of these issues to ensure inclusion.

2.2 What principles have underpinned the development of the LECP?

The principles for inclusive community engagement in this guide have been drawn from several sources, including the Values and Principles for Collaboration and Partnership Working with the Community and Voluntary Sector.

- **Respect** for the diversity of knowledge, skills, views and lived experience being brought to the process by all stakeholders.
- **Subsidiarity**, by recognising and facilitating communities, whether geographic or a community of interest, to influence decisions, take actions, and promote power-sharing.

- **Harmonisation** with existing strategies and standards of good practice relevant to local and community development
- **Value for Money** through a collaborative, whole-of-government ethos that prioritises societal value and community need.
- **Implementation** by leveraging the potential of existing local and national structures which are in place.
- **Collaboration** with relevant stakeholders and communities to support sustainable approaches to policy and programme development and implementation.

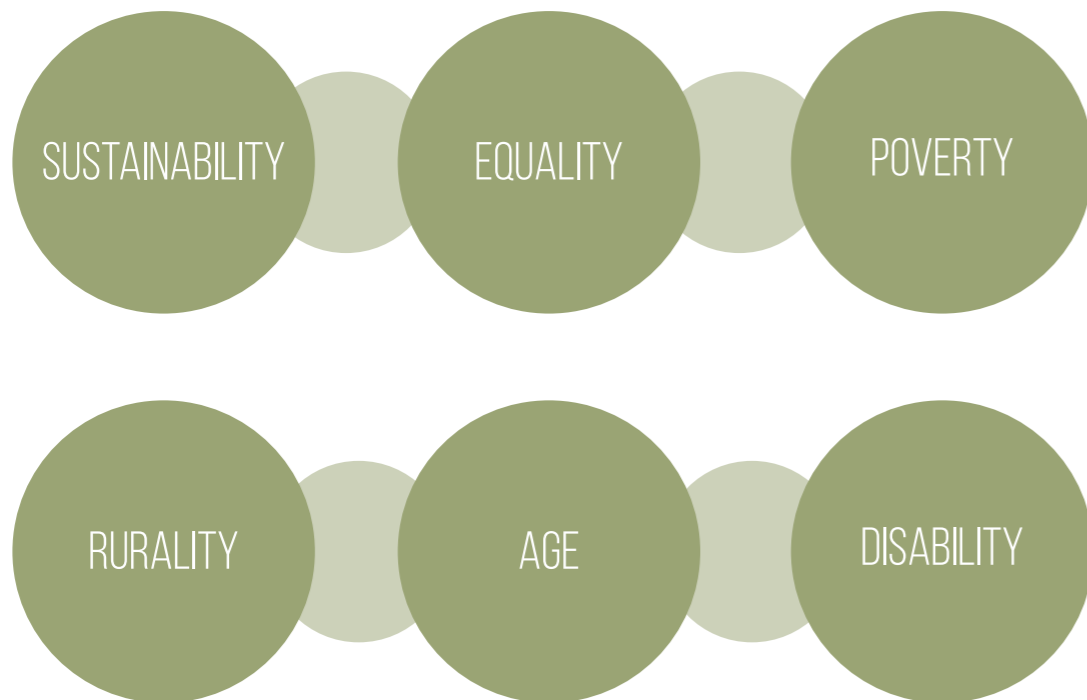
2.3 What cross-cutting priorities underpin the development of the LECP?

In addition to ensuring consistency with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and County Development Plan, full consideration has been given to assessing the potential impact of the LECP according to the following cross-cutting priorities:

- Sustainability
- Equality
- Poverty
- Rurality
- Age
- Disability



Figure 2.2 Cross-cutting priorities



3.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This section provides a comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic factors influencing Galway County. It offers an overview of the catchment including key community profiles, economic sectors, employment trends, and the environmental profile.



3.1 Geographic & Administrative Profile

Administrative Profile

The County sits within the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA). The NWRA is a significant component of regional governance in Ireland. Established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014, the NWRA is one of three regional assemblies in Ireland. Its primary role is to coordinate, promote, and support strategic planning and sustainable development in its territory, aiming to enhance the region's overall economic, social, and environmental well-being. Galway County and Galway City, both within the NWR, while geographically contiguous and often discussed in conjunction, have distinct administrative boundaries and governance structures. The LECP for Galway County is

specifically designed to address the needs and development goals of those that live, visit and work in Galway County. From the outset it is important to distinguish Galway County from Galway City, which has its own separate LECP. This distinction is crucial for planning and implementing localised strategies that cater to the unique socio-economic and community dynamics of each area. This separation is particularly relevant in the context of LECPs, where tailored approaches to economic and community development are essential. In instances where data encompasses both Galway County and City, the term "Galway City and County" is used to denote the combined catchment area, acknowledging cases where separate data for the two areas is not provided.

The governance structure of Galway County is detailed through its division into five Municipal



Figure 3.1 Galway County Municipal Districts

Districts (MDs): Athenry, Ballinasloe, Conamara, Loughrea, and Tuam. Each of these districts has unique characteristics and development needs, which are represented by a total of 39 Elected Members within the Galway County Council. These representatives play a pivotal role in shaping and implementing the LECP, ensuring that the diverse needs of their respective districts are addressed, thereby fostering balanced and inclusive development across Galway County.

Geographic Profile

Galway County has the second largest administrative area in Ireland, second only to Cork County. It has an area of

approximately 6,100 km² and a coastline stretching to almost 2,000 kilometres. The country's four most populated offshore islands, Inis Móir, Inis Óirr, Inis Meáin and Inisbofin, are part of Galway County. The County borders five other counties with Mayo to the north, Clare to the south, Roscommon and Offaly to the east, and Tipperary to the south-east. Per Census 2022, Galway County has the largest Gaeltacht population in Ireland, where 36,687 people speak the Irish language daily.

The County is characterised by a diverse and natural landscape that includes features such as the mountainous Conamara region west of the River Corrib, fertile agricultural lands to the east and a more varied

limestone area to the south. These topographical attributes combine to give Galway its outstanding and widely varied landscape setting.

The County has eight Nature Reserves as well as a significant number of EU Natura 2000 designated sites, reflecting the high-quality natural and unique environments found throughout the County. Natural boundaries in the County include Galway Bay to the west, the River Shannon to the east, Lough Derg to the south-east and, at its centre, the County contains the largest inland lake in the Republic of Ireland, Lough Corrib.

3.2 Settlement Profile

A varying hierarchy of settlements

The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 contains a hierarchy of settlement typologies. While the County town of Galway is Galway City, there are several settlements within Galway County which also fall into the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). They are Baile Chláir, Bearna, Oranmore,

Briarhill and Garraun. The MASP has been identified to accommodate critical mass in population growth within the area that will ensure the vitality and appeal of Galway City and the surrounding towns and villages.

Ballinasloe and Tuam, as distinct from other major settlements in Galway County as they are designated as Key Towns within Chapter 3 of the RSES. These towns are of regional strategic employment centres of significant scale that can act as regional drivers that complement and support the

higher order areas within the settlement hierarchy.

Athenry is the only settlement in the County that has been designated as a town of Strategic Potential. It is considered a large economically active service centre that provides employment for the surrounding areas.

Gort and Loughrea are both designated Self-Sustaining Towns due to high levels of population growth and a limited employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/

Figure 3.2 Categories of settlement map Galway County



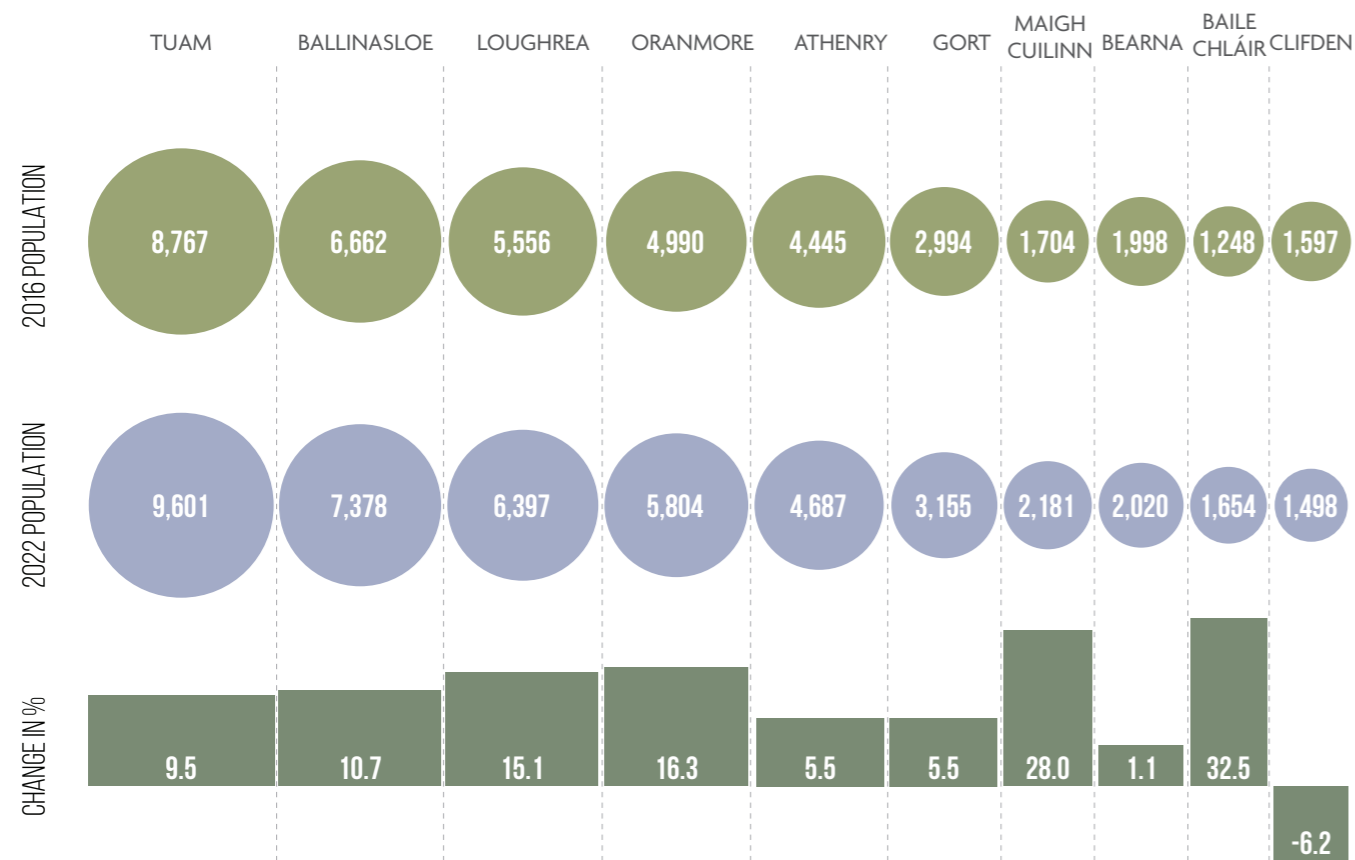


Figure 3.3: Population change in Galway County Towns between 2016 to 2022

or services and which require targeted “catchup” investment to become more sustaining. There are five settlements in Galway County which are designated ‘Small Growth Towns’. They are small Towns with local service and employment potential. There is a need to promote regeneration and revitalisation of towns and support local enterprise and employment opportunities to ensure their viability as service centres for surrounding rural areas. Clifden, Maigh Cuilinn, Oughterard, Portumna and Headford are

all designated Small Growth Towns. Small Growth Villages are defined as small villages with local service and employment potential. An Chearthrú Rua, An Spidéal, Ballygar, Dunmore, Glenamaddy, Kinvara and Moylough are all designated as Small Growth Villages.

A rural County

In Galway County, 75.6% of the population reside in rural areas, surpassing the NWR’s rate of 63% and the State’s

rate of 36.3%. Of those that live in urban areas in the State, 52% reside in towns exceeding 10,000 residents, contrasting with the NWR’s 22.6%. Galway County does not have any settlements with a population in excess of 10,000. This rural population highlights the importance of local community amenities and service accessibility.

There are now 38 NWR Towns with populations between 1,500 and 10,000, up from 34 in 2016. In Galway County, 3 towns have entered this size category

(Oughterard, Portumna, Baile Chláir) while one has dropped beneath the threshold (Clifden).

Increasing population in Urban Settlements

A new method of defining urban settlements and calculating town populations was introduced for Census 2022 and beyond, Built-up Urban Areas (BUAs). There are now 12 BUAs in Galway County. It should be noted that the new method means that populations are not directly comparable with those from previous Census.

When the Census 2022 and 2016 data is presented based on

the old settlement boundaries, it provides a clearer picture of the changes in population across the urban settlements in Galway County. Between 2016 and 2022, most towns recorded an increase of population, with Baile Chláir having the highest increase (32.5%). Of the included towns, only Clifden showed a decrease in population (dropping 16.2%).

Higher residential vacancy rates than the State

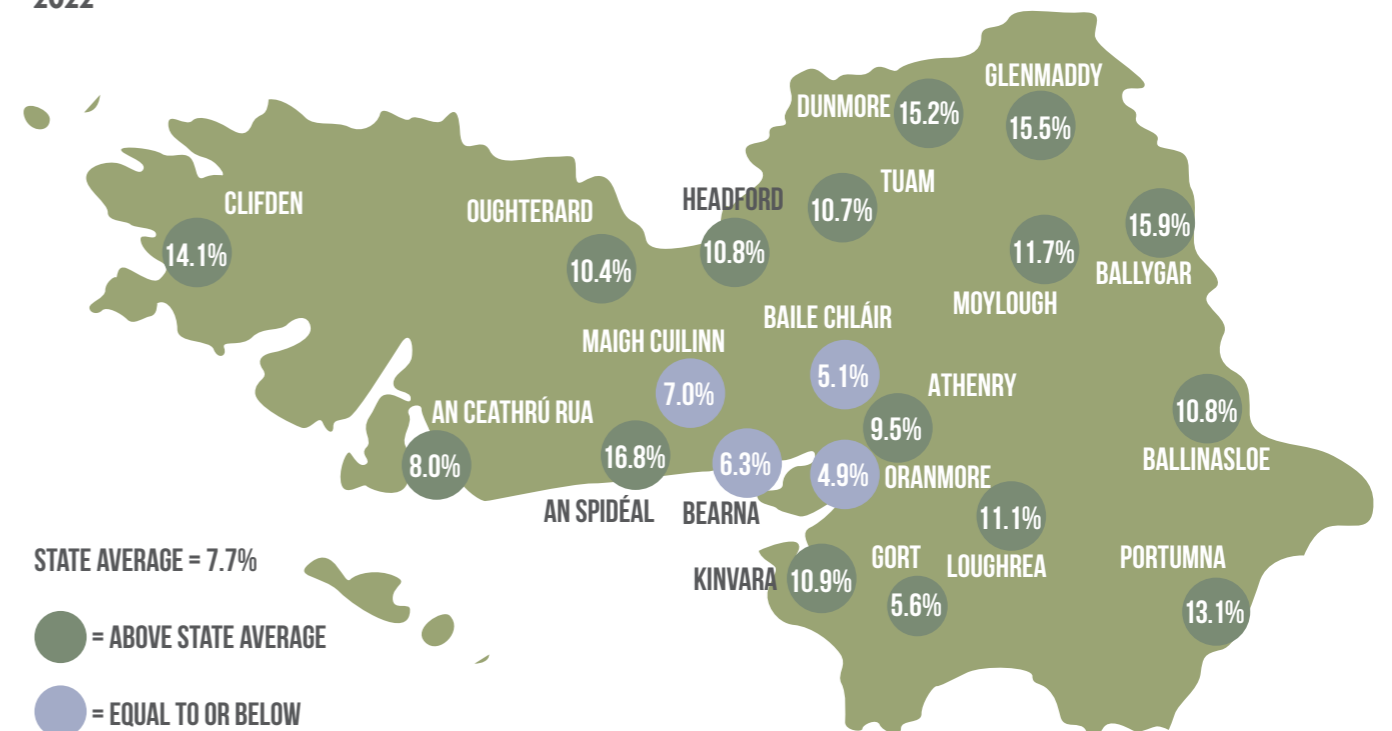
Data from Census 2022 gives a measurement of housing stock, which is occupied households and vacant residential dwellings. It is important to note dwellings under construction

and derelict properties are not included in the count of vacant dwellings and that a dwelling classified as vacant for census purposes does not necessarily imply that it is available for re-use. In 2022, the residential vacancy rate in Galway County (10.7%) this was lower than the Northern and Western Region (NWR) (11.5%), but higher than the State rate (7.7%).

Galway County had an unoccupied holiday home rate of 5.2% in 2022, which showed a rise from the 2016 rate of 4.9%. The figures for both years were lower than the NWR, but higher than the State.

According to the January 2022 analysis of regional vacancy

Figure 3.4: Galway County Towns with above State Average residential vacancy and dereliction rate 2022



and dereliction by the NWR, the following towns in Galway County were above the State Average of residential vacancy and dereliction of 4.9% (the average rate for Galway City and County was 6.8% in 2020).

3.3 Demographic Profile

A growing population

Between 2016 and 2022, Galway County experienced an increase in population, rising from 179,390 to 193,323 residents. This was a growth rate of 7.8%. This growth rate was slightly higher than the combined rate for Galway City and County, which stood at 7.6%. At the MD level, Loughrea MD showed above average population growth with a rate of 10.1%, surpassing the overall growth rate of Galway County. Moreover, the population growth rate in

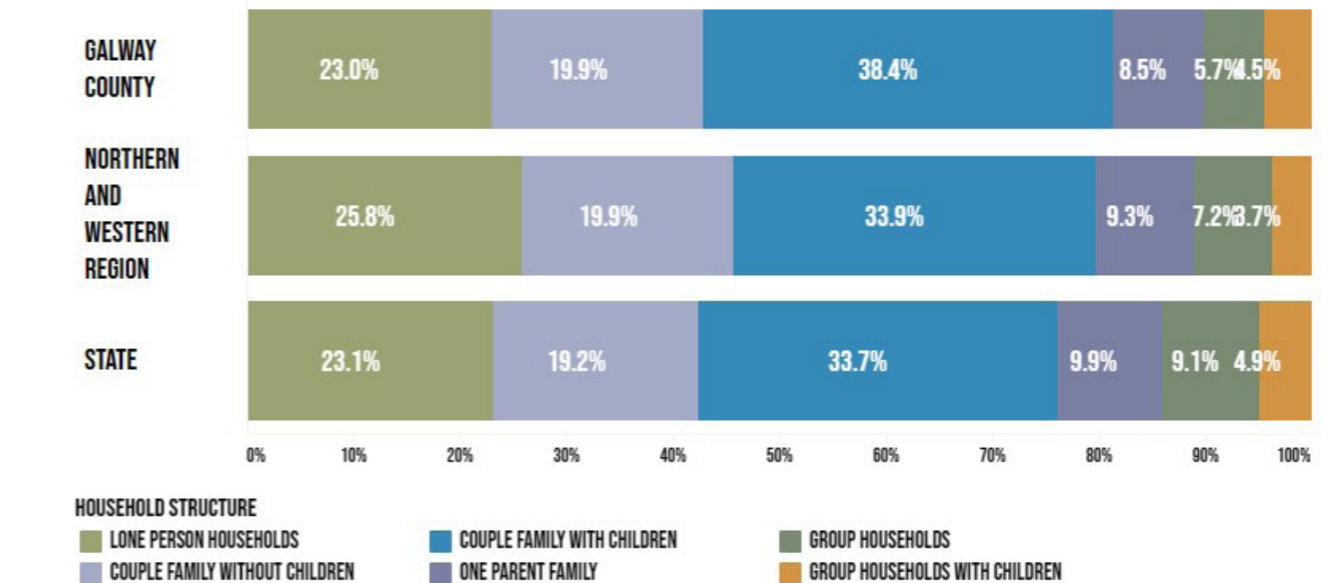
Galway County closely mirrors the expansion in housing stock, which recorded a growth rate of 7.9% over the same period, indicating a balanced provision of housing to accommodate the growing population. Examining the sources of population growth reveals that 46.0% of Galway County's population increase stemmed from natural increase (births minus deaths). This percentage contrasts with the NWR's average of 37.9%, with Galway City reporting the highest rate at 53.3% and Leitrim the lowest at 24.4%. Inward migration accounted for the remaining 54.0% of population growth in Galway County, lower than the NWR's average of 62.1%.

An ageing population

In 2022, Galway County was shown to have varying demographic statistics compared to national and

regional averages. With an average age of 39.7, slightly higher than the national mean of 38.8, the County saw an increase from its 2016 figure of 38.1. This demographic shift was accompanied by an age dependency ratio of 60.3%, or, six dependants for every ten individuals of working age.

Notably, Galway County's Youth Dependency ratio stood at 33.6%, exceeding the State average of 30.1%, with Athenry (35.5%) and Loughrea (34.7%) recording the highest ratios at the MD level. Moreover, Galway County had higher proportions of infants, preschoolers, primary schoolers, and secondary schoolers compared to both the NWR and the State. Conversely, its Old Age Dependency ratio, at 26.7%, was higher than the State average of 23.1%, with Ballinasloe (32.6%) and Conamara (32.1%) emerging as the MDs with the highest



ratios. Despite showing lower proportions of certain elderly age groups compared to the NWR, Galway County still recorded higher figures than the State.

High proportions of married people and families

While just over half (50.9%) of Galway County reported their marital status as single in 2022, this was lower than the proportions in the NWR (52.0%), and the State (53.9%). Instead, Galway County had a high proportion of married people (40.5%) when compared to the NWR (38.7%), and the State (37.1%).

As would be expected, given the high proportion of married people, the proportion of households that were couple

families with children (38.4%) and without children (19.9%) were higher than the State averages (33.7% and 19.2% respectively). Conversely, the proportion of lone person households (23.0%) and one-parent family households (8.5%) in Galway County were below the State average (23.1% and 9.9% respectively).

An increasingly diverse population

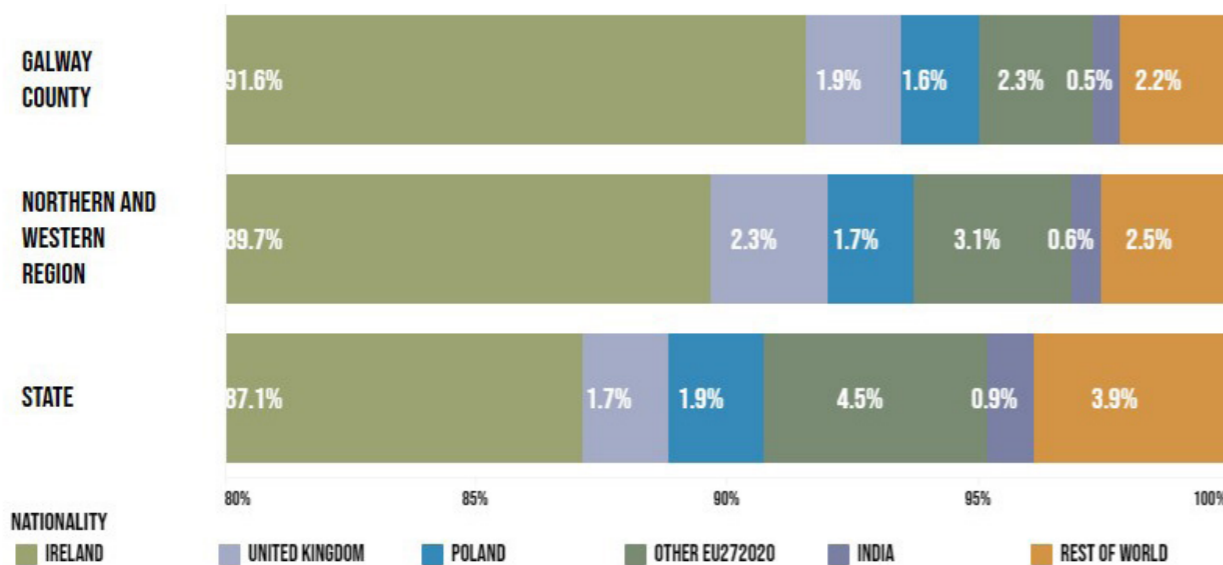
In 2022, Galway County exhibited a predominantly White Irish population, accounting for 87.2% of its residents. The remainder consisted of White Irish Travellers (1.4%), Asian or Asian Irish (1.6%), Black or Black Irish (0.6%), Other White (7.8%), and 1.4% identified as another ethnicity. This demographic makeup reflected relatively

low diversity compared to the national level, where White Irish comprised 81.6% of the population.

However, over the period from 2016 to 2022, Galway County experienced an increase in the proportions of individuals identifying as Asian or Asian Irish (+0.7%), Black or Black Irish (+0.1%), Other White (+0.3%), and Other ethnicities (+0.3%).

Tuam was the most ethnically diverse MD within Galway County in 2022, with White Irish only accounting for 84.5% of its population. The remaining population comprised of White Irish Travellers (2.5%), Asian or Asian Irish (1.8%), Black or Black Irish (1.1%), Other White (8.8%), and other ethnicities (1.4%).

Galway County had a higher proportion of Irish nationals (91.6%) compared to both the



NWR (89.7%) and the State (87.1%) in 2022. Additionally, it had the highest population of Irish Travellers in the State, numbering 2,509 in 2022, albeit down from 2,640 in 2016. This population represented 7.6% of the Irish Traveller population in the State. Notably, the MDs of Ballinasloe (27.5 per 1,000 total population) and Tuam (23.5 per 1,000 total population) reported the highest proportions of Irish Travellers relative to their total populations.

In terms of nationality, Galway County had a high proportion of Irish Nationals (91.6%) compared to the State (87.1%) in 2022. The remaining nationalities included the UK (1.9%), Poland (1.6%), India (0.5%), Other EU27 (2.3%) and other countries (2.2%).

Additionally, as of the 6th of February 2022, over 3,600 Ukrainian Nationals had been accommodated in over 20 different locations throughout Galway County as Temporary Beneficiaries of Protection, reflecting the County's response to the war in Ukraine.

A multilingual population

In Galway County, a notable proportion of the population aged 3 and over reported being able to speak Irish, with the figure standing at 50.3%.

This surpassed the State's proportion of 40.4%, which is to be expected given that Galway County has the largest Gaeltacht population in the country.

Among those who reported speaking languages other than English at home, Galway County had a large number of Polish speakers, comprising 22.5% of this demographic. This exceeded both the NWA average of 20.7% and exceeded the statewide average of 16.5%, underscoring the County's diverse linguistic landscape.

However, despite the linguistic diversity within Galway County, the proportion of foreign language speakers who reported speaking English 'Not well' or 'Not at all' was 13.2%. This figure matches the State's rate but was lower than the NWR's proportion of 15.4%.

Relatively good health, and a high proportion of carers

In Galway County, a significant majority of individuals rated their general health as good or very good, comprising 89.3% of the population. This figure surpassed both the NWR's rating of 88.1% and the national average of 88.9%. However, there was a decline of 3% in

self-reported health ratings since 2016, a trend consistent with NWR and State levels. According to Census 2022, the proportion of individuals reporting a disability in Galway County stood at 20.0%, marking the lowest rate within the NWR and lower than the national rate of 21.5%. At the MD level, Ballinasloe MD exhibited a higher disability rate at 21.9% compared to the State, while the remaining four MDs reported lower disability rates. Additionally, Galway County reported a relatively high percentage of carers within its population, with 6.5% of individuals serving in this capacity, surpassing the State average of 5.8%. This trend was consistent among all rural counties in the NWR, where the carer population ranged between 6.4% to 6.9%.

A lower proportion of volunteers than the State

The proportion of people who reported that they took part in volunteering activities related to social, charitable, religious, political, sporting or community organisations across Galway County was 16.2%. This was lower than the State average of 18.0%.

Relatively safe County with decreasing crime rate

Across 2022, a total of 3,462 crimes were recorded in the 44 Garda stations in Galway County. This represented 1.7% of the total crimes recorded in the State, a low proportion given that Galway County represented 3.8% of the

population. This represented a short-term increase from 3,038 in 2020, but a much more significant long-term decrease from 5,463 in 2008. Of those crimes in 2022, the most common offences were theft and related offences (20.5%),

attempts/threats to murder, assaults, harassment and related offences (16.5%) and public order and other social code offences (14.8%). These were the same three categories that were most common across the State.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Galway County's population is growing at a slightly lower rate than the State average, however, Loughrea MD has seen more rapid population growth. This growth is relatively balanced with just over half through inward migration and just under half through natural growth. A similar growth in housing stock suggests the provision of housing has been able to keep up with population growth.
- Galway County had a younger age profile, with high proportions of children and teenagers, however, the population is ageing, shown by an increased average age between 2016 and 2022. These suggest needs for both young family supports such as childcare as well as age-related supports for accessibility and preventing isolation.
- Galway County had relatively low diversity compared to the State, however, the population as a whole did see increases in diversity between 2016 and 2022. Galway County had the large-st Traveller population of any administrative county in 2022 however this number has down from 2016. Ballinasloe MD and Tuam MD particularly had high proportions of Travellers. Increasing diversity highlights the need for integration support to ensure that new communities are valued and represented in Galway County.
- Over half of the population in Galway County spoke Irish, significantly higher than the State average. There were also significant populations of foreign language speakers in Galway County, particularly Polish speakers. This shows a need to continue preserving the Irish language within Galway County, but also a make sure important information is available in a range of languages and to support those with limited English-speaking ability.
- Galway County is relatively healthy, with 2022 data showing a higher proportion of people reporting good or very good health and a lower disability rate, compared to the State. Health supports need to be appropriate and targeted to where they will be most effective, particularly with an ageing population.
- While the crime rate in Galway County has significantly decreased since 2008, 2022 had slightly higher numbers of crimes than the pre-COVID years of 2018 and 2019.

3.4 Education, Employment and Deprivation Profile

A well-educated population

In Galway County, Census 2022 revealed notable educational trends within the population. The data indicated that 2.6% of residents had no formal education, while 8.7% had completed primary education, 13.2% had achieved a lower secondary level, and 19.4% had attained an upper secondary level. These proportions closely mirrored those reported at the national level, suggesting consistency in educational attainment across the State.

However, Galway County demonstrated a higher

prevalence of individuals completing their formal education at 21 years or older, accounting for 43.5% of the population. This figure exceeded both the NWR's rate of 39.7% and the national average of 42.4%, indicating a trend towards people attending third-level education.

Between 2016 and 2022, Galway County experienced an increase in the proportion of individuals holding tertiary education qualifications, rising from 50.4% to 56.1%. This upward trajectory underscores a growing emphasis on higher education attainment within Galway County.

In terms of gender disparities in educational attainment, Census 2022 highlighted a notable gap between females and males. Specifically, 41.3% of females

had achieved a bachelor's level qualification or higher, compared to 30.3% of males with both genders in Galway County exhibiting higher levels of education compared to the State averages.

Recognising the critical role of human capital in driving economic prosperity and social advancement, investments in higher education and

vocational training have been pivotal in shaping Ireland's socioeconomic landscape. According to the Higher Education Authority, a total of 4,835 students originating from Galway City and County graduated from Higher Education Institutes in 2022, marking a 12% increase since 2018. Additionally, data from the Department of Education revealed fluctuations in

enrolment in Further Education and Training (FET) programmes within the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (ETB). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, FET beneficiary numbers stood at 21,184 in 2019 but declined to 15,044 in 2020, attributing the decrease to the pandemic's disruptive effects on educational activities.

A highly skilled Workforce

Galway County demonstrates a higher proportion of professional, managerial, and technical workers at 44.4%, surpassing both the NWR (40.4%) and the State (44.1%). Notably, Loughrea (53.0%) and Athenry (52.2%) stand out at the Electoral Division level. Conversely, Galway County witnessed a decline in the proportion of farmers by -5.1% from 2016 to 2022, in line with the regional trend of -4.4%.

Slightly low labour force participation rates compared to the State

In 2022, Galway County reported a labour force participation rate of 60.6%, slightly below the statewide average of 61.2%. This metric measures the proportion of individuals aged 15 years

and older who are either employed or available for work and excludes students, homemakers, retirees, and those unable to work due to disability. Analysis revealed that while the female labour force participation rate in Galway County (55.7%) closely mirrored the State average (55.6%), the male participation rate was slightly lower, standing at 65.7%, compared to 67% for the State.

Lowest unemployment rate in the Region

In 2022, Galway County exhibited a lower unemployment rate (7.2%) than that of the State (8.3%), marking the lowest rate within the NWR. Particularly noteworthy were the low unemployment rates in Athenry MD at 5.7% and Loughrea MD at 6.0%, whereas Conamara MD at 8.9% and Ballinasloe at 8.7% reported rates above the State average. This marked a significant decrease from the unemployment rate of 11.7% recorded in Galway County in 2016.

However, long-term unemployment, defined as a duration of 12 months or more, affected 60.9% of unemployed individuals in Galway County, with 58.8% being female and 62.7% male. This trend closely mirrored the average of 60.2%

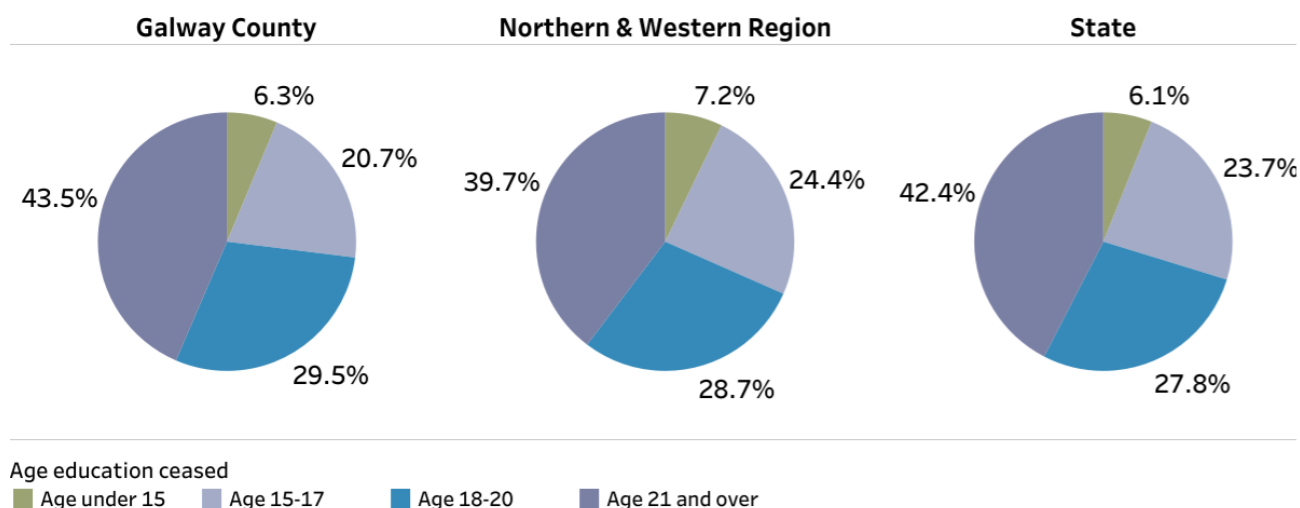
in the State, with 59% female and 61.1% male. As of February 2024, 4,101 people were on the Live Register across the Galway County Social Welfare Offices of Ballinasloe, Clifden, Gort, Loughrea and Tuam. This represents a 25.0% decrease from the total in February of 2019 (5,467).

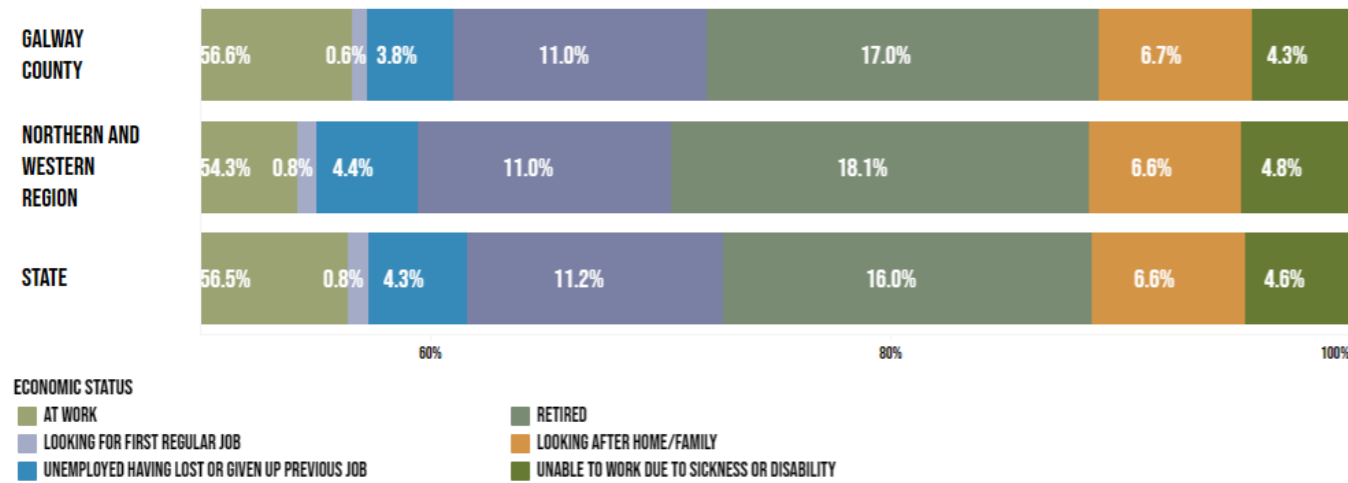
Diverse Range of Employment Sectors

Census data from 2022 highlights the prominent employment sectors in Galway County, with Professional Services at 26.7%, Commerce and Trade at 19.3%, and Manufacturing Industries at 16.9%. These sectors serve as vital contributors to the County's economic landscape.

According to the NWRA, key sectors identified through stakeholder consultations and research for the RSES include:

- Tourism
- Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Economy
- Marine and Blue Economy
- ICT and Life Sciences
- Agri-Tech and Agri-Food
- Retail
- Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering.





These sectors are integral to fostering balanced regional development in alignment with national frameworks.

The County Galway Tourism Strategy 2023-2031 targets a 10% increase in overall visitor spend by 2030. Currently, Galway attracts 984,000 domestic trips and 1.7 million overseas visitors, generating €754 million in tourism expenditure. The strategy aims to attract longer-staying visitors who spend more in Galway's towns and villages by further promoting the County's significant tourism potential.

The presence of IDA client companies in Galway City and County has shown substantial growth, increasing from 66 in 2011 to 99 in 2022. These companies provided direct employment to 24,400

individuals in 2022, marking consistent net job growth over the past decade. Additionally, Galway-based client companies now constitute 5.6% of the total IDA stock. Similarly, direct employment in client companies supported by Enterprise Ireland has risen from 6,103 in 2010 to 8,651 in 2022.

Local enterprise development initiatives have also played a significant role in employment generation. In 2022, client companies supported by the Galway Local Enterprise Office employed 1,192 individuals, contributing to the County's economic vibrancy.

A comprehensive analysis conducted by the Western Development Commission in 2019 revealed a thriving enterprise landscape in Galway

County. The report identified 18,003 active enterprises, accounting for 5.3% of the State activity, engaging 104,035 individuals, representing 4.6% of State activity. These findings underscore the robust entrepreneurial ecosystem and employment opportunities within the County.

SMEs account for the vast majority of enterprises but employ less than 75% of the Workforce

Micro-enterprises, defined as those employing fewer than 10 individuals, made up the majority of active enterprises in Galway City and County, accounting for 91.5% of the total. Despite their prevalence, they represented only 19.9% of the County's workforce. Small to medium enterprises

(SMEs), employing fewer than 250 individuals, constituted 99.8% of all enterprises in Galway and accounted for 74.3% of the workforce. This underscores the significant contribution of SMEs to local employment and economic activity.

Although fewer in number, large enterprises (250+ employees) held substantial influence due to their sizable workforce. Despite accounting for only 0.2% of active enterprises, the thirty large enterprises registered in Galway City and County collectively employed 17,792 individuals, representing 25.7% of the total workforce. Notably, sectors such as construction (19.6%), wholesale & retail (13.9%), and professional, technical, and scientific services (10.4%) emerged as key contributors to the County's enterprise landscape.

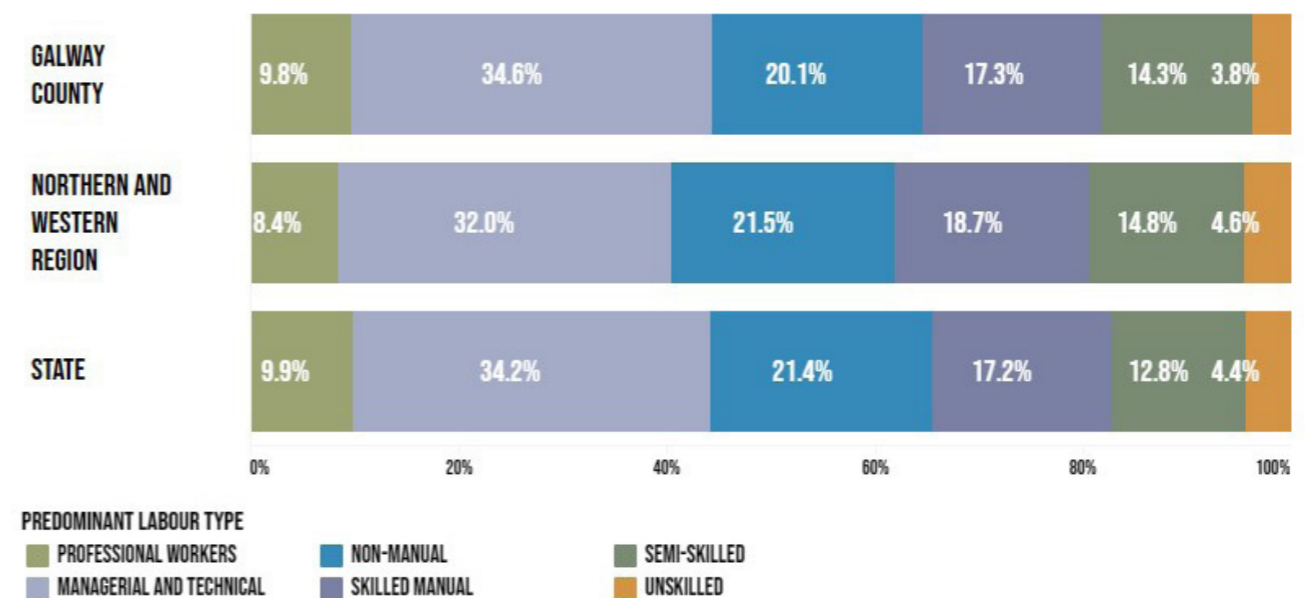
Disposable Income gap between Region and State Widening

A critical gauge of economic prosperity is the level of disposable income per capita, which serves as a significant indicator of household purchasing power and housing affordability. In 2021, the average disposable income in Galway City and County amounted to €23,495 per person. This figure is slightly below the State Average of €24,376 per capita. Evaluating disposable income levels provides valuable insights into the financial well-being of individuals and households within Galway, informing broader assessments of economic health and standard of living within the region.

Varying rates of deprivation

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index measures the relative affluence and deprivation of geographical areas. Per Census 2022 data, 4.3% of the EDs in Galway County were Affluent, 49.3% were Marginally Above Average, 41.1% were Marginally Below Average and 5.3% were Disadvantaged.

Despite being classified as Marginally Above Average at a County level overall, certain areas exhibit pockets of high levels of disadvantage. For instance, within Ballinasloe Urban ED, and Tuam Urban ED, there are pockets of areas classified as Disadvantaged and Extremely Disadvantaged. This highlights the need for targeted interventions to address localised deprivation.



A lower proportion of people working from home compared to the State

The national trend towards remote work saw a significant 173% increase from Census 2016 to 2022. In Galway County, however, a slightly lower proportion of individuals, at 29.8%, reported working from home compared to the State average of 32.2%. Galway City led the NWR with 31.1% of its population engaged in remote work. Notably, residential dwellings in Galway County showed longer distances to remote work hubs, with 43.2% within 5km and 26.2% located 10km or more away, contrasting with the State average of 57.6% within 5km and 17.8% at 10km or more.

A lower proportion of households connected to the Internet compared to the State

Galway County had a higher proportion of households without internet access (11.3%) compared to the State average (8.7%), and a lower proportion with broadband connectivity (75.2%) compared to the State (79.4%). These findings reveal disparities in internet

access, emphasising the need for efforts to improve digital infrastructure and ensure equitable access to online resources and opportunities.

Higher Commercial Vacancy Rate than the State

The economic vitality of towns and villages can be impacted by the prevalence of vacant commercial properties.

In Galway City and County, as of September 2020, the number of vacant commercial properties stood at 1,621, with a commercial vacancy rate of

13.4%. This rate exceeds the State Average of 11.4%. In response to this issue, the NWRA report offers recommendations aimed at revitalising town centres and villages. These recommendations include prioritising initiatives such as Town Centre First and schemes like URDF, RRDF, ERDF, and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Image: Joan Nagle - Connemara Carpets



KEY FINDINGS:

- Education rates across Galway County were high, with an increase in the proportion of people with tertiary education between 2016 and 2022. FET data also shows that the number of students from Galway graduating from higher education institutions across Ireland has also increased. Overall, this suggests that education and training is a strength in the Galway County that can continue to be built upon.
- This high education level is reflected in the high proportion of professional, managerial and technical workers across Galway County compared to the State. In terms of industrial sector, the largest employers in Galway County were Professional Services, Commerce and Trade and Manufacturing Industries. This may indicate a growing need for ongoing training and development supports, and for sufficient infrastructure to support the sustainable growth of these sectors.
- The unemployment rate in Galway County is the lowest in the NWR and lower than the State average. Despite this, there are areas of deprivation in Galway County, with almost half of the EDs ranking marginally below average or disadvantaged in the HP Deprivation Index 2022. The County also has two unemployment blackspots, and there is a below average level of disposable income across Galway County. Taken together, these figures may suggest a growing need for targeted employment and financial supports, with particular attention in areas experiencing high deprivation and unemployment.
- Enterprise in Galway County has seen significant growth, with the number of IDA client companies and companies supported by the Galway LEO growing to nearly 10,000 in 2022. The majority of enterprises across Galway were SMEs, with only 30 large companies registered. However, these companies did make up over a quarter of the employees. The presence and success of these 30 large companies suggests the potential for clustering and attracting new enterprises to locate in the County. The relatively high number of SMEs may indicate the potential to provide ongoing innovation and business supports, for example digitalisation services, mentoring, small business start-up programmes, and guidance for scaling up small businesses.

3.5 Environmental Profile

Low litter pollution compared to the State in some areas, but significantly higher in others

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) assesses the environmental performance of Local Authorities, including Galway County, through various surveys. One such survey evaluates litter pollution across different categories. In 2022, 20% of Galway County was

emphasising as unpolluted or litter-free, aligning with the State's proportion. The percentage of slightly polluted areas in Galway County stood at 43%, lower than the national median of 62%. However, 7% of Galway County was classified as significantly polluted, marking a deviation of 6 percentage points from the national median of 1%. These findings shed light on the varying degrees of litter pollution within Galway County, emphasising the need for targeted interventions to address areas of significant pollution and maintain environmental quality across the region.

Relatively good ecological status of lakes and rivers in Galway County

LECPs offer Local Authorities a platform to enhance and safeguard local ecosystems. In Galway County, these efforts have yielded notable results. According to the EPA's "Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018" report, Galway County boasts a higher proportion of river water bodies (56%) and lake water bodies (79%) with satisfactory ecological status compared to the State averages of 53% and 50%, respectively.

These findings underscore Galway County's commitment to biodiversity preservation and highlight the effectiveness of local initiatives in maintaining ecological health.

Overall decline in afforestation since 2007

In Galway City and County, afforestation levels have fluctuated in recent years. Peaking at 561 hectares in 2010, afforestation has since declined, reaching a low of 96 hectares in 2020, with a slight increase to 144 hectares in 2021. As of 2022, the total forest area in Galway City and County stands at 63,795 hectares, representing 10.4% of the total area, according to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The Figure below displays the total afforestation in Hectares (ha) in Galway for each year between 2007 and 2021.

A relatively low proportion of households connected to public mains water supply.

In 2022, Galway County had lower rates of households connected to public mains for water supply (57%) compared to the NWR (71%) and the State (82%). As would be expected,

a higher proportion of households in Galway County (29%) were connected to group water schemes compared to the NWR (20%) and the State (5%). According to Uisce Éireann's Water Supply Capacity Register as of June 2023, all 43 water sources in Galway City and County have potential capacity available, but 79.1% of them require improvements to meet projected population targets up to 2031.

Most Wastewater Treatment plants operating within capacity

Effective wastewater infrastructure is essential for facilitating future population and employment growth in Galway County's towns and villages. According to Uisce Éireann's June 2022 Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register, only four (11.4%) of the 35 settlements in Galway County lack additional treatment capacity. Each of these settlements either had Wastewater Treatment Plant projects planned or underway. Additionally, 61% of households in Galway County rely on individual septic tanks for sewerage treatment, a higher proportion compared to both the NWR (46%) and the State (21%).

Higher levels of car ownership than the Region

In 2022, 7.9% of households in Galway County did not own a car. This was lower than both the region (11.4%) and the State (14.4%). Additionally, 55.5% of Galway County households owned more than one car, surpassing regional (47.7%) and national (44.7%) averages. Moreover, 80.9% of Galway County residents commuted to work by personal vehicle, higher than the region (78.7%) and the State (68.2%), while only 7.3% used active or public transport, contrasting with the State average of 19.7%. These findings underscore the County's reliance on personal vehicles for commuting and highlight opportunities for promoting alternative transportation methods to enhance sustainability.

Uptake of EVs is lower than the State but rising

The transition to a low-carbon economy in the NWR heavily relies on the adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs). In 2021, Galway City and County saw 339 EVs licensed, constituting 4.3% of all new and second-hand private cars licensed for the first time, slightly below the national average of 5.3%. By

Image: Connemara - Twelve Bens





Image: Cows in agricultural setting

January to May 2022, Galway City and County's EV share increased to 9.5%, yet remained slightly below the State average of 10.2%. The availability of EV charging infrastructure is vital to bolstering EV adoption in the region. Real-time data on public and private EV bays/stations is accessible through resources like "Open Charge Map" and the ESB's real-time map, providing valuable information for stakeholders and potential EV owners.

BER scores lower than State average

Supporting households and businesses in enhancing their Building Energy Ratings (BER) is instrumental in facilitating the

region's transition to a low-carbon economy. From 2009 to Q3-2023, 27% of audited residential dwellings nationwide achieved BERs between "A" and "B". Within Galway County, 23% of audited residential dwellings achieved similar ratings. Conversely, in the non-residential sector, 17% of audited buildings across Ireland achieved BERs between "A" and "B", with 18% of audited non-residential buildings in Galway County attaining these ratings.

Almost twice as many homes use Renewable Energy Sources for heating as opposed to turf

In the NWR, oil serves as the

primary home heating fuel for 59% of households, notably higher than the 34% observed in the rest of the State. This disparity is largely attributed to limited access to natural gas across most of the NWR, where only 5% of households utilise it, in stark contrast to the 39% in other areas of the State. Peat also features more prominently as a home heating fuel in the NWR, accounting for 11% of households, compared to just 2% in the rest of the State. Peat usage varies significantly between counties, with Galway County and Roscommon exhibiting higher rates (18% and 20% respectively) compared to Clare (5%) and Galway City (1%).

Census 2022 introduced a new question on renewable energy

sources for heating, revealing that 34% of households in Galway County utilise renewable energy sources. This rate surpasses the figures for the NWR (28%) and the rest of the State (25%), although Galway City records the lowest rate at 17%. These insights underscore the regional differences in heating fuel choices and highlight the growing adoption of renewable energy sources in Galway County.

Wind generates power and revenue

The Climate Action Plan prioritises increasing the share of renewable electricity to 80% by 2030, with a focus on wind and solar energy technologies to achieve this target. Galway County has made strides in wind energy, with an installed capacity of 326 MW across eight wind farms as of October 2021, contributing 7.5% of the State's total installed wind

energy capacity. This significant capacity translates into substantial commercial rates for Galway County Council, with Wind Energy Ireland data indicating that €2.3 million in commercial rates were attributable to the onshore wind energy sector in 2020, comprising 7.3% of the County Council's total rates collection for that year.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Transportation within Galway County could be more sustainable, with over half of all households having more than one car. In addition to this the uptake of electric vehicles was slower than the State but has seen recent increases. This high car usage ownership was reflected in commuting patterns, with active and public transport usage lower in Galway County than the State. Actions to promote public and active transport as well as other sustainable transport solutions could reduce the environmental impact of transport across Galway County.
- Galway County has both strengths and areas for improvement in terms of energy production and usage. Residentially, Galway County were below State average in the proportion of households with good BER's, meaning the efficiency of energy use was low across the Galway County. However, Galway County was ahead of the State average when it came to households with installed renewable energy sources. Galway County also has significant wind energy capacity installed within the County and off the coast. This suggests that Galway County is progressing towards a sustainable generation of energy, however, there are opportunities to improve how efficiently this energy is used across the County.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS SNAPSHOT

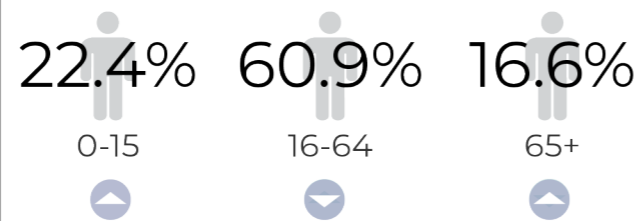
LOWER THAN THE STATE
 HIGHER THAN THE STATE

POPULATION 2022

193,323

7.8% 2016-2022 population growth

AGE STRUCTURE

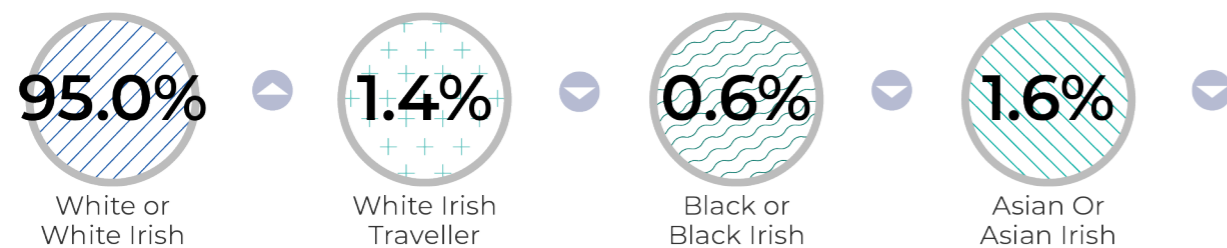


NATIONALITY

...less than 1 in 10 residents are Non-Irish nationals



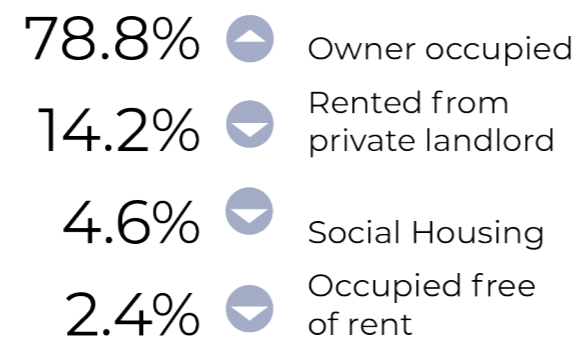
ETHNICITY



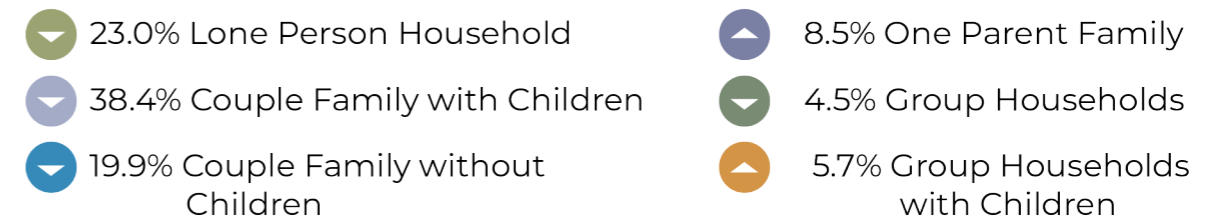
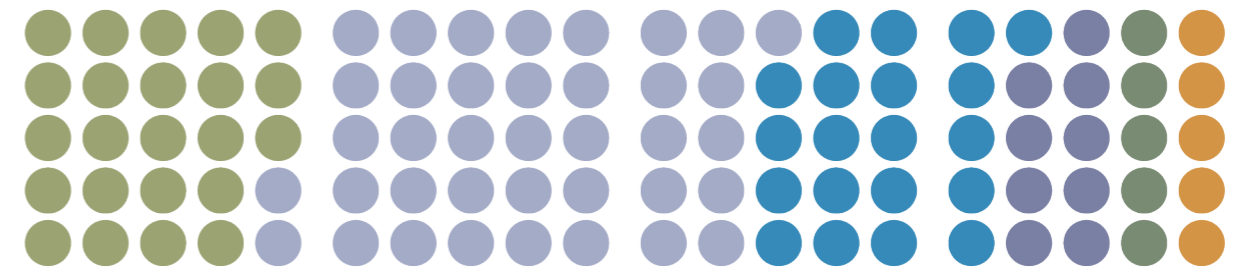
HOUSING STOCK

82,337

5.3% housing growth from 2016 - 2022



HOUSEHOLDS

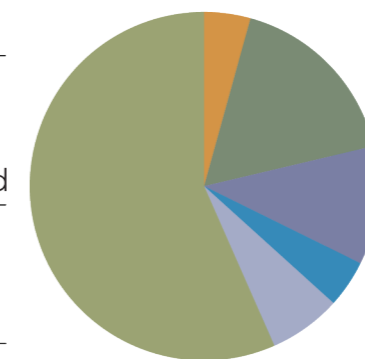


ECONOMIC STATUS

56.6% At work

4.4% Unemployed

11.0% Student

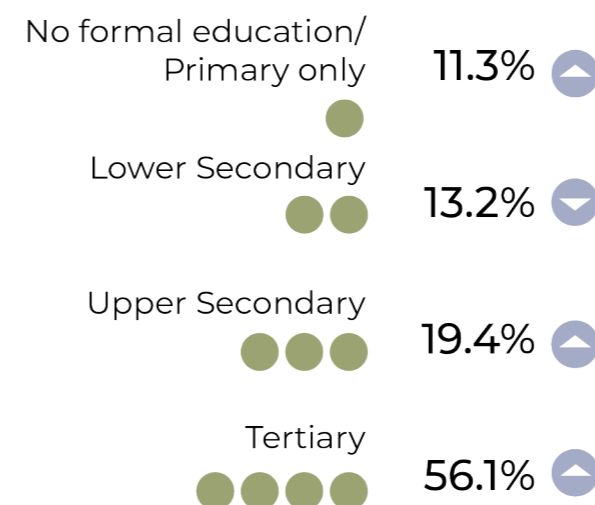


Looking after home or family 6.7%

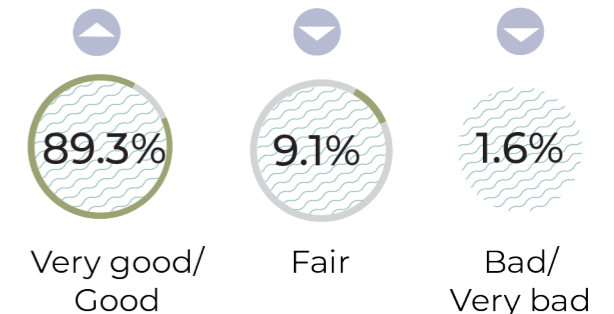
Retired 17.0%

Unable to work due to sickness or disability 4.3%

EDUCATION LEVEL



HEALTH



DISABILITY

20% of residents reported having a disability of any extent.

4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

The LECP 2024-2029 is the primary mechanism for delivering national and regional goals at the local level. The table below outlines key national strategies that make up community, economic and environmental policy context and their regional and local counterparts.

The LECP is informed by the goals, objectives and best practices outlined in these and other plans and strategies. An important element of the 2024-

2029 LECP is an increased focus on climate action and sustainability.

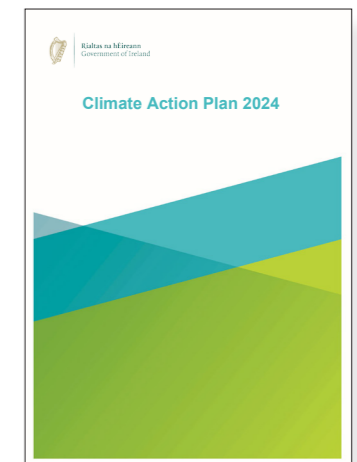
Section 7, which deals with the High-Level Goals, has been guided by National, Regional and Local policies and aligns each goal to the objectives of the SDG and RESES.

Regional & Local Policies

REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2020-2032 (NWRA)	WEST REGIONAL ENTERPRISE PLAN TO 2024	GALWAY COUNTY CORPORATE PLAN 2020- 2024	GALWAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2029	GALWAY COUNTY TRANSPORT AND PLANNING STRATEGY 2022-2028
COUNTY GALWAY TOURISM STRATEGY 2023-2031	GALWAY COUNTY CULTURE AND CREATIVITY STRATEGY 2023-2027	GALWAY COUNTY 2040	GALWAY COUNTY PPN WORKPLAN 2022	GALWAY COUNTY HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY PLAN 2017-2022
GALWAY AGE FRIENDLY ALLIANCE WORKPLAN 2022	GALWAY COUNTY DIGITAL STRATEGY 2020-2023	GALWAY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2021-2023	TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME 2019-2024	GALWAY LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2016 - 2021

National Policies

NATIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN (NEP)	ENTERPRISE 2025 RENEWED	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018-2027 (NDP)	OUR RURAL FUTURE: RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2021-2025
CONNECTING IRELAND RURAL MOBILITY PLAN HOUSING FOR ALL: A NEW HOUSING PLAN FOR IRELAND	CLIMATE ACTION PLAN 2024 (CAP24)	THE NATION STRATEGY FOR MIGRANT INTEGRATION (FORTHCOMING, 2024)	TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IRELAND
CONNECTING IRELAND RURAL MOBILITY PLAN HOUSING FOR ALL: A NEW HOUSING PLAN FOR IRELAND	PROJECT IRELAND 2040	THE NATION STRATEGY FOR MIGRANT INTEGRATION (FORTHCOMING, 2024)	HEALTHY IRELAND FRAMEWORK 2019-2025
PATHWAYS TO WORK STRATEGY 2021 - 2025	ROADMAP FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION 2020-2025	SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES 2019-2024	TOWN CENTRE FIRST POLICY
NATIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN (NEP)	ENTERPRISE 2025 RENEWED	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018-2027 (NDP)	20-YEAR STRATEGY FOR THE IRISH LANGUAGE 2010-2030
THE NATIONAL SME AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP GROWTH PLAN	NATIONAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISE POLICY FOR IRELAND 2024-2027	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018-2027 (NDP) OUR RURAL FUTURE: RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2021-2025	ROADMAP FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION 2020-2025



5.0 CONSULTATION SECTION

Public consultation was focused on refining the High-Level Goals, as well as identifying potential objectives and actions to fit within each goal. The public consultation phase of the LECP was carried out during June, July, August and September 2024.



5.1 The consultation process

A variety of engagement methods were provided to ensure access to the public consultation process to as many people across the County as possible. Those wishing to make submissions were invited to refer to a Socio-Economic Statement prepared by Galway County Council to support the public consultation phase.

Both in-person and online consultation methods were utilised. Invitation was extended to this process via press release, media activity, a social media campaign, and a dedicated website.

5.2 Who participated

In total, over 27,1k people engaged with at least one component of the consultation process. The engagement numbers and demographics of those

that responded to the surveys are illustrated on the next page.

5.3 How public consultation shaped the High-Level Goals

A crucial component of public consultation is ensuring the LECP reflects the feedback shared during the consultation process. The table on page 36 presents a summary of the feedback received around the draft High-Level Goals, and shows how the final goals were adapted to reflect the input from the public. Of note, the language of some High-Level Goals was updated to reflect outcomes-driven language, in order to provide a strong strategic direction for the LECP.

THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS ACROSS COUNTY GALWAY

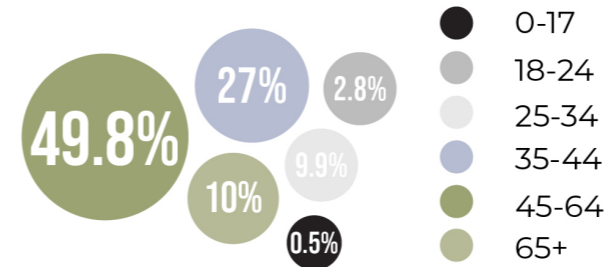


THE NUMBERS

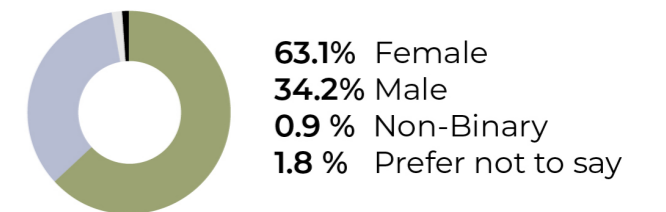


SURVEY RESPONDENTS

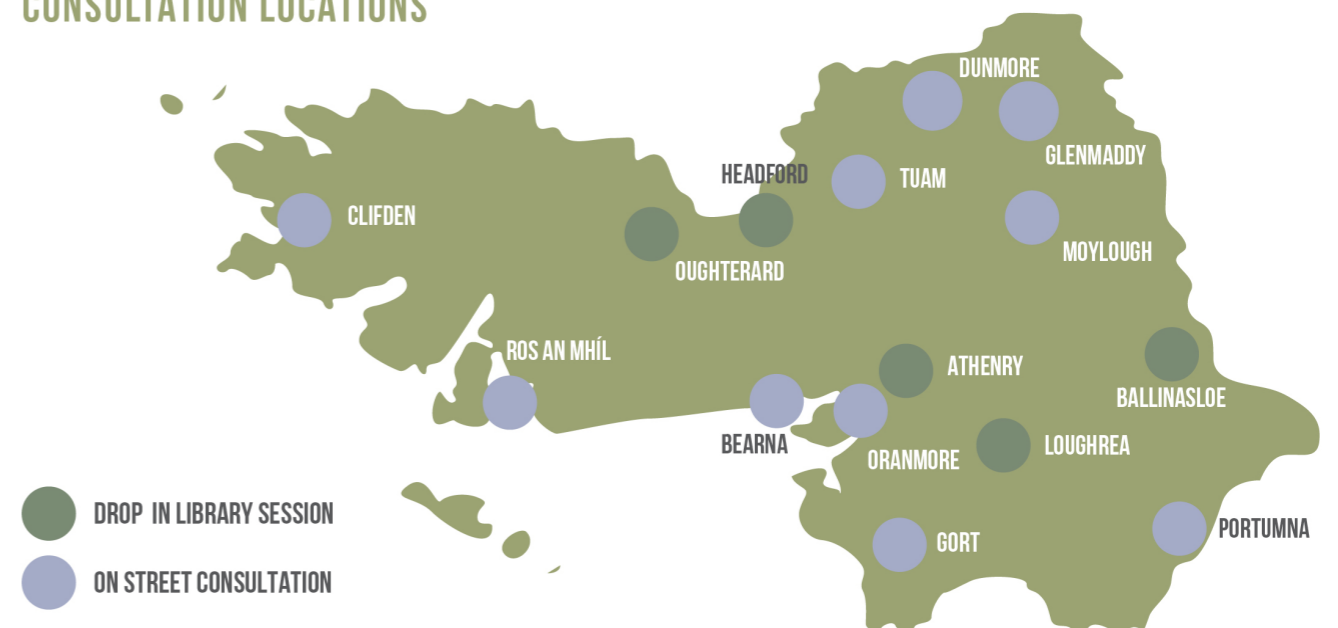
AGE



GENDER



CONSULTATION LOCATIONS



DRAFT HIGH LEVEL GOALS GALWAY COUNTY LECP



THE DRAFT HIGH LEVEL GOALS

- Goal 1:** Active, healthy and safe communities
- Goal 2:** Equal, inclusive and engaged communities
- Goal 3:** A culturally rich County
- Goal 4:** A County with vibrant urban and rural settlements
- Goal 5:** A sustainable and climate resilient County
- Goal 6:** An economically resilient County

THE PUBLIC FEEDBACK

As part of the public consultation, we sought feedback on the clarity of the draft high-level goals as well as their order of importance.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS AT ALL

I FULLY UNDERSTAND



LEAST IMPORTANT

MOST IMPORTANT

THE REVISED HIGH LEVEL GOALS

- Goal 1:** Active, healthy and safe communities
- Goal 2:** **Equitable**, inclusive and engaged communities
- Goal 3:** A County that celebrates its **unique** cultural identity
- Goal 4:** An **accessible** County with **thriving** urban and rural settlements
- Goal 5:** A sustainable and climate resilient County
- Goal 6:** A County that prioritises economic **development** and **education**

The Table below summaries the changes made to the High Level Goals and key themes that emerged from the research.

	HLG 1	HLG 2	HLG 3	HLG 4	HLG 5	HLG 6
Draft	Active, healthy and safe communities	Equal, inclusive and engaged communities	A culturally rich County	A County with vibrant urban and rural settlements	A sustainable and climate resilient County	An economically resilient County
Change	No change	Minor change	Minor change	Moderate change	No change	Moderate change
Change		Equitable, inclusive and engaged communities	A County that celebrates its unique cultural identity	An accessible County with thriving urban and rural settlements		A County that prioritises economic development and education
Emerging Themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health and Wellbeing ▪ Community Safety ▪ Health Infrastructure ▪ Supports and Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poverty and Social Inclusion ▪ Community Development ▪ Universal Accessibility, Universal Design and Social Inclusion ▪ Multicultural Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Culture and Language ▪ Tourism ▪ Arts ▪ Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transport/ Accessibility ▪ Regeneration and Revitalisation - Towns, Villages and Islands ▪ Balanced Sustainable Development ▪ Tourism ▪ Public Realm/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural Environment ▪ Green Economy ▪ Harnessing our Natural Resources ▪ Sustainable/ Green transport ▪ Just Transition ▪ Climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment ▪ Enterprise Development ▪ FDI ▪ Education and Training ▪ Lifelong Learning ▪ Technology ▪ Research and Innovation

6.0 SCOT ANALYSIS

The following section provides a SCOT (Strengths, Opportunities, Challenges and Threats) analysis based on the previously outlined social, economic and environmental profile and consultation. This information has

been used to identify potential needs and to inform the Vision, High-Level Goals and potential strategic objective areas.

STRENGTHS

- Rich and diverse physical landscape.
- High proportion of the population live in rural areas.
- Accessible to major cities and employment zones.
- Almost all towns/BUAs experiencing population growth.
- Population and housing stock increasing at similar rates
- Easy access to Galway City and third-level institutions such as NUI Galway and ATU Galway City
- Relatively low crime rates
- County Galway is home to the largest Gael-tacht Irish-speaking region in Ireland
- A diverse, multilingual population
- People are living healthier for longer
- A well-educated, highly skilled workforce
- Increasing employment rates and lowest unemployment in the Region.
- High employment and diverse range of High employment sectors
- The country's four most populated offshore islands, Inis Mór, Inis Óirr, Inis Meáin and Inisbofin, are part of Galway County.
- Sufficient capacity in water and wastewater facilities
- Comparatively high uptake of renewable heating energy in the home

CHALLENGES

- Relatively higher residential and commercial vacancy rates than the State average.
- An ageing profile with an increasing average age profile
- Relatively low proportions of volunteerism than the State average.
- Slightly lower Labour Force participation rates than the State average.
- Average disposable income low compared to the State average.
- Pockets of relatively high deprivation, particularly in Tuam and Ballinasloe among areas in Galway County.
- The offshore islands, require targeted dedicated supports and services.
- Growth in Ethnic Diversity and highest proportion of Irish Travellers in the State.
- Digital connectivity growing but behind the State average.
- Higher prevalence of areas classified as very polluted.
- Decline in recent afforestation levels (lower rates than average across 2013-2019).
- Less energy-efficient homes than the State average.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure a balanced approach to community development and infrastructure development that aligns with population growth.
- Promote ongoing community consultation and community engagement to ensure all groups are heard and represented.
- Utilise existing multiagency structures such as the LCDC, SPC, PPN among others to ensure joined up thinking and interagency collaboration.
- Continue to promote healthy lifestyle choices to ensure Galway can maintain its relatively high levels of general health.
- Promote the implementation of the Town Centre First policy to encourage development in urban cores and reduce urban sprawl in expanding BUAs.
- Targeted interventions and resources in areas that are experiencing higher levels of deprivation.
- Promote continued utilisation of Galway's geographical context to sustainably grow and diversify its tourism offering.
- Promote and incentivise adaptive reuse of vacant commercial properties.

THREATS

- Global inflation rates and cost of living crisis.
- Geopolitical crisis.
- Local effects of climate change.
- Monitor and manage the advances of emerging technologies.

7.0 VISION FOR GALWAY COUNTY



Goal 1: Active, healthy and safe communities

Galway County where individuals and communities are supported to improve their health, wellbeing, and sense of safety and security.



Goal 2: Equitable, inclusive and engaged communities

A County that strives to reduce poverty and disadvantage, and fosters social inclusion, through active citizen engagement and participation.



Goal 3: A County that celebrates its unique cultural identity

A County with a clear sense of identity, reflecting its heritage, language, and culture.



Goal 4: An accessible County with thriving urban and rural settlements

A County that is dedicated to the improving accessibility, revitalisation and regeneration of its towns, villages, and islands in a sustainable manner.



Goal 5: A Sustainable and climate resilient County

A County that protects its environment and supports the transformation to a climate-neutral society.



Goal 6: A County that prioritises economic development and education

A County that promotes sustainable economic and enterprise development, innovation, education and lifelong learning.



Vision

"An inclusive County, with a clear sense of identity, where we work together to achieve the full economic, social, community, linguistic and cultural potential of Galway County and its people, through citizen engagement at a local level."

The overall direction of the LECP is guided by High-Level Goals. These main goals provide the core aims of the LECP and represent how Galway County should grow over the lifetime of the plan. The six High-Level Goals below were developed to reflect the socio-economic analysis undertaken (see section 3.0), and to align with existing policies and plans (see section 4.0) and refined through consultation with the public and key stakeholders.

7.1 Sustainable Community Objectives & Sustainable Economic Development Objectives

An evidence-based approach was taken to develop the LECP High-Level Goals, and the Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) associated with each goal. Development was informed by the key findings from the policy context, the socio-economic profile, and the public consultation. The table below provides a summary of the High-Level Goals and the related SCOs/SEDOs. Further detail can be found in Chapter 8: An Implementation Plan for Galway County.

HIGH-LEVEL GOAL	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES
Goal 1: Active, healthy and safe communities	SCO 1.1 Support increased access to physical and mental health and wellbeing services and initiatives.
	SCO 1.2 Continue to promote and facilitate new and existing community safety actions and initiatives.
	SCO 1.3 Increase participation in sport and recreation activity.
Goal 2: Equitable, inclusive and engaged communities	SCO 2.1 Continue to support community development, celebrate diversity and promote active inclusion for all.
	SEDO 2.2 Improve quality and availability of supports and services that aim to reduce poverty and disadvantage.
	SCO 2.3 Empower and support individuals and communities to play an active role in local decision-making processes.
	SCO 2.4 Enhance equitable access and reduce barriers to participation.
Goal 3: A County that celebrates its unique cultural identity	SCO 3.1 Continue to promote the use and appreciation of the Irish language throughout the County.
	SCO 3.2 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries.

Goal 4: An accessible County with thriving urban and rural settlements	SCO 4.1 Support Galway County's towns and villages to act as social, cultural and recreational hubs for the local community.
	SEDO 4.2 Support the sustainable development and regeneration of Galway County's towns, villages and islands.
	SEDO 4.3 Enhance equitable access to and uptake of digital, information and communications technology.
	SEDO 4.4 Enhance and expand transport and movement to, from and within Galway.
Goal 5: A Sustainable and climate-resilient County	SCO 5.1 Increase community and business involvement in environmental action and the reduction of Galway County's carbon footprint.
	SEDO 5.2 Ensuring a Just Transition in Galway County.
	SEDO 5.3 Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity throughout the County.
	SEDO 5.4 Develop Galway's green economy, circular economy and sustainable energy future.
Goal 6: A County that prioritises economic development and education	SCO 6.1 Promote and support increased and equitable access to and engagement with education, training and lifelong learning opportunities.
	SEDO 6.2 Attract new and expand existing key sectors and enterprise with significant employment, income and growth potential.
	SEDO 6.3 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs.
	SEDO 6.4 Infrastructure and services that develop a workforce with the skills necessary to sustain and be in demand in the emerging economy.
	SEDO 6.5 Develop and foster an environment conducive to innovation, enterprise, and entrepreneurship, including community and social enterprise initiatives.

7.2 Alignment with NWRA Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

Because the LECP is responsible for implementing national and regional strategies at the local level, it is critical that this document integrates and complements the Northern and Western Regional Assembly’s (NWRA) Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES). The RSES includes Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) organised under five main growth ambitions: Economy and Employment (Vibrant Region), Environment (Natural Region), Connectivity (Connected Region) Quality of Life (Inclusive Region) and Infrastructure (Enabling our Region). These five growth ambitions are considered with a strong focus on People and Places, and aim to support a region that is: “Vibrant”, “Natural”, “Connected”, “Inclusive” and a “Great Place to Live.” It brings a new “place-based” approach that involves tapping into the economic potential that remains unused, so that all parts of the Northern and Western Region – whether they be cities, towns, or their rural hinterlands – can contribute to national development.

As noted in the 2021 guidelines of the LECPs – and in line with the Local Government Reform Act 2014 – the Galway County LECP must be consistent with the NWRA RSES. Considering this policy requirement, the NWRA prepared an “LECP Briefing Note for Galway County” to highlight priority areas for inclusion in the County’s LECP objectives and actions. Per the NWRA Briefing Note:

“In preparing the LECP, consideration should be given to the RSES of the Northern and Western Region which includes a suite of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) for the region... .”
This briefing note highlights the RPOs that this

LECP could potentially support, with these objectives categorised by the appropriate chapter headings in the RSES, namely:

- Chapter 3 – People and Places
- Chapter 4 – Vibrant Region
- Chapter 5 – Natural Region
- Chapter 6 – Connected Region
- Chapter 7 – Inclusive Region

The highlighted RPOs from the chapters listed above were considered during the development of Galway County Framework LECP, with regard to the development of the High-Level Goals, the Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) and the Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs). In order to ensure that the Galway County Framework LECP supports the progression toward the RPOs identified in the RSES, it was ensured the LECP aligned with the RSES.

An LECP alignment table is provided in Appendix D.

8.0 AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR GALWAY COUNTY





HIGH LEVEL GOAL 1: ACTIVE, HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES



STRENGTHS

-  **Generally high levels of good health** (89.3%) compared to the region (88.1%) and the State (88.9%). *(Census 2022)*
-  **Health, Wellbeing and Safety** ranked as **number 1 priority** area in the consultation. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  **Relatively low rates of reported crimes** recorded in Galway County stations (24.2 per 1,000 population) compared to the State (41.9 per 1,000). *(Census 2022)*
-  81.7% of public survey respondents reported a **positive perception of public safety**. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  77.6% of public survey respondents **rated sports clubs and facilities positively**, with over 10% rating them as excellent. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  Consultation indicated **high participation rates in physical health activities**, with a variety of well-attended sports clubs, walking tracks and recreational programmes promoting active lifestyles. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  The **existing family support services** across the county, such as the five **FRCs**, are **recognised as a vital resource and received positive feedback** in the agency and public consultation. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  A **strong sense of community spirit and local pride** is evident, with 88.9% of public survey respondents identifying it as a strength. *(GLECP public survey)*

CHALLENGES

-  An **ageing population** with an **increasing average age** (38.2 in 2016 to 39.7 in 2022). *(Census 2022)*
-  Relatively **high proportion people unable to work** due to **fulfilling caring roles** (6.5% compared to 5.8% for the State). *(Census 2022)*
-  Higher death rate (7.46 per 1,000 population) than the State (6.87 per 1,000 population). *(CSO)*
-  **Increasing number of crimes** reported per year (3,820 in 2018 to 4,672 in 2023). *(CSO)*
-  The public survey highlighted **dissatisfaction with current physical healthcare facilities and access**, with 78.6% ranking it as average or poor. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  The public survey data revealed that 35.4% of respondents rated the **quality of recreation and green spaces as poor**. This, coupled with **high reported demand for physical activities**, underscores a desire for more and better-maintained green spaces that can support active lifestyles. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  **Mental health and wellbeing supports were rated poorly** by 54.1% of respondents, the **highest poor rating among all themes**. This reflects a shortage in specialised and general mental health and wellbeing services. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  Consultation highlighted **limited access to community childcare and family support facilities**, creating barriers to participation in the workforce. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  Consultation indicated concern about **road safety, particularly for vulnerable road users**. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

Galway County has a growing population. The age-profile of the County is slightly older than the State, suggesting the potential emerging need for increased supports and services for older adults in the coming years. The County enjoys comparatively good health, though there was a slight decline (-3%) in those reporting good or very good health between 2016 and 2022.

While the County overall has a lower proportion of people with disabilities than the State, approximately one-fifth (20%) of the population reported having a disability in 2022. Additionally, there was a higher proportion of carers in Galway County (6.5%) compared to the State (5.8%).

These figures suggest that the relatively good health of the County is a strength to build upon. However, the slight decline in health and high proportion of carers may indicate the need for health and wellbeing focused interventions and supports into the future.

Galway County has relatively low crime rate compared to the State. The number of crimes has dropped significantly between 2008 and 2022, however, 2022 represented a small increase in crime since 2018.

Galway County has a range of plans, policies, programmes and organisations that aim to support health and wellbeing for residents across the County. These include (but are not limited to): Healthy Galway, the Galway Sports Partnership, Galway Traveller Movement's Right to Health initiative, and the Galway Joint Policing Committee.

Public consultation suggested that current facilities, supports and services related to both mental health and physical activity are highly

valued across Galway County. There was a demand for increased access to these, especially in rural areas, and for underserved communities. Key themes emerging from public consultation related to this goal included: Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing, Health Infrastructure, and Supports and Services.

This High-Level Goal aims to continue to build on the initiatives above to promote health and wellbeing for everyone in the County, by enhancing the range of universal and targeted supports and services available.

Sustainable Objectives:

- **SCO 1.1** Support increased access to physical and mental health and wellbeing services and initiatives.
- **SCO 1.2** Continue to promote and facilitate new and existing community safety actions and initiatives.
- **SCO 1.3** Increase participation in sport and recreation activity.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWRA RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO 5.19, RPO 6.50, RPO 7.8, RPO 7.9, RPO 7.10, RPO 7.11, RPO 7.13 and RPO 7.15.

Goal 1: Active, healthy and safe communities

Objective SCO 1.1 Support increased access to physical and mental health and wellbeing services and initiatives

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
1.1.1	Deliver health and wellbeing supports and services through the development of new and implementation of existing plans and strategies such as the 'Healthy Galway, Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing (2013-2025), Sláinte Care strategy, Reducing Harm-Supporting Recovery 2017-2025, HSE Connecting, CYPSC Plan and similar, as well as supporting the work of groups and organisations.	Increase health and wellbeing	LCDC	GCC, PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, CAMHS, Jigsaw, Tusla, GTM, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of supports and services
1.1.2	Ensure the needs-led continued development of primary care centres, healthcare facilities, and satellite services in appropriate locations across the across County Galway.	Increase health infrastructure	HSE	GCC, PPN, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RSP, CAMHS, Jigsaw, Tusla	ST-MT-LT	Number of facilities and centres
1.1.3	Develop targeted programmes and services that reduce health inequalities through the implementation of plans and initiatives such as the National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027, National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027, HSE Intercultural Health Programmes, Age-Friendly Ireland, and similar.	Reducing health inequalities	HSE	GCC, FRCs, CYPSC, Mental Health Ireland, Disability Groups, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of targeted health and wellbeing supports delivered in line with national, regional and local health strategies
1.1.4	Leverage national mental health and stigma reduction campaigns and evidence-based programmes by supporting local community and voluntary groups to inform and encourage participation at local level.	Increase mental health awareness and stigma reduction	HSE	HSE, H&W Sub-Committee, Community, LCDC, Voluntary Groups, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of campaigns and programmes supported
1.1.5	Collaborate to empower individuals and communities to adopt healthier lifestyles through campaigns and educational programmes that promote healthy eating, positive parenting, and sexual education, while also aiming to reduce alcohol, drug, and tobacco use to prevent harm.	Increase in healthy lifestyle and behaviour choices	HSE	GCC, GLS, HG, LCDC, HIF, Tusla, Planet Youth, CNN, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes, initiatives and facilities

Objective		SCO 1.2 Continue to promote and facilitate new and existing community safety actions and initiatives							
Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome		Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI		
1.2.1	Increase the perception and experience of community safety in County Galway by developing and implementing community safety initiatives, including safety talks and training, safety audits, SICAP, Sláintecare, Planet Youth surveys, 'Seeking Safety' Pilot Project, wellbeing checks and other community-centred approaches to building a sense of safety.	Increase targeted safety initiatives		AGS (An Garda Síochána)	GCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, PPN, RSP, CAMHS, WRDATF, Safe Link, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	No. needs-led safety initiatives delivered		
1.2.2	Establish a County Galway Local Community Safety Partnership, in line with national guidelines.	Community Safety Partnership		GCC	AGS, HSE, TUSLA, PPN	ST	Established Community Safety Partnership		
1.2.3	Develop and implement a County Galway Local Community Safety Plan, in line with national policy direction.	A multi agency approach to community safety		GCC	GCC, PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, PPN, RSP, CAMHS, WRDATF, Safe Link, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla, GRD SICAP	ST	Launched Community Safety Plan		
1.2.4	Promote greater road safety for all users by supporting and implementing key transport plans, such as Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030, the National Transport Plan, and the Galway Transport Strategy, while also delivering road safety education and awareness-raising initiatives.	Increase road safety		GCC	GCC, AGS	ST-MT-LT	Number recreation spaces and initiatives delivered		
1.2.5	Support the reduction and awareness of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence by supporting the implementation of the The Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) Bill 2023 at a local level. This will be achieved through ongoing coordinating actions to tackle DSGBV, including delivery of services to victims of DSGBV, pursuing the objective of providing a Domestic Violence Refuge in Co Galway with the relevant stakeholders, prioritising the safety, well-being, and empowerment of survivors while promoting a community culture of zero tolerance for DSGBV.	Increase awareness of and DSGBV		LCDC/SPC	LCDC, SPC	ST-MT-LT	Number of initiatives and services delivered		






Objective		SCO 1.3 Increase participation in sport and recreation activity							
Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome		Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI		
1.3.1	Support initiatives that expand and promote sport and recreational infrastructure, benefits and opportunities across County Galway in suitable locations, including sports equipment libraries, safe play areas, active transport, and other sports and recreation facilities.	Increase in physical activity levels across wider community and awareness of associated benefits		GSP	GCC, PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, LDCs, Sport Ireland Funded Programmes, Sports Clubs, Community Groups, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number recreation spaces Number recreational initiatives delivered		
1.3.2	Support targeted initiatives and programmes that aim to make physical activity the norm by improving promotion, access and opportunities for all ages and abilities to participate including older people, those with additional	Increase participation in sport and physical activity and programmes for		GSP	GCC, PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, CYPSC, GCC, GSP, PPN, Disability Organisations - DPAF, OPC - HIF, GTM, CI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of sport and physical recreation initiatives and events delivered		











HIGH LEVEL GOAL 2: EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES



STRENGTHS

- 
A high level of community financial supports and services were identified, with 69.9% of survey respondents rating them positively (16.3% as excellent and 53.6% as good). *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
Education and training facilities are well-regarded in the County, with 81.9% of the GLECP Public Survey respondents rating them positively. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
 Galway County ranked ‘**marginally above average**’ on the Pobal HP Deprivation Index 2022. Between 2016 and 2022 the overall **deprivation ranking improved** (1.84 in 2016 to 2.34 in 2022). *(Pobal)*
- 
 Relatively **high rate of volunteerism** in Galway County (16.2%) compared to the State (13.8%), suggesting high levels of social capital, community cohesion and community engagement. *(Census 2022)*
- 
 Consultation highlighted an **appreciation for existing community festivals and events**, with 79.6% of the public survey respondents rating them as above average, of which 37% rated them as good or excellent. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
 The consultation revealed **strong participation in sporting events and activities**, with a variety of well-attended sports clubs, walking tracks, recreational programmes, and other sports activities across the County. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
 The County recently welcomed **over 3,700 Ukrainian Nationals and other refugees and asylum seekers**, accommodated in over 20 different locations throughout Galway County. *(CSO)*
- 
Highest proportion of Irish Travellers in the State (13.1 persons per 1,000 of the total population), indicative of needs for targeted supports and services. *(Census 2022)*

CHALLENGES

- 
Rural transport and connectivity emerged as a major challenges, with 61.6% of public survey respondents rating them as poor. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
 Increased **need for youth focused supports and services** as 44.5% of survey respondents rated it as poor. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 
 Consultation revealed concerns about the **lack of affordable housing options**, especially in rural areas, with 93.9% of survey respondents rating it as average or worse. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
- 
Pockets of relatively high deprivation identified across the County, including (but not limited to) coastal areas of Connemara, Tuam and Ballinasloe. This demonstrates a demand for targeted interventions and resources. *(Pobal)*
- 
 Galway County is experiencing an **aging population** with 35.7% of the population aged over 50, which is **higher than the national average** at 32.9%. This results in high demand for Age Friendly initiatives and targeted older adult supports and services. *(Census 2022)*
- 
 Public consultation identified a **strong demand for improved accessibility** for people with reduced mobility and additional needs. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
- 
 Consultation highlighted the **need for enhanced supports and services**, particularly in rural areas, for **new arrivals**. Many reported **limited access to healthcare, education, employment, and language assistance** posing challenges to community integration. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
- 
 Galway has a **relatively high total age dependency ratio** (36.8% compared to the State at 27.3%, respectively). This refers to the proportion of people within and outside of working age. High total dependency ratio places greater pressure and **demand on social infrastructure**. *(Census 2022)*

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

Galway County has the lowest unemployment rate in the Region at 7.2%, which is lower than the State rate. However, there are still some areas affected by relatively high rates of deprivation. This, combined with the growing gap between the NWR and the State for disposable income may suggest the need for targeted financial and employment supports.

Galway County’s high levels of education is a key strength which assists in maintaining its a highly skilled workforce. Galway County also benefits from easy access to Galway City and third-level institutions such as NUI Galway and ATU Galway City. Supporting existing work to keep people in education longer and consistently producing a high number of graduates may help to further employment opportunities and reduce the gap in disposable income. Again, targeting services such as return to education initiatives and FET institutions to areas of lower employment may help reduce levels of deprivation in particular areas.

While Galway County has slightly lower than State levels of ethnic and national diversity, however, it does have the highest population of Irish Travellers in the State. Ballinasloe and Tuam had particularly high populations of Travellers which may suggest that integration services in these areas could be of benefit to encourage and enable higher levels of and more representative active citizen engagement and community participation.



Galway County has slightly lower levels of volunteering than the State. While there are a number of active groups such as Galway County (1,298 according to the Galway County Public Participation Network) providing easier access to and disseminating information on available volunteering opportunities may be of

benefit to both people providing and availing of volunteering services.

There are already a range of policies, plans and organisations in Galway County that the LECPP will aim to complement and support. Some of these include Galway Age Friendly Alliance Workplan, Traveller Accommodation Programme, Galway County Culture and Creativity Strategy and Galway Library Development Programme.

This goal aims to build upon the work of previous and current initiatives to reduce levels of deprivation in Galway County to continue developing an equal and inclusive community where people feel included, represented and able to engage and participate in their community.

Sustainable Objectives:

- 
SCO 2.1 Continue to support community development, celebrate diversity and promote active inclusion for all.
- 
SEDO 2.2 Improve quality and availability of supports and services that aim to reduce poverty and disadvantage.
- 
SCO 2.3 Empower and support individuals and communities to play an active role in local decision-making processes.
- 
SCO 2.4 Enhance equitable access and reduce barriers to participation.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWRA RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO 6.58, RPO 7.2, RPO 7.12 and RPO 7.13..

Goal 2: Equitable, inclusive and engaged communities

Objective SCO 2.1: Continue to support community development, celebrate diversity and promote active inclusion for all.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.1.1	Strengthen universal community development, active citizenship, social capital, and inclusion of new and marginalised communities in Galway County through targeted initiatives and strategies.	Increased social capital and inclusion	LCDC	HSE, GCC, PPN, CYPSC, LDCs, GRETB, GLS, GTM, CI	ST-MT-LT	Number of community development, capacity building and social inclusion initiatives implemented
2.1.2	Support the provision of social and community facilities and services within the County which meet the current and future needs of the entire population, through the maintenance, activation, and creation of multi-use community facilities across Galway County (in accordance with the Galway County Development Plan).	Increased access to community facilities	GCC	PPN, HSE, HI, CYPSC, GLS, GTM, CI	ST-MT-LT	Number of sport and physical recreation initiatives and events delivered
2.1.3	Support existing and new groups, plans and initiatives that actively promote and support marginalised communities through initiatives such as the Galway County Intercultural Forum, FRCs, SICAP, LCDC, PPN, Traveller Interagency Group, Galway County Traveller Accommodation Programme 2025-2029, the National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027 etc.	Increase of targeted community support	LCDC	GCC, PPN, LDCs, HSE, GRETB, TUSLA, FRCs, GLS, GTM, GSP, CI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of targeted social inclusion initiatives delivered Number of target group members actively participating

Objective SEDO 2.2: Improve quality and availability of supports and services that aim to reduce poverty and disadvantage.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.2.1	Promote targeted employment initiatives for specific groups identified as being in or at risk of disadvantage	Increase of availability and uptake of employment supports	LCDCs	GCC, PPN, LDCs GTM, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of targeted employment initiatives supported
2.2.2	Provision and referrals to services such as MABS that supports people with money advice, money management, budgeting, and problem debt.	Reduction in poverty	MABS	GCC, PPN, LDCs, HSE, GRETB, TUSLA, FRCs, GLS, GCCLS, PPN, GSP	ST-MT-LT	Recorded increase in people being referred to and accessing services

2.2.3	Address educational disadvantage through needs-based initiatives such as school completion programmes, literacy and language programmes, digital skills trainings, and similar.	Reduction in educational disadvantage	GRETB	TUSLA, LCDC, PPN, GCC, Youth Work Galway, CYPSC GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of targeted initiatives supported
2.2.4	Continue to deliver family supports and services for disadvantaged areas through the provision of facilities and programmes such as Family Resource Centres, public childcare options, drop-in family support services, and similar.	Reduction in disadvantaged communities	TUSLA	FRC, Youth Work Galway, CYPSC, HSE, CI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and services implemented

Objective **SCO 2.3 Empower and support individuals and communities to play an active role in local decision-making processes.**

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.3.1	Actively engage with the Galway County PPN in the preparation and implementation of local authority policies and programmes to increase support for the community and voluntary sector while responding to the needs of the residents of County Galway.	Empowered voluntary and community groups	PPN	GCC, CI	ST-MT-LT	Increased engagement with PPN on policies and programmes
2.3.2	Use digital platforms to enable improved communication and engagement between citizens and local authorities including fostering the capacity for the community to influenced decision-making.	Greater community engagement	GCC	CI	ST-MT-LT	Increased utilisation of digital platforms to improve communication and engagement
2.3.3	Provide training, general awareness and information among the public about how to get involved in local decision-making processes and procedures including Galway County Council, Town Teams, PPN, SPCs, LCDC, LEN etc.	Greater participation in local decision-making processes	LCDC/SPC	GCC, PPN, SPC, LCDC, LEN	ST-MT-LT	Number of awareness raising programmes and initiatives

Objective **SCO 2.4 Enhance equitable access and reduce barriers to participation.**

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.4.1	Develop Galway County a county that ensuring accessibility and provision for everyone including older people, people with additional needs, those with young children and others through initiatives such as 'Age Friendly', CYPSC, NCPD.	Diversity	LCDC	NCPD, GCC, PPN, SPC, LCDC, CYPSC, LDCs	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and initiatives
2.4.2	Support initiatives and programmes that support a multi-agency approaches for delivering the health, social care, education, and community services needed by rural, growing, diverse or isolated communities.	Geographic and Rural Proofing	LCDC	GCC, HSE, GRETB, CYPSC, CI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and initiatives



HIGH LEVEL GOAL 3: A COUNTY THAT CELEBRATES ITS UNIQUE CULTURAL IDENTITY



STRENGTHS

-  Galway County is home to **Ireland's largest Gaeltacht**, with 50.3% of its population speaking Irish. *(Census 2022)*
-  **A diverse, multilingual population** with over 18,700 people reporting speaking a foreign language at home representing a culturally rich County. *(Census 2022)*
-  Galway County contains 35 of the country's 148 Natural Heritage areas (NHAs), demonstrating its **rich and diverse landscape**. *(NPWS)*
-  The **Galway PPN has 293 diverse community groups** registered, which are actively engaged in areas such as **heritage, conservation, arts, and culture**. *(PPN Galway County)*
-  Galway's (City and County) wide offering of culture and heritage is a **valuable economic driver in the tourism sector**, with 2,684,000 visitors to the county in 2022 (combined overseas and domestic) spending over €750m. *(County Galway Tourism Strategy 23-31)*
-  Consultation highlighted the **value respondents place on the natural heritage** with 81.6% of respondents rating it a positive asset. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  Consultation indicated a **strong sense of pride around local heritage and traditions**, including music and the Irish language, including 42.1% survey respondents rating the Irish language as excellent or good. *(GLECP Consultation Report)*
-  The County has a **vibrant and active artist community** with 365 funding applications made to the Arts Council in 2022, with over €1.1m awarded. *(Equality Data and Arts Council Awards)*

CHALLENGES

-  More than 2,300 foreign language speakers across Galway County reported **limited English-speaking ability**, highlighting a barrier to social and economic participation. *(Census 2022)*
-  A notable 28.7% of the public survey respondents rated the **preservation and promotion of the Gaeltacht and Irish language as 'Poor'**. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  Consultation highlighted **concerns about the decline of the Kant language and other Traveller traditions**, along with a **demand for greater recognition** of Traveller-specific needs, culture, and heritage. *(GLECP Focus Group)*
-  **Undersupply of tourist accommodation**, with 42.1 Fáilte Ireland registered bedspaces per 1,000 of population, compared to 45.0 across the State. *(Fáilte Ireland)*
-  Consultation highlighted **concerns around the protection and maintenance of Galway's (City and County) 14,581 monument sites**. *(LECP Consultation Report & National Monuments Service)*
-  61.1% of public survey respondents rated **access to libraries and cultural facilities as average or poor**, highlighting a **perceived shortage of cultural spaces** and a demand for arts centres, creative venues, and performance spaces *(GLECP Public Survey)*
-  The combined population of Galway's four most populated offshore islands, **the Aran Islands and Inishbofin, increased by 9.28%** from 2016 to 2022, which is a important factor in preserving the Islands unique heritage and traditions. However, resulting in an increased need for social infrastructure. *(Census 2022)*

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

The Irish language is intrinsically linked to the culture and heritage of Galway County. Galway (County & City) has the largest Gaeltacht population in the State. Continuing to support initiatives that promote, protect and expand the use of the Irish language in Galway County may help to ensure this aspect of the County's identity is clear and to the fore.

The Irish language is intrinsically linked to the culture and heritage of Galway County. Galway (County & City) has the largest Gaeltacht population in the State. Continuing to support initiatives that promote, protect and expand the use of the Irish language in Galway County may help to ensure this aspect of the County's identity is clear and to the fore.

Galway County has an abundance of heritage sites and areas. There are 14 designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) in towns in Galway County which are recognised for their special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or their contributions to the appreciation of a protected structure, and whose character it is an objective of a development plan to preserve. As well as these, the Galway County Heritage Office has compiled a database recording 429 natural and historical heritage sites throughout the County. Chapter 12 of the Adopted County Development Plan addresses architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage in Galway County. The policy objectives of this should be supported with the aim of preserving and protecting Galway's unique heritage culture and identity.

As well as the County Development Plan, there are many other plans, policies and initiatives which the LECP will aim to support and complement. Some of these include County

Galway Tourism Strategy, Galway County Culture and Creativity Strategy, Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity, Galway Library Development Programme.

Public consultation indicated a strong sense of pride in Galway County's heritage and culture, including the County's unique island culture. Participants voiced appreciation of the County's natural beauty and historical assets, as well as deeply valuing the local linguistic, arts, and musical heritage. There was a preference to see arts and culture protected, enhanced and promoted through the development of facilities and initiatives for residents and tourists alike. Key themes emerging from public consultation related to this goal included: Culture and Language, Tourism, Arts, and Heritage.

The aim of this goal is to support and build upon the work of other policies, initiatives and organisations to ensure Galway County remains a place with a clear sense of identity which is formed by its heritage, language and culture.

Sustainable Objectives:

- **SCO 3.1** Continue to promote the use and appreciation of the Irish language throughout the County.
- **SCO 3.2** Support the utilisation and development of Galway County's cultural infrastructure, programmes and initiatives
- **SCO 3.3** Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWRA RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO 4.3, RPO 4.4, RPO 4.5, RPO 5.8 and RPO 5.13.

Goal 3: A County that celebrates its unique cultural identity

Objective SCO 3.1 Continue to promote the use and appreciation of the Irish language throughout the County.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.1.1	Continue to support initiatives to promote the Irish Language through the implementation of the National Language Scheme 2023-2026, and similar plans and strategies.	Promotion of policies and strategies	GCC	EnG, ÚnG	ST-MT-LT	Number of plans and initiatives supported
3.1.2	Support appreciation of the Irish language through local events, festivals, libraries, the arts, and publications that celebrate the Irish Language.	Greater appreciation of the Irish Language	GCC	GCC, PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, CYPSC, CI	ST-MT-LT	Number of sport and physical recreation initiatives and events delivered
3.1.3	Create local networks, working in Irish, across a variety sectors in the county to encourage collaboration, project development and peer-to-peer learning.	Growth in networks operating in Irish	GCC	EnG, ÚnG	ST-MT-LT	Number of events and initiatives

Objective SCO 3.2 Support the utilisation and development of Galway County's cultural infrastructure, programmes and initiatives.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.2.1	To effectively support the art sector across Galway County, implement the Culture and Creativity Strategy and Galway County Council Arts Plan 2020-2024 along with similar plans. Additionally, the delivery of local arts events can play a crucial role in nurturing and showcasing the cultural talents of the area, thereby enriching the community's artistic landscape.	An enhanced community led artistic landscape	GCC,	MnT, GCCA, GCCLS, CI	ST-MT-LT	Implementation of Galway County Council Arts Plan Number of events and initiatives
3.2.2	Support multi-agency and stakeholder collaborative approach to delivering arts and culture programs targeted at children and young people through primary and secondary schools, local initiatives with various stakeholders, music generation, library workshops and artist-led projects.	Increased number of children engaging in arts, heritage and culture initiatives	GCCAO	GCCLS, CI, Creative Schools, GRET, HCG	ST-MT-LT	Number of events and initiatives

3.2.3	Capture the creativity and contribution of older people in county Galway through arts, heritage and culture initiatives by engaging with local and national organisations such as Age & Opportunity, Age Friendly Ireland, Age Action and Galway Older People's Council.	Increased in the number of older adults engaging in arts, heritage and culture initiatives	GCCAO/ GCCLS	GCCAO, GRETB, LCDC, GRA, HCG	ST-MT-LT	Number of events and initiatives
3.2.4	Support, protect and promote arts, heritage and cultural infrastructure such as theatres, local museums and heritage centres, music venues, performance, arts and exhibition spaces, galleries and workshops many are in private or community ownership.	Increased promotion of arts and heritage and culture	GCC	GCCAO, GRETB, LCDC, GRA, HCG	ST-MT-LT	Number of events and initiatives

Objective SCO 3.3 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.3.1	Support the development of County Galway as a key tourist destinations and develop the sustainable tourism potential of existing culture and heritage infrastructure and improve Galway's outdoor recreation infrastructure and natural heritage.	Increased tourism numbers	GCC	Library Service, CI, Creative Schools, GRETB	ST-MT-LT	Increased tourism numbers
3.3.2	Support and promote County Galway Tourism Strategy 2023-2031 through a dedicated working group with strategic partners that will oversee collaborative work across the County, including the Tourism Strategy.	Targeted multi agency approach to tourism	GCC	FI, WI, ÚG, Coillte, NPWS, OPW, LEO	ST-MT-LT	Implementation and monitoring of Galway County Tourism Strategy 2023-2031
3.3.3	Clearly identify, promote, market and communicate the assets and unique culture and the unique tourism opportunities within the County.	Increased tourism	GCC	FI, WI, ÚG, Coillte, NPWS, OPW, LEO	ST-MT-LT	Number of marketing and communication programmes



HIGH LEVEL GOAL 4: AN ACCESSIBLE COUNTY WITH THRIVING URBAN AND RURAL SETTLEMENTS



STRENGTHS

- Almost all towns are experiencing **population growth**, with highest increase rates seen in Baile Chláir (32.5%) Maigh Cuilinn (28.0%). (*Census 2022*)
- Growth in housing stock inline with population growth**, with population (7.8%) and housing stock (7.9%) both increasing at similar rates, with 264 new dwellings completed in 2024Q2 and 963 completed in 2023. (*Census 2022, CSO*)
- Wastewater treatment capacity** supporting development, with available capacity reported in 88.6% of wastewater treatment facilities. (*Uisce Éireann, 2022*)
- Strong local **engagement in environmental beautification and improvement projects**, with 30 Tidy Towns groups active in the County. (*Galway PPN*)
- Existing **green spaces are valued and appreciated**, with 72% of survey respondents rating them positively. (*GLECP Public Survey*)
- Relatively high rates of homeownership** (78.8% either with a mortgage or outright) suggesting higher rates of housing stability compared to the national average (68.9%) (*Census 2022*)
- Four of Ireland's five most populated offshore islands**—Inis Móir, Inis Óirr, Inis Meáin, and Inisbofin—are located in Galway County. This underlines the importance of implementing specialised programmes to safeguard and develop these vibrant island communities. (*Census 2022*)

CHALLENGES

- Relatively **high residential vacancy rate** (10.7%) and **high commercial vacancy rate** (13.7%). Public consultation identified associated negative visual and social impacts. (*Census 2022, GLECP Public & Business Survey*)
- Low use of public (2%) and active transport (5.3)** for commutes to work, resulting in high dependence on personal vehicles. This was coupled with a **request for improved frequency and broader range in public transport options**. (*Census 2022, GLECP Public Survey*)
- 73.0% of survey respondents reported **access to housing poses a significant challenge** to the revitalisation of Towns and Villages. (*GLECP Public Survey*)
- Signs of **connectivity and digital inequality/disadvantage** with household internet connectivity (87.8%) noticeably behind the State average (90.5%). (*Census 2022*)
- 44.8% of the public survey respondents **rated 'Public Realm and Shared Spaces' as poor** and would like to see more equitable investment in public realm improvements across urban and rural areas (*GLECP Consultation Report*)
- 43.6% of business survey respondents identified **commercial vacancy rates and availability of space as a challenge** for existing businesses. (*GLECP Business survey*)
- A **desire for more local shops, personal services and hospitality businesses** with 72.8% of public survey respondents rating **existing supply as poor or average**. (*GLECP Consultation Report*)
- Consultation indicated **demand for increased targeted investment and supports on offshore islands**. (*GLECP Consultation Report*)

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

Approximately three quarters (75.6%) of people in Galway County live in rural settlements, which is higher than the average in the wider NWR and in the State. As population increases, the demand for housing in high-quality neighbourhoods and towns will continue to grow. According to the 2022 Census, Galway County had a higher proportion of vacant homes, and the NWRA established that nine towns in Galway County had higher rate of derelict homes than the State. The 2022 NOAC survey found that 20% of the County was unpolluted and litter-free, matching the State proportion.

In line with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032, Tuam and Ballinasloe require targeted attention recognising their unique status as Key Towns, the LECP is committed to leveraging and expanding upon existing initiatives like the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and Smart Villages to fast-track their development. This strategic focus includes addressing the higher vacancy and dereliction rates by implementing tailored spatial and economic policies that enhance housing availability and quality, and by fostering economic opportunities that are expected to attract and sustain a growing workforce, aiming for a population to employment growth ratio of 2:1.

There are a number of initiatives and organisations that aim to support vibrant towns across County Galway Tourism Strategy, including the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, Smart Villages, and the LEADER Programme, among others. These local-level initiatives contribute to supporting national aims included in policies like 'Our Rural Future' and the 'Town Centres First Policy'.

Public consultation indicated an appreciation for town and village centres, and especially for public

realm and public green spaces. There was an appetite to see these areas enhanced, with efforts to tackle dereliction and support beautification. Participants also emphasised that accessibility was a high priority, both in terms of transportation and the design of public spaces. Participants acknowledged challenges related to the ongoing housing and cost of living crisis and indicated the need for balanced and sustainable development to provide appropriate accommodation for the County's growing population.

Key themes emerging from public consultation related to this goal included: Transport/ Accessibility, Regeneration and Revitalisation of Towns, Villages and Islands, Balanced Sustainable Development, Tourism, Public Realm/ Green Spaces, Housing, and Pride of Place.

This High-Level Goal aims to ensure vibrant villages, towns and settlements that provide attractive and accessible public areas and contribute to a high-quality of life for both residents and visitors alike.

Sustainable Objectives:

- SCO 4.1** Support Galway County's towns and villages to act as social, cultural and recreational hubs for the local community.
- SEDO 4.2** Support the sustainable development and regeneration of Galway County's towns, villages and islands.
- SEDO 4.3** Enhance equitable access to and uptake of digital, information and communications technology.
- SEDO 4.4** Enhance and expand transport and movement to, from and within Galway.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWRA RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO3.1, RPO 3.2, RPO 3.3, RPO 4.6, RPO 4.7 and RPO 6.60.

Goal 4: An accessible County with thriving urban and rural settlements

Objective SCO 4.1 Support Galway County's towns and villages to act as social, cultural and recreational hubs for the local community.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.1.1	Strengthen the social fabric of smaller towns through collaborative stakeholder (local authority, businesses, landlords, community groups etc.) led initiatives such as the Town Teams, Chambers of Commerce, Local Development Groups, PPN and other community groups.	Increased citizen engagement	LCDC/SPC	GCC, PPN, GSP, local community groups	ST-MT-LT	Number of stakeholders actively involved
4.1.2	Work with local communities to support and encourage volunteerism and build capacity through mentoring, training, information provision and network development.	Increase in volunteerism	LCDC	GCC, GCLS, LDCs, OPC, Tidy Town Networks, SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Increase in volunteerism rates on the CSO
4.1.3	Build on existing and create new local networks within the county for artists, festivals and voluntary groups to create a collaborative and supportive culture of resource sharing, information and skills exchange.	Increase in number and capacity of networks	LCDC	GCCA, GCLS, LCCs, SICAP, LEO	ST-MT-LT	Number of community networks
4.1.4	Ensure Libraries can continue their role as inclusive community hubs that provide access to information, as well as being venues for social and cultural activities.	Increase in Library numbers and engagement	LCDC	GCLS	ST-MT-LT	Increase in library visitation

Objective SEDO 4.2 Support the sustainable development and regeneration of Galway County's towns, villages and islands.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.2.1	To prioritise projects and proposals which will result in both social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration within towns and villages. The Planning Authority will leverage the variety of funds available including LHAF, Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund in pursuance of this objective.	Town and village revitalisation	GCC	GCCA, GCLS, LDCs, OPC, Tidy Town Networks, TT	ST-MT-LT	Number of projects and proposals with a focus on social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration

4.2.2	To prioritise projects and proposals which will ensure stakeholders can effectively leverage the variety of funds available including LIHAF, Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, LEADER, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund among others.	Increased access in funding for urban and rural regeneration	LDC	LCDC, PPN, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Track the number of regeneration projects started
4.2.3	Actively promote town and village renewal schemes and initiatives across County Galway including the Town Centre First Policy and Collaborative Town Centre Health Checks in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.	Increase in Regeneration Plans and Health Checks	SPC	GCC, ÚnG, LCDC, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of Health Checks completed and regeneration plans
4.2.4	Support the sustainable and sympathetic development of the islands for the benefit of island communities generally and to encourage the development that contributes to the long term economic and social development of the islands.	Increase in social and economic infrastructure on the Islands	LDCs	GCC, ÚnG, LCDC, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of social and economic infrastructure projects and initiatives on the Islands

Objective SEDO 4.3 Enhance equitable access to and uptake of digital, information and communications technology.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.3.1	Libraries will continue to enhance community engagement by hosting digital literacy workshops, providing IT access, and positioning themselves as trusted centres for accurate information.	Enhanced digital access through the Libraries	GCCLS	LDS, PPN, LDS	ST-MT-LT	Number of digital programmes and initiatives delivered
4.3.2	Sustain Galway's strategic efforts to promote and enable digital transformation, connectivity, and infrastructure through harnessing programmes and initiatives including the National Broadband Schemes, Galway County Digital Strategy, LEADER and other programmes to increase broadband coverage and improve ICT infrastructure in the County.	Enhanced digital infrastructure and connectivity	GCC	GRETb, ÚnG, NBI	ST-MT-LT	Number of digital infrastructure programmes and initiatives
4.3.3	Encourage the effective use of resources available in existing and new digital hubs, remote working spaces, co-working facilities to support the digitalisation of local communities.	Enhanced utilisation of digital hubs and co-working facilities	GCC	LCDC, LDS, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of digital hubs and co-working facilities

4.3.4	Digital grants and consultancy will be offered by LEOs to ensure small businesses are being supported in digitalisation and will contribute towards the target of 90% basic digital intensity of enterprise by 2030.	Increased digital intensity of enterprises	LEO	LCDC, EI, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of businesses receiving business supports
4.3.5	Implement training programs and initiatives aimed to decrease the digital divide by enhancing digital literacy and support all community segments to participate and make the most of digital opportunities.	Enhanced digital skills and online participation	GCC	LCDC, LDS, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of people receiving training programs and initiatives

Objective SEDO 4.4 Enhance and expand transport and movement to, from and within Galway.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.4.1	Promote the use of public transport and encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport through promoting and facilitating public transport, active transport and other sustainable transport solutions.	Reduced private car dependency	SPC	TFI, NTA, IR, ESB, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Number of initiatives
4.4.2	Support investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport.	Increased access and connectivity across Galway County	SPC	TFI, NTA, IR, ESB, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Number of investment and improvement supports
4.4.3	To support the National Transport Authority (NTA) and 'Local Link' and other stakeholders and community groups in improving transport infrastructure and update of services.	Enhanced transport infrastructure and connectivity	SPC	TFI, NTA, IR, ESB, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Number of investment and improvement supports



HIGH LEVEL GOAL 5: A SUSTAINABLE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT COUNTY



STRENGTHS

- Galway is the **second-largest county in Ireland**, covering an area of 6,149 km² and boasting a **coastline that stretches to 2,000 km²**. Consultation identified significant **desire to protect and enhance coastal areas** and leverage opportunities in the blue economy. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- Public consultation indicates that the community appreciates and values the County's **extensive natural environments**, with 72.2% rating the natural environment positively. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- Public consultation identified local appreciation of existing efforts towards **conservation biodiversity and natural heritage**, with positive recognition, with 61.1% rating it positively. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- Consultation identified **significant desire to preserve and enhance our natural environment through the implementation and promotion of sustainable land use practices**. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 39.6% of business survey respondents recognised and supported existing **incentives for reducing carbon emissions and promoting environmentally friendly practices**. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Consultation identified **significant public interest in renewable energy adoption**. However, only 15% of survey respondents identifying its existing levels as good. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- There are **46 active voluntary organisations focused on environmental efforts**, reflecting strong local involvement in climate action and sustainability. *(Galway County PPN)*
- The **Public Sector Climate Action Mandate 2024** requires Irish public bodies to **reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions by 51% and improve energy efficiency by 50% by 2030**, highlighting the need to prioritise climate action targets. *(Public Sector Climate Action Mandate 2024)*

CHALLENGES

- 46.3% of the public survey respondents stated the County had **poor waste management**. Many pointed to issues such as insufficient public bins, lack of free recycling centres, and the imposition of recycling charges, which hinder the adoption of **sustainable waste practices**. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- The consultation process identified a **desire for greater transparency and increased dialogue between the government, private sector and local communities** regarding major infrastructure and green energy projects. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- Consultation highlighted concern around the high **cost of implementing green/sustainable business practices**, with 49.5% of business survey respondents considering the **'availability of supports for adopting sustainable business practices'** as either a moderate or significant challenge. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- During consultation the **lack of or inadequate safe cycling and walking routes, greenways, and coastal walkways** were identified as contributing factors to the **high reliance on personal vehicles**. With 80.9% commuting to work via personal vehicle, 12.7% higher than the national average. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 91.5% of the recent climate action survey respondents expressed a **desire to improve the energy efficiency of their homes or businesses**, with cost identified as the biggest barrier. *(Climate Action Survey)*
- 90% of the public survey respondents identified **challenges and limitations in sustainable transport options**. *(GLECP Public Survey)*
- 49.5% of respondents in the GLECP Business Survey reported **challenges in accessing support for adopting sustainable commercial practices**. Consultation highlighted a need for better financial and educational supports and services. *(GLECP Business Survey)*

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

Galway County is a rural area with extensive natural environments. Litter pollution levels are similar to the State, with 20% of Galway County being considered unpolluted. However, this still means that 80% of Galway County is at least partially litter-polluted. The waterways of Galway County are in relatively good condition with the proportions of rivers and lakes with satisfactory ecological statuses both higher than the State. Galway County has seen significant afforestation measures taken but the rate of this has slowed slightly in recent times. Data suggests that transport across Galway County could be more sustainable, with 92.1% of households having at least one car and 80.9% of people commuting to work by private vehicle, both higher than the State average. Along with this the uptake of electric vehicles in Galway County was slow but has seen increases. In addition to possible inefficiencies in transport, there are also inefficiencies in dwellings across Galway County, with only 23% of audited households gaining an A or B Building Energy Rating. However, Galway County does have a significant installed capacity of wind energy production, generating over €2 million in commercial rates were payable to Galway County Council.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 established a framework with clear targets and commitments, such as achieving an average 7% per annum reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2030 and becoming climate neutral by 2050. This High-Level Goal sets out a broad framework for a transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient society by reducing greenhouse gases, improving energy efficiency, and increasing renewable energy. Communities want and need to step up local climate action. Therefore, capacity building & awareness and local climate-action initiatives

will be important elements of becoming a climate-resilient county.

Public consultation indicated an appetite for increased opportunities to be involved in climate action. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity was highlighted as a priority. Additionally, participants showed an awareness of and enthusiasm for producing and consuming renewable energy. Participants also voiced a preference for increased sustainable transport options. Key themes emerging from public consultation related to this goal included: The Natural Environment, Green Economy, Harnessing Natural Resources, Sustainable/Green Transport, Just Transition, Climate Education, and The Circular Economy.

This High-Level Goal aims to preserve the natural environment of Galway County and to expand the ecologically healthy areas of the County. Additionally, the goal seeks to move Galway County towards climate neutrality through renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainability.

Sustainable Objectives:

- SCO 5.1** Increase community and business involvement in environmental action and the reduction of Galway County's carbon footprint.
- SEDO 5.2** Ensuring a Just Transition in Galway County.
- SEDO 5.3** Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity throughout the County.
- SEDO 5.4** Develop Galway's green economy, circular economy and sustainable energy future.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWRA RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO 3.5, RPO 5.1, RPO 5.2, RPO 5.4, RPO 5.18, RPO 5.22, RPO 6.41 and RPO 6.42.

Goal 5: A Sustainable and climate-resilient County

Objective SCO 5.1 Increase community and business involvement in environmental action and the reduction of Galway County's carbon footprint.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.1.1	Facilitate local community and business engagement in climate action through educational and training initiatives, information dissemination and resources that enhance access to relevant knowledge required to support environment and climate change.	Accelerate community led climate action	GCC	GCC, PPN, GSP, local community groups, GCC-Arts, GCLS, LDCs, OPC, and community networks	ST-MT-LT	Number of communities and businesses engaged in training, educational programmes and other initiatives
5.1.2	Support the use of national, regional and local funding streams to support climate change adaptation, energy efficiency and renewable energy usage.	Capatalise on climate action funding available	SPC	GCC Environment, SEAI, LDCs	ST-MT-LT	Increase in volunteerism rates in CSO
5.1.3	Ensure social infrastructure, including libraries and community buildings can be reviewed and upgraded to ensure that they are energy efficient. These upgrades or new buildings can serve as a public model of sustainability for other buildings.	Decarbonise the built environment	GCC	LCDC, SPC, GCCA, GCLS, SICAP, GCCRCD, CnO, GCCAO,	ST-MT-LT	Number of community networks
5.1.4	Implement Galway County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 and increase sustainable practices across the County to contribute to the achievement of regional and national targets.	Strategic approach to achieving targets	GCC	GCC, PPN, GSP, local community groups, GCC-Arts, GCLS, LDCs, OPC, and community networks	ST-MT-LT	Monitoring and review of the Galway County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Objective SEDO 5.2 Ensuring a Just Transition in Galway County.

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.2.1	Ensure Just-Transition support for those working in traditional sectors (farming, agriculture, extractive industries) and engage with the EU Just Transition Fund for economy diversification, peatland restoration and sustainable mobility initiatives in qualifying areas of Galway County.	Proactive participation in the Just Transition Plan and Fund	LCDC	GCC, PPN, GSP, local community groups	ST-MT-LT	Number of projects in receipt of EU Just Transition Funding

Objective SEDO 5.3 Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity throughout the County						
Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.3.1	Protect and enhance Galway County's natural heritage and biodiversity by implementing relevant plans such as the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, the Galway County Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2024-2030, the Galway County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, and the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, while delivering a range of related trainings and initiatives.	Increased biodiversity preservation and conservation initiatives	GCC	LCDC, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of biodiversity preservation, conservation initiatives and strategies implemented
5.3.2	Conserve, enhance, manage and protect the architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage as key social, economic and cultural assets which are an integral part of the County and safeguard these valuable resources through proper management, sensitive enhancement and appropriate development.	Increased preservation efforts	GCC	OPW, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of preservation programmes and initiatives

Objective SEDO 5.4 Develop Galway's green economy, circular economy and sustainable energy future						
Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.4.1	Support the development and use of low-carbon technologies such as electric vehicles and low-carbon fuels.	Increased production and usage of renewable energy	GCC Environment	GCC, SEAI,	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and initiatives focused on renewable energy production
5.4.2	Promotion of Libraries as leaders in the circular economy through lending and sharing resources such as books, DVDs, board games, toys, musical instruments, items for loan, such as garden tools etc.	Increased engagement with the circular economy through libraries	GCLS	LCDC, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and initiatives that promote the circular economy
5.4.3	Continue to promote greater participation in the circular economy by hosting workshops, repair shops, clothes swaps and other items, and providing a space for people to swap items like clothes.	Increased engagement with the circular economy	LCDC	PPN, GCC, GCLS	ST-MT-LT	Number of programmes and initiatives that promote the circular economy
5.4.4	Implement effective energy management and projects across community and state agencies aligned with 2030 targets and net zero trajectory.	Meeting carbon reduction targets	LCDC	GCC, LDCS, PPN	ST-MT-LT	Carbon reduction
5.4.5	Facilitate climate action throughout the County, by engaging and collaborating with stakeholders and citizens in the development, implementation and review of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan, and provide them with information and support.	Increase in climate action	GCC	LCDC, PPN, LDCs	ST-MT-LT	Number of climate action programmes and initiatives



HIGH LEVEL GOAL 6: A COUNTY THAT PRIORITISES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION



STRENGTHS

- A **highly educated workforce**, with over 55% of the population aged 25-64 holding a third-level degree (above the national average), driven by good access to educational institutions like the National University of Ireland, Galway, and the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology. *(Census, 2022)*
- Galway has a **strong manufacturing sector**, employing 15.6% of the workforce higher than the national average of 13.2%. *(Census, 2022)*
- Galway consistently **exhibits strong employment rates**. Galway County has an employment rate of 56.6%, which is on par with the national average, demonstrating a **robust labour market**. Increasing employment rates and lowest unemployment rate (7.2%) in the Region. *(Census 2022)*
- 55.9% of business survey respondents identified County Galway's **geographical location as strategically advantageous** for doing business. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Growth in the number of enterprises** per 1,000 of the population (49.2 in 2016 to 77.4 in 2022). *(Census 2022)*
- Industry clustering was perceived as positive** by 70.4% of respondents of businesses reflecting the foundational potential for creating sectoral networks. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) was perceived positively** by 75.9% of business survey respondents. The total number of IDA Ireland client companies based in Galway amounted to 94 in 2021, representing 5.6% of the national IDA Ireland client companies. *(IDA Ireland/GLECP Business Survey)*
- The business survey identified a strength in **high-speed internet connection**, with 43.3% of respondents recognising it as either a significant or moderate benefit, demonstrating Galway's strong digital infrastructure supporting businesses. *(GLECP Business Survey)*

CHALLENGES

- Housing supply and affordability** was an issue, with 67.5% of business survey respondents seeing it as a challenge (41.9% significant, 25.6% moderate), underscoring how the national housing crisis affected recruitment, retention, and overall quality of life. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- There is a **high reliance on traditional industries like agriculture, forestry, fishing, and construction**, with agriculture employing 6% and construction 6.3% of the workforce, both above national averages. This reliance creates vulnerabilities to economic shifts. *(Census, 2022)*
- A high proportion of **early school leavers**, with 6.3% of individuals ceasing education before the age of 15, compared to 6.1% at the national level. *(Census, 2022)*
- Cost of doing business** was the most **significant concern** identified in consultation, with 91.4% of respondents identifying it as a challenge (53.3% significant, 38.1% moderate), highlighting high operational costs, particularly impacting smaller enterprises. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Labour supply issues** were a pressing challenge, with 75.0% of business survey respondents identifying it as a concern (40.4% significant, 34.6% moderate), indicating **difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled staff and need for sector-specific training/upskilling**. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Frequency of local business events and initiatives** was viewed as an issue by 56.9% (25.0% significant, 31.9% moderate), suggesting that more consistent opportunities for engagement were needed. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- The business survey found that 69.8% of businesses see **public transport services** as a challenge, noting it affects business operations, workforce mobility and retention. *(GLECP Business Survey)*
- Economic disparity** exists **between urban and rural areas**, with Galway's metropolitan area benefiting from diverse employment, while rural areas rely on traditional sectors like agriculture, leading to unequal development and limited participation in regional prosperity. *(GLECP Business Survey)*

Rationale for this High-Level Goal

This Goal aims to support the RSES and NPF Population Growth to Employment Growth Ratio of 3:2 (Population / Jobs). Currently, Galway County has a diverse range of employment sectors, including tourism, renewable energy, marine, ICT and life sciences, agriculture, retail and advanced manufacturing and engineering. Maintaining and expanding these key growth sectors is critical to creating a resilient and adaptable economy. SMEs employ 74.3% of the workforce, ensuring these businesses, as well as any new or potential businesses, have the supports they need to continue to trade in the County and employ such a large majority of the population may help maintain and further reduce Galway County's low unemployment rates.

There are 30 large employers in Galway County, which account for over a quarter of the workforce. Ensuring these companies are incentivised to stay in the area may help ensure Galway remains an attractive place to do business and its economy remains resilient.

Galway County enjoys good access to third-level institutions, including University of Galway and ATU Galway City. Galway The County had a relatively high proportion of students (43.5%) completing their formal education at 21 years or older, indicating a trend towards people attending third-level education, and exceeded both the NWR's (39.7%) and the national average (42.4%). Between 2016 and 2022, the County experienced an increase in the proportion of individuals holding tertiary education qualifications, rising from 50.4% to 56.1%. The GRETb also provides ongoing education opportunities in several centres and hubs across the County.

There are several plans, policies and initiatives already delivering much of what is outlined above. The LECP will endeavour to support and build upon them. Some of these plans, policies and initiatives

include: Galway County Corporate Plan, West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, and Galway County Digital Strategy.

Public consultation found participants had high rates of satisfaction with education facilities, however, identified a need for additional employment and sector-specific upskilling and training. Key themes emerging from public consultation related to this goal included: Employment, Enterprise Development, FDI, Education and Training, Lifelong Learning, Technology, and Research and Innovation.

The aim of this High-Level Goal is to build upon the initiatives mentioned above to ensure Galway County has a resilient and sustainable economy and that it is a place that it continues to encourage and foster enterprise, innovation and education.

Sustainable Objectives:

- SCO 6.1** Promote and support increased and equitable access to and engagement with education, training and lifelong learning opportunities.
- SEDO 6.2** Attract new and expand existing key sectors and enterprise with significant employment, income and growth potential.
- SEDO 6.3** Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs.
- SEDO 6.4** Infrastructure and services that develop a workforce with the skills necessary to sustain and be in demand in the emerging economy.
- SEDO 6.5** Develop and foster an environment conducive to innovation, enterprise, and entrepreneurship, including community and social enterprise initiatives.

These sustainable objectives support the following NWR RSES regional priority objectives (RPO); RPO 6.45, RPO 6.46, RPO 6.47, RPO 6.56, RPO 6.57, RPO 7.1, RPO 7.2, RPO 7.3 and RPO 7.5.

Goal 6: A County that prioritises economic development and education

Objective SCO 6.1 Promote and support increased and equitable access to and engagement with education, training and lifelong learning opportunities

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.1.1	Continue to promote existing educational facilities and the library as centres for education, training and lifelong learning, while providing support and resources for all ages.	Increase in those in engaging in lifelong learning	GRETB	GCCL, NUIG, GCCAO, GCCHO, CCG	ST-MT-LT	Number engaged in lifelong learning
6.1.2	Continue to provide access to specialised educational supports for children and young people like TTRS and Nessy licences and C-Pens. Explore other supports.	Increase in specialised education supports for children	DoE	GCCC, CYPSC, TUSLA, DoE, HSE, GCCLS, NAPD, CnN, MnT	ST-MT-LT	Those engaged specialised education supports

Objective SEDO 6.2 Attract new and expand existing key sectors and enterprise with significant employment, income and growth potential

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.2.1	To ensure the attractiveness of Galway is retained and developed further as a location for domestic and foreign direct investment and regional development through existing strategic networks including the Strategic Economic Corridor, AEC projects, promotion of key employment locations identified in the GCDP.	Attract and retain domestic and foreign direct investment	EI	LEO, GCC, ÚnG, NEH, CnO, LDCs, DEASP	ST-MT-LT	Number of strategies and programmes that focus on domestic and foreign direct investment
6.2.2	Provide targeted support to emerging sectors and clusters including; Tourism; Renewable energy and low carbon future; Marine and Blue Economy; ICT and Digital Enterprise; Life Science (Medtech, Pharma, Biotech, Healthcare); Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering; Agri-tech and Agri-food; and Retail.	Growth in emerging economic sectors and clusters	SPC	LEO, EI, LDCs, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Number of enterprises in the emerging economic sectors and clusters
6.2.3	An Economic Forum will be established, comprising representatives from all support providers in the County connected to the support and service of start-ups and SMEs, with the purpose of maximising collaboration and cooperation across the County.	Established Economic Forum	SPC	LEO, EI, GCC	ST-MT-LT	Established Economic Forum

6.2.4	Encourage the progression of companies from LEOs to EI in alignment with their development stage, while offering funding, advisory, and development support to high-potential enterprises seeking sustainable international success and significant employment growth.	Growth in export enterprises and jobs	EI	LEO, EI, GCCRCD, LDCs, FC,	ST-MT-LT	Number of enterprises and those in employment
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Objective SEDO 6.3 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.3.1	Maximise collaboration with the community enterprise centres to assist start-ups and existing businesses to grow and develop. Support micro enterprises and SME's by establishing robust business networks and start-up forums.	Enhanced business development support and networks	LEO	GRETB, ÚnG	ST-MT-LT	Number of businesses receiving enterprise development support and networks
6.3.2	Continue to connect local businesses with local enterprise development agencies, private sector bodies and statutory agencies to foster relationships and to champion business needs.	Strengthened business referral pathways	LEO	EI, GCC, ÚnG, NEH,	ST-MT-LT	Number of business and local enterprise development supports
6.3.3	Advertise and promote funding available to SMEs including but not limited feasibility grants, priming grants, expansion grants, digital grants, green for business, green start, LEADER, energy adaption, lean for business and lean for business.	Increased awareness and utilisation of funding opportunities	LEO	LDCs	ST-MT-LT	Number of funding streams available

Objective SEDO 6.4 Infrastructure and services that develop a workforce with the skills necessary to sustain and be in demand in the emerging economy

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.4.1	Utilise labour market activation schemes such as Community Employment, Rural Social Scheme, and TUS to deliver community services and support employer-linked programmes and events throughout the County.	Enhanced community engagement and employer support	LEO	LDCs, LCDC, SPC, EI, FRCs	ST-MT-LT	Number of people engaged in labour market schemes
6.4.2	To actively support the sustainable development of Galway's higher education and training ecosystem, through advocacy for funding and strategic investment.	Strengthened higher education and training ecosystem	NUIG	NoG, GRETB, EI, GCC, GRETB	ST-MT-LT	Number of education and training programmes
6.4.3	Conduct targeted skill needs assessments to develop needs-led programs that equip the workforce with the skills needed by new and existing employers of the emerging economy.	Workforce development aligned with market needs	LEO	NoG, GRETB, EI, GCC, GRETB	ST-MT-LT	Number of people engaged in workforce development initiatives

Objective SEDO 6.5 Develop and foster an environment conducive to innovation, enterprise, and entrepreneurship, including community and social enterprise initiatives

Number	Action Description	Desired Outcome	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.5.1	Encourage the development of existing, new and potential entrepreneur by providing general advice and information regarding starting a business, including: start-up guides, training opportunities, business planning and research, sources of funding and support, online resources, LEADER, capital, LEO Galway online and print resources, mentoring supports among others.	Empowered and thriving entrepreneurial community	LEO	ÚnG, LCDC, SPC, EI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of those engaged in entrepreneurial supports
6.5.2	Continue to promote inclusion and accessibility in entrepreneurship, in particular among under-represented groups, including people with disabilities and those in receipt of social welfare among others. This would be achieved through outreach and engagement, signposting, consultation, training, mentorship, business planning, and mentoring.	Greater inclusion and diversity in entrepreneurship	LEO	EI, GRETB, GCC, Microfinance Ireland, NUIG, MI, GRD SICAP	ST-MT-LT	Number of initiatives focused on increasing diversity in entrepreneurship

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

9.1 Who will monitor and review the implementation and progress of the LECP?

Monitoring of these Implementation Plans will be undertaken regularly by an independent working group of local enterprise, innovation and community stakeholders.

9.2 How often will the LECP be reviewed?

The LECP will be delivered through a series of Annual Implementation Plans agreed at the start of each year to achieve the targets set out. Monitoring of these Implementation Plans will be undertaken on an ongoing basis, with a report prepared and submitted to Galway County LCDC and SPC every two years.

As a result, progress will be formally reviewed three times over the lifetime of the LECP. Two interim reviews will take place in 2026 and 2028 to evaluate progress and to ensure any new emerging needs are reflected in the objectives and actions of the subsequent Implementation Plans. A final review will take place at the close of the LECP in 2030, in preparation for the next iteration of the document.

9.3 How is the LECP evaluated?

The LECP includes High-Level Goals, each with

several related objectives and actions. Each objective includes one or more success indicators to measure progress toward the achievement of the High-Level Goal (see the action tables attached to each goal). These will undergo ongoing monitoring based on the prioritisation of actions and the determination of outputs and indicators for each Implementation Plan.

In order to support comprehensive evaluation of LECP interventions, the development of case studies will also form part of the monitoring process for the LECPs. To demonstrate an integrated and consistent approach across policy documents, LECP case study reports will follow the case study template used by the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP).

The final review and support for the development of the next LECP which will be informed by both the quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the Implementation Plan and ongoing monitoring process.

9.4 Can the public access the monitoring and evaluation process?

The annual implementation reports will be published yearly, and the interim reports will be published every two years. A summary of lessons learned/emerging matters will be included.

APPENDICES

A. LCDC Membership

- Cllr. Pdraig Mac An Iomaire - Leas Cathaoirleach Galway County Council
- Cllr. James Charity - Galway County Council
- Cllr. Michael Connolly - Galway County Council
- Jacqueline Carroll - Galway County Council, Director of Services, Rural & Community Development, Integration, and Environment
- Caroline McDonagh - Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Head of Enterprise
- Laurence Gaughan - Health Service Executive, Regional Project Manager, Community Healthcare West
- Regina Higgins - Department of Social Protection, Regional Manager
- Donal Walsh - Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board, Adult Education Officer
- Seán Ó Coisdealbha - Údarás na Gaeltachta, Bainisteoir Réigiúnach
- Steve Dolan Galway Rural Development, Chief Executive Officer
- Karen Mannion - FORUM Connemara, Chief Executive Officer
- Máire Uí Mhaoláin - Comhar na nOileán CTR, Chief Executive Officer
- Peter Gohery - County Galway PPN, Social Inclusion College
- Kevin Gavin County Galway PPN, Social Inclusion College
- Máirín Ni Chonghaile - County Galway PPN, Community & Voluntary College
- Gerard Costello - County Galway PPN, Community & Voluntary College

- Jen Fisher - County Galway PPN, Environmental College
- Eveanna Ryan - Galway Chamber, President
- Anne Mitchell - Irish Farmers' Association, Chairperson

B. SPC Membership

- Name of Elected Member Municipal District
- Chairperson Donagh Killilea, Tuam
- Gerry King, Conamara
- Thomas Welby, Conamara
- Mary Hoade, Tuam
- Declan Geraghty, Ballinasloe
- David Collins, Athenry/Oranmore
- Community / Voluntary, PPN, Lyn Donnelly
- Trade Union, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Deborah Reynolds
- Development / Construction, Construction Industry Federation, Paul Carey
- Business / Commercial, Galway Chamber, Helena McElmeel

C. Galway County LECP County Development Plan Alignment

HIGH LEVEL GOALS	GALWAY COUNTY LECP SUSTAINABLE OBJECTIVES	RELATED GALWAY COUNTY GDP OBJECTIVES
Goal 1	<p>SCO 1.1 Support increased access to physical and mental health and wellbeing services and initiatives.</p>	<p>H 1 Healthcare Facilities Support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of healthcare facilities to all sections of the community, at appropriate locations, especially where good public transport links and parking facilities are available.</p> <p>SC 1 Social and Community Infrastructure Support the provision of social and community facilities and services within the County which meet the current and future needs of the entire population.</p> <p>SC 2 Provision of lands for Social and Community Facilities Support the provision of lands for social and community facilities and encourage the provision of facilities suitable for all members of the community.</p> <p>H 2 Health Service Support the Department of Health in the implementation of the objectives of the Sláinte Care strategy and the provision of health and social care services.</p> <p>H 3 Provision of Primary Healthcare Centre's Support the provision of Primary Healthcare Facilities in appropriate locations across the county subject to proper planning and sustainable development requirements.</p> <p>SCI 3 Social Inclusion Promote social inclusion as outlined in the 'Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025' through equality of access to services and facilities and to assist in the removal of barriers to full participation in society.</p>
	<p>SCO 1.2 Continue to promote and facilitate new and existing community safety actions and initiatives.</p>	<p>CP 1 Crime Prevention and Joint Policing Committee Engage and support An Garda Síochána in addressing policing and crime issues via the Joint Policing Committee.</p> <p>CP 2 Crime Prevention and Older Person Strategy Co-operate with An Garda Síochána's Older Person Strategy to ensure contact and safety of elderly and rurally isolated citizens.</p> <p>CP 3 Crime Prevention through Surveillance and Design All new development must consider the principles of designing out crime such as surveillance, access and movement, physical protection, management and maintenance as outlined in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.</p>
	<p>SCO 1.3 Increase participation in sport and recreation activity.</p>	<p>SRA 1 Sport, Amenity and Recreation Support local sports groups and community groups in the development, improvement and expansion of authorised facilities for sporting and recreational needs of all sectors and ages through the reservation of suitable land where available and appropriate.</p> <p>SRA 2 Promote Public Access to Natural Amenities Recognize the role played by natural amenities as a major resource for visitors and local people and support, protect and promote public access to natural amenities that have been traditionally used for outdoor recreation (water-based facilities, recreational activities, and marinas).</p> <p>SRA 3 High-quality cycle and walking network Identify and seek to implement a strategic, coherent and high-quality cycle and walking network across the County that is integrated with accessible public transport where possible and interconnected with cultural, recreational, retail, educational and employment destinations access for all toilet facilities and attractions.</p> <p>SRA 4 Passive and Active Open Space Seek to develop multifunctional open spaces throughout the County which will support a range of recreational and amenity activities that provides for active and passive needs. SRA 5 Galway Sports Partnership Work in co-operation with Galway Sports Partnership in exploring the potential for clustering facilities.</p>

Goal 2	SCO 2.1 Continue to support community development, celebrate diversity and promote active inclusion for all.	SC 1 Social and Community Infrastructure Support the provision of social and community facilities and services within the County which meet the current and future needs of the entire population.
	SEDO 2.2 Improve quality and availability of supports and services that aim to reduce poverty and disadvantage.	SC 2 Provision of lands for Social and Community Facilities Support the provision of lands for social and community facilities and encourage the provision of facilities suitable for all members of the community.
	SCO 2.3 Empower and support individuals and communities to play an active role in local decision-making processes.	SCI 5 Voluntary and Community Groups To actively engage with the Galway Public Participation Network in the preparation and implementation of local authority policies and programmes to increase support for the community
	SCO 2.4 Enhance equitable access and reduce barriers to participation.	<p>SCI 3 Social Inclusion Promote social inclusion as outlined in the 'Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025' through equality of access to services and facilities and to assist in the removal of barriers to full participation in society.</p> <p>PDU 1 Universal Design Approach It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority Council to promote Universal Design and ensure that all public buildings, public open spaces, recreational and amenity areas are accessible for people with disabilities.</p> <p>PDU 2 Recognised Special Needs a) It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to consider all different levels of ability, in the location, layout and design of housing developments, communal facilities, public spaces and transport services. Proposals could include the appropriate mitigation of the built environment for example, through the selection of building materials; the provision of quiet rooms and sensory gardens where appropriate; and in the design of pedestrian facilities for the visually impaired. b) To support the provision of public accessibility friendly toilets, maximum dependency adult changing facilities at all appropriate locations in our towns and villages and at transport connectivity nodes. c) To support the provision of universal access to water-based facilities (e.g., marinas) recreational water-based activities for all people, especially for those with additional needs, individuals who are differently abled, those with physical or/and sensory impairments, mobility difficulties and that the overall the implementation of United Nations Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities in this regard.</p> <p>PDU 3 Social Infrastructure Developments and Housing It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to ensure that new social infrastructure developments and housing are accessible and inclusive for a range of users by promoting a universal design approach and provide for an age friendly society in which people of all ages can live full active, valued and healthy lives.</p>
Goal 3	SCO 3.1 Continue to promote the use and appreciation of the Irish language throughout the County.	CA 1 Development of Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Provide for the balanced development of an arts and cultural infrastructure that meets the cultural and artistic needs of communities, supports creative activity and enhances cultural, economic and social life of communities and which are accessible to all members of the community.
	SCO 3.2 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries.	<p>CA 2 Development of facilities Support and facilitate the provision or development of arts spaces, cultural spaces and entertainment facilities including performance, exhibition, studio and other arts related facilities in appropriate locations, where proposals are in accordance with the other policy objectives of this plan.</p> <p>TOU 1 Tourism Sector To co-operate with all relevant stakeholders in initiatives that strengthen the tourism sector in the county.</p>

		<p>TOU 2 Key Economic Pillars To promote and facilitate tourism as an economic pillar of the County's economy and to support the provision of appropriate visitor attractions and improvement in public spaces to promote attractive and vibrant town centres as key places for tourists.</p> <p>GCTS 1 Galway County Tourism Strategy To support the preparation and implementation of the Galway County Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>TI 1 Tourist Infrastructure Encourage and promote tourism related facilities and accommodation within existing settlements in the county. Consideration will be given to such facilities in rural areas where there is a justified requirement for the proposal at that location. These proposals are required to comply with environmental considerations and the relevant DM Standards.</p> <p>TI 2 Visitor Accommodation Encourage and facilitate visitor accommodation facilities at appropriate locations within the county where there is a justifiable requirement for such facilities. These proposals are required to comply with environmental considerations and the relevant DM Standards.</p> <p>TI 3 Energy Efficiency Support best-practice environmental management including energy efficiency, waste management, procurement and recycling in accommodation providers and tourism enterprises in the County.</p> <p>TI 4 Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity The potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals. Galway County Council will support Irish Water and Fáilte Ireland to ensure that tourism is serviced by adequate and appropriate water services infrastructure.</p> <p>CT3 Tourism Development To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural, environment or the economic value of the County's coastline and beaches.</p> <p>HT3 Sustainable Tourism Industry To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.</p> <p>VEDP 1 Visitor Experience Development Plans To support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs) In the county and to underpin the overarching tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the county.</p> <p>HT 1 Stakeholders To work with the relevant stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, Fáilte Ireland, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, the Arts Council, Waterways Ireland, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in Galway.</p> <p>CTB 1 Tourism Branding To support the promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Hidden Heartlands in their role to grow the economic contribution of tourism along their routes.</p>
<p>Goal 4:</p>	<p>SCO 4.1 Support Galway County's towns and villages to act as social, cultural and recreational hubs for the local community.</p>	<p>FC 1 Food and Crafts To support the development and marketing of the foods and crafts of the County through networking and developing trade links with regions, locally, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>EF 1 Events and Festivals Support and promote the existing festivals and cultural events which take place in the county and facilitate the establishment of new events where appropriate in order to increase the profile of the county as a key tourism destination.</p>

		<p>CTB 5 Destination Towns (a) To support the promotion of Clifden as the First Destination Town and as the principal visitor Services Centre and hub for Fáilte Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way in the County; (b) Support the designation of additional “Destination Towns” within the county if opportunities arise.</p>
	<p>SEDO 4.2 Support the sustainable development and regeneration of Galway County's towns, villages and islands.</p>	<p>PM 1 Placemaking To promote and facilitate the sustainable development of a high-quality built environment where there is a distinctive sense of place in attractive streets, spaces, and neighbourhoods that are accessible and safe places for all members of the community to meet and socialise.</p> <p>PM 2 Regeneration To prioritise projects and proposals which will result in both social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration within towns and villages. The Planning Authority will leverage the variety of funds available including LIHAF, Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund in pursuance of this objective.</p> <p>PM 3 Town and Village Centre Management Plans To promote the preparation of town and village centre management plans across the county that accord with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>CGR 2 Regeneration To promote the redevelopment and renewal of areas in towns and villages that are in need of regeneration.</p> <p>CGR 8 Town and Village Centre To encourage and support a range of appropriate uses in town and village centres that will assist in the regeneration and reuse of vacant and under-utilised buildings and land and will re-energise the town and village centres, subject to a high standard of development being achieved.</p> <p>CGR 9 Delivering Improved Public Realm Provide for a high-quality public realm and public spaces.</p> <p>CT3 Tourism Development To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural, environment or the economic value of the County’s coastline and beaches.</p> <p>HT3 Sustainable Tourism Industry To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.</p> <p>VEDP 1 Visitor Experience Development Plans To support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs) In the county and to underpin the overarching tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the county.</p> <p>HT 1 Stakeholders To work with the relevant stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, Fáilte Ireland, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, the Arts Council, Waterways Ireland, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in Galway.</p> <p>CTB 1 Tourism Branding To support the promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Hidden Heartlands in their role to grow the economic contribution of tourism along their routes.</p>

		<p>CGR 2 Regeneration To promote the redevelopment and renewal of areas in towns and villages that are in need of regeneration.</p> <p>CGR 8 Town and Village Centre To encourage and support a range of appropriate uses in town and village centres that will assist in the regeneration and reuse of vacant and under-utilised buildings and land and will re-energise the town and village centres, subject to a high standard of development being achieved.</p> <p>CGR 9 Delivering Improved Public Realm Provide for a high-quality public realm and public spaces in towns and villages by promoting quality design that accommodates creative patterns of use having regard to the physical, cultural, and social identities of individual settlements.</p> <p>CGR 10 Public Realm Strategy Consider the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy for County Galway within the lifetime of the Development Plan as resources permit.</p> <p>CGR 13 Town Centre First It will be a Policy Objective of Galway County Council to actively promote town and village renewal schemes and initiatives across County Galway including the Town Centre First Policy and Collaborative Town Centre Health Checks in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development</p> <p>CT3 Tourism Development To support proposals for tourism development in coastal areas where it can be demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the amenities of the area, the integrity of the natural, environment or the economic value of the County’s coastline and beaches.</p> <p>HT3 Sustainable Tourism Industry To support the development of a more sustainable tourism industry which minimises adverse impacts on local communities, the built heritage, landscapes, habitats and species; leaving them undiminished as a resource for future generations, while supporting social and economic prosperity.</p> <p>VEDP 1 Visitor Experience Development Plans To support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs) In the county and to underpin the overarching tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the county.</p> <p>HT 1 Stakeholders To work with the relevant stakeholders including the OPW, the Heritage Council, Fáilte Ireland, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, the Arts Council, Waterways Ireland, local communities and businesses to support the development of heritage and cultural tourism in Galway.</p> <p>CTB 1 Tourism Branding To support the promotion of the Wild Atlantic Way and Irelands Hidden Heartlands in their role to grow the economic contribution of tourism along their routes.</p>
	<p>SEDO 4.3 Enhance equitable access to and uptake of digital, information and communications technology.</p>	<p>ICT 1 ICT infrastructure Support the delivery of high capacity Information Communications Technology Infrastructure, broadband connectivity and digital broadcasting, throughout the County in line with the Galway County Digital Strategy 2020 - 2023, in order to ensure economic competitiveness for the enterprise and commercial sectors and in enabling more flexible work practices i.e. remote working, smart hubs etc.</p> <p>ICT 2 National Broadband Plan Support and facilitate delivery of the National Broadband Plan.</p>
	<p>SEDO 4.4 Enhance and expand transport and movement to, from and within Galway.</p>	<p>PM 1 Placemaking To promote and facilitate the sustainable development of a high-quality built environment where there is a distinctive sense of place in attractive streets, spaces, and neighbourhoods that are accessible and safe places for all members of the community to meet and socialise.</p>

		<p>PM 2 Regeneration To prioritise projects and proposals which will result in both social and economic rejuvenation and regeneration within towns and villages. The Planning Authority will leverage the variety of funds available including LIHAF, Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds, Climate Activation Fund and Disruptive Technologies Fund in pursuance of this objective.</p> <p>PM 3 Town and Village Centre Management Plans To promote the preparation of town and village centre management plans across the county that accord with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>CGR 2 Regeneration To promote the redevelopment and renewal of areas in towns and villages</p> <p>CGR 8 Town and Village Centre To encourage and support a range of appropriate uses in town and village centres that will assist in the regeneration and reuse of vacant and under-utilised buildings and land and will re-energise the town and village centres, subject to a high standard of development being achieved.</p> <p>CGR 9 Delivering Improved Public Realm Provide for a high-quality public realm and public spaces in towns and villages by promoting quality design that accommodates creative patterns of use having regard to the physical, cultural, and social identities of individual settlements.</p> <p>CGR 10 Public Realm Strategy Consider the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy for County Galway within the lifetime of the Development Plan as resources permit.</p> <p>CGR 13 Town Centre First It will be a Policy Objective of Galway County Council to actively promote town and village renewal schemes and initiatives across County Galway including the Town Centre First Policy and Collaborative Town Centre Health Checks in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development</p>
<p>Goal 5</p>	<p>SCO 5.1 Increase community and business involvement in environmental action and the reduction of Galway County's carbon footprint.</p>	<p>WM 8 Sustainable Waste Management Practices Promote and facilitate communities to become involved in environmental awareness activities and community based recycling initiatives or environmental management initiatives that will lead to local sustainable waste management practices.</p> <p>AQ 4 Air Purification Galway County Council shall encourage landscaping and deciduous tree planting in an environmentally sensitive manner within towns and villages as a means of air purification, the filtering of suspended particles and the improvement of their micro-climate.</p> <p>CC2 Transition to a low carbon, climate-resilient society It is a policy objective of the Planning Authority to support the transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency.</p> <p>CC3 County Galway Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 To implement the County Galway Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 as appropriate.</p>
	<p>SEDO 5.2 Ensuring a Just Transition in Galway County.</p>	<p>P1 Ensure that peatland areas which are designated (or proposed for designation) as NHAs, SACs or SPAs are conserved for their ecological, climate regulation, education and culture, archaeological potential including any ancient walkways (together) through bogs.</p> <p>P2 Work in partnership with relevant stakeholders on all suitable peatland sites to demonstrate best practice in sustainable peatland conservation, management and restoration techniques and to promote their heritage and educational value subject to Ecological Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening, as appropriate.</p>

		<p>P3 Seek to support relevant agencies such as Bord na Mona in advancing rehabilitation works for the peatlands and related infrastructure, to provide for the future sustainable and environmentally sensitive use of peatlands sites including for amenity purposes. CC7 Support the delivery of sustainable development projects under the European Green Deal and utilise the Climate Action Fund/ Just Transition Fund established under the National Development Plan to encourage public and private climate mitigation and adaptation projects in line with criteria set out by the Fund at that time.</p>
	<p>SEDO 5.3 Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity throughout the County</p>	<p>WS 2 Collaborate with Irish Water and the Group Water Federation Scheme to protect, conserve and enhance all existing and potential water resources in the County to ensure compliance with the European Union (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 (as amended) and compliance of water supplies with the parameters identified in these Regulations.</p> <p>CWS 1 To ensure all developments incorporate water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply.</p> <p>NHB 1 Support the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural heritage and biodiversity, including the protection of the integrity of European sites, that form part of the Natura 2000 network, the protection of Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Wild Fowl Sanctuaries (and other designated sites including any future designations) and the promotion of the development of a green/ ecological network.</p> <p>NHB 5 Support the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity in non-designated sites, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, semi-natural grasslands, rivers, streams, natural springs, wetlands, stonewalls, geological and geo-morphological systems, other landscape features and associated wildlife areas where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>NHB 6 Support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Heritage Plan 2030, the National Biodiversity Plan, the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and the National Peatlands Strategy and any such plans and strategies during the lifetime of this plan.</p> <p>NHB 8 Facilitate increased awareness of the County’s biodiversity and natural heritage through the provision of information to landowners and the community generally, in cooperation with statutory and other partners.</p> <p>UGG 1 To continue to work in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to facilitate and support the ongoing work of the Joyce Country and Western Lakes aspiring Geopark and its application for full UNESCO Global Geopark status. Support initiatives in relation to the Burren Lowlands, The Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark that relate to the county.</p>
	<p>SEDO 5.4 Develop Galway's green economy, circular economy and sustainable energy future.</p>	<p>EDU 1 Facilitate the provision of primary, second-level, third-level, vocational, outreach, research, adult and further educational facilities, lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning to meet the needs of the County. Multiuse facilities which can accommodate both educational and childcare facilities are also encouraged.</p> <p>EDU 2 (b) Recognise that new residential communities can generate demand for additional school places and that it is vital to the process of supporting sustainable communities, that the necessary increased capacity in school facilities, either in the form of new schools, or the expansion of existing schools, is supported.</p> <p>EDU 4 Support the development of the Connaught-Ulster Technological University to deliver a broad range of high-quality dedicated Higher Education and training in each associated campus in the Region.</p>

Goal 6	<p>SCO 6.1 Promote and support increased and equitable access to and engagement with education, training and lifelong learning opportunities.</p>	<p>SCO 1 Support the continued provision of employment investment across County Galway in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>SCO 2 The Plan will seek to retain the relationship created with FDI's in recent years by identifying appropriate sites and conditions for these international companies to locate and develop in Galway.</p> <p>SCO 3 Support the development of the agri-food industry and rural diversification in a sustainable manner across County Galway facilitating research and development where appropriate.</p> <p>SCO 4 Support the development of ag-innovation clusters in County Galway encouraging improved links between farm, research, technology and commercialisation in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>SCO 5 To protect and support the development of the gastronomy sector as part of our cultural heritage in County Galway as a source of sustainable economic development.</p>
	<p>SEDO 6.2 Attract new and expand existing key sectors and enterprise with significant employment, income and growth potential.</p>	<p>SCO 1 Support the continued provision of employment investment across County Galway in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.</p> <p>SCO 7 Support exploratory research, pioneering projects, new start up businesses/industries and retraining programmes in conjunction with the development agencies and educational/research institutions.</p>
	<p>SEDO 6.3 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs.</p>	<p>SCO 7 Support exploratory research, pioneering projects, new start up businesses/industries and retraining programmes in conjunction with the development agencies and educational/research institutions.</p> <p>SCO 8 Promote the development of Smart Towns and Villages across County Galway to develop and diversify the rural economy and build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovations around smart technologies in energy, transport, agri-food, tourism, e-services and remote working including working hubs.</p>
	<p>SEDO 6.4 Infrastructure and services that develop a workforce with the skills necessary to sustain and be in demand in the emerging economy.</p>	<p>EL 1 It is an objective of the plan to continue to deliver and enhance key employment locations and supporting infrastructure within the county. Economic development will be promoted within locations listed in Table 5.4 in order to secure the county's continued economic development.</p> <p>SCO 8 Promote the development of Smart Towns and Villages across County Galway to develop and diversify the rural economy and build on local enterprise and infrastructure assets to drive innovations around smart technologies in energy, transport, agri-food, tourism, e-services and remote working including working hubs.</p>
	<p>SEDO 6.5 Develop and foster an environment conducive to innovation, enterprise, and entrepreneurship, including community and social enterprise initiatives.</p>	<p>ES 1 Support the preparation of an Economic Development Strategy for County Galway.</p> <p>SCO 7 Support exploratory research, pioneering projects, new start up businesses/industries and retraining programmes in conjunction with the development agencies and educational/research institutions.</p>

D. Alignment of the Galway County LECP to the RSES for the NWRA

LECP HIGH LEVEL GOALS	NWRA RSES REGIONAL POLICY OBJECTIVES (RPO)	
<p>Goal 1: Active, healthy and safe communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 5.19: The Assembly supports the further development of Greenways as part of the Outdoor Recreational Plan for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland 2017-2021, as part of an overall improvement of facilities to enhance health and wellbeing across society. RPO 6.50 Continue to encourage Active Travel initiatives and where possible leverage technology and digital platforms to enhance the delivery of cycleway and walking infrastructure, particularly in our urban centres. RPO 7.8 To support the implementation of the objectives of Sláinte Care, including the development of a Single Tier Health Service, and the advancement of Primary Care Centres in our Urban Places. RPO 7.9 Promote the provision of high-quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open spaces and promote linkage with social, cultural and heritage sites and buildings. In this process prioritise access for walking and cycling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 7.10 Support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of healthcare facilities to all sections of the community, at appropriate locations, with good public transport links, parking and accessible facilities. RPO 7.11 Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan and the National Obesity Plan through integration with planning policy. RPO 7.13 Aim to make this region an Age-Friendly one by working with constituent Planning Authorities and recognising the demographic challenges that face the region and ensure the provision of suitable facilities and services at appropriate locations. RPO 7.15: Encourage multi-agency approaches for delivering the health, social care, education, and community services needed by growing, diverse or isolated communities.
<p>Goal 2: Equitable, inclusive and engaged communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 6.58 Use digital platforms to enable improved communication and engagement between citizens and local authorities including fostering the capacity for the community to influenced decision-making. RPO 7.2 Support disadvantaged communities facing particular barriers to employment, including actively marketing vacancies that are relevant to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 7.12 Ensure local planning, housing, transport/ accessibility and leisure policies are developed with a focus on meeting the needs and opportunities of an ageing population and people with disabilities and younger persons. RPO 7.13 Aim to make this region an Age-Friendly one by working with constituent Planning Authorities and recognising the demographic challenges that face the region and ensure the provision of suitable facilities and services at appropriate locations.
<p>Goal 3: A County that celebrates its unique cultural identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 4.3 To support the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs) within the Northern and Western Region, to underpin the overarching regional tourism benefits and to promote the natural and cultural assets of the region. RPO 4.4 That the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) touring network and visitor attractions within the region shall be upgraded and improved to cater for the growth in visitor cars, buses, and cyclists using the route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 4.5 To enhance access to our tourist assets, including the development of a Coastal Walking/ Cycling Route along the Western Seaboard, which extends generally along the Route of the WAW, and incorporates existing resources, such as beaches, ports, harbours, piers and marinas. This coastal route to be subject to a route option analysis, and feasibility study in Counties Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. Stakeholders will include Fáilte Ireland, NWRA, the relevant local authorities and the public. RPO 5.8 Promote, enhance and protect the linguistic, cultural and heritage value of our Gaeltacht Communities. This shall include development and implementation of Language Plans as the key Planning Framework and the development of the Gaeltacht brand as a tool to provide a competitive advantage. RPO 5.13 Protect, enhance and harness the potential of the region's cultural and heritage assets.
<p>Goal 4: An accessible County with thriving urban and rural settlements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 3.1 Develop urban places of regional-scale through delivering significant compact growth in Key Towns; and developing derelict and underutilised sites, with an initial focus within town cores. (Tuam and Ballinasloe) RPO 3.2 (a) Deliver at least 50% of all new city homes targeted in the Galway MASP, within the existing built-up footprint of Galway City and suburbs. (b) Deliver at least 40% of all new housing targeted in the Regional Growth Centres, within the existing built-up footprint. (c) Deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements with a population of at least 1,500 (other than the Galway MASP and the Regional Growth Centres), within the existing built-up footprints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RPO 3.3 Deliver at least 20% of all new housing in rural areas on brownfield sites. RPO 4.6 To ensure provision is made for the expansion in accommodation and facilities within Destination Towns. Supporting infrastructural investment will also be provided, including improvements to the public realm, transport links, accommodation, night-time economy and the sustainable development of our natural and built heritage. RPO 4.7 To establish potential tourist and amenity attractions of scale in the Cavan/Monaghan region, in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and the relevant local authorities. RPO 6.60 To assist in the establishment of New 'Technology and Innovation Poles' (TIPs) - encouraged in our Metropolitan and Regional Growth centres.

<p>Goal 5: A Sustainable and climate-resilient County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 3.5 Identify and develop quality green infrastructure, within and adjacent to City, Regional Growth Centres and Key Towns. • RPO 5.1 The Assembly will support through CARO and Local Authorities the preparation and implementation of Local Climate Strategies which will, inter alia, address vulnerability to climate risks and provide prioritised actions in accordance with the guiding principles of the National Adaptation Framework. • RPO 5.2 (a) Protect manage and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of our Landscapes and seascapes. (b) The Assembly supports co-operation and co-ordination between Local Authorities in determining landscape character along their borders. A targeted review should be undertaken to ensure consistency in classification and policy in adjoining areas of similar character. The NWRA will assist in collaboration and coordination. (c) Following the completion of the National Landscape Character Assessment, and any associated statutory Guidelines, the Regional Assembly shall prepare a Regional Landscape Character Assessment to promote improved landscape management and designation. • RPO 5.4 Encourage the prioritisation of Site-Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) for all sites of Conservation Value, designated in EU Directive (i.e. SACs, SPAs) to integrate with the development objectives of this Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 5.18 The Regional Assembly shall collaborate with Local Authorities, Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, DTAS, and other relevant stakeholders in developing an integrated network of Greenways across the region's catchments. To support, and enable the development of sustainable Greenway projects, the NWRA will encourage and promote: (a) The advancement and growth of Greenways through several Key National and Regional Greenway Projects, which are high capacity, and which can in the medium/long term be extended and interlinked across County Boundaries and with Local Greenways, and other cycling/walking infrastructure. (b) Prioritisation of Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to the region and are regularly used by overseas and domestic visitors, and locals, thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity. (c) The appropriate development of local businesses, and start-ups in the vicinity of Greenway Projects. (d) The development of Greenways in accordance with an agreed code of practice. (e) Collaborative development of Greenways and Blueways, including feasibility and route selection studies to minimise impacts on environmentally sensitive areas. • RPO 5.22 To protect and conserve our designated peatlands and bogs for reasons of biodiversity, ecosystem services, carbon sinks, areas of habitat importance, amenity and landscape value. • RPO 6.41 Promote technology interventions and best practice that enhance sustainability in public places, parks, waterways and building management. • RPO 6.42 Encourage policies that promote effective resource management through the application of new technologies, data and environmental management.
<p>Goal 6: A County that prioritises economic development and education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 6.45 Leverage the Smart region approach to secure EU and private financing to accelerate business growth and economic development. • RPO 6.46 Actively develop the regional innovation ecosystem's capacity to nurture businesses, artists, creatives and innovators and generate economic growth in key industry sectors aligned with Enterprise 2025 Objectives and NDP investments. • RPO 6.47 Promote a local and regional 'Open Data' policy and build a Regional Data Infrastructure platform - data is at the basis of the smart approach. Data infrastructure is a shared technological platform where data can be collected, processed, shared and analysed from across the region. • RPO 6.56 Enable access and utilisation of public data to improve planning, stimulate economic development, encourage people into business. • RPO 6.57 Within 2 years, the Assembly, along with WDC, IDA and other relevant agencies, will construct the principles for the creation of a Digital Skills Platform. This Platform will enable access and utilisation of public data to enhance planning, economic growth and encourage entrepreneurship and business startups. • RPO 7.1 Support the co-ordination of employment skills and support in the region through the alignment of needs as identified by the Regional Skills Fora to include facilities and opportunities for disadvantaged areas and groups in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPO 7.1 Support the co-ordination of employment skills and support in the region through the alignment of needs as identified by the Regional Skills Fora to include facilities and opportunities for disadvantaged areas and groups in the community. • RPO 7.2 Support disadvantaged communities facing particular barriers to employment, including actively marketing vacancies that are relevant to them. • RPO 7.3 Through constituent LCDCs promote vocational and occupational programmes and pathways for progression to a career • RPO 7.5 Ensure that the requirements of emerging sectors are reflected in the regional skills needs and resourcing.

E. Glossary

AGS	An Garda Síochána	GCC	Galway County Council	NPAS	National Positive Ageing Strategy	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ATU	Atlantic Technological University Galway City	GHG	Green House Gas	NPF	National Planning Framework	URDF	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
BECCS	BioEnergy with Carbon Capture and Storage	GRETB	Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board	NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service	VEDP	Visitor Experience Development Plan
BER	Building Energy Rating	GSP	Galway Sports Partnership	NTA	National Transport Authority	WDC	Western Development Commission
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	HEI	Higher Education Institution	NWRA	Northern and Western Regional Assembly	WRDATF	Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force
CAP	Climate Action Policy	HIF	Healthy Ireland Fund	OPO	Older Persons Council	ZEVI	Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office	HLG	High Level Goal	PC	Personal Computer		
CDP	County Development Plan	HSE	Health Service Executive	PPN	Public Participation Network		
CHO	Community Health Organisations	ICT	Information and communications technology	PUP	Pandemic Unemployment Payment		
CIS	Citizens Information Service	IDA	Industrial Development Agency	PyCCS	Pyrogenic Carbon Capture and Storage		
CNN	Comhairle na nÓg	IFA	Irish Farmers Association	RA	Regional Authority		
CSO	Central Statistics Office	IRBEA	Irish BioEnergy Association	RPO	Regional Policy Objective		
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee	JPC	Joint Policing Committee	RRDF	Rural Regeneration and Development Fund		
DECLG	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government	KPI	Key Performance Indicator	RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy		
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	LA	Local Authority	RSS	Rural Social Scheme		
DPAF	Disability Participation and Awareness Fund	LAP	Local Area Plan	SCO	Sustainable Community Objective		
DSP	Department of Social Protection	LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal		
ED	Electoral Division	LCDC	Local Community Development Committee	SDZ	Strategic Development Zone		
EI	Enterprise Ireland	LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale	SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority Of Ireland		
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan	SEC	Sustainable Energy Community		
EROC	Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre	LEO	Local Enterprise Office	SEDO	Sustainable Economic Development Objective		
ESB	Electricity Supply Board	LTACC	Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee	SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme		
EU	European Union	MCRI	Migrant Rights Centre Ireland	SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound		
EV	Electric Vehicle	MD	Municipal District	SME	Small-to-Medium Enterprise		
EWSS	Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme	MOL	My Open Library	SPC	Strategic Policy Committee		
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency	SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats		
FRC	Family Resource Centre	NDP	National Development Plan	TFI	Transport for Ireland		
		NEP	National Economic Plan	TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland		
		NOSP	National Office Suicide Prevention	TUS	Technological University of the Shannon		
				TWSS	Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme		
				UN	United Nations		

