



Joining Up Development

The Story of the INTERREG IIIA Programme in the Irish Central Border Area



Project part financed
by the European Union

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Cllr Sean McDermott, Chairperson ICBAN Welcome



I feel honoured as Chairperson and Board Member of ICBAN to be asked to pen a few words on the occasion of the celebrations of INTERREG IIIA Cross Border Co-operation 2003-2008. I have seen ICBAN make a big difference in its catchment areas along the border. Coming as I do from one of the 'weaker' counties, I can vouch for the positive change ICBAN has

made from its involvement in a wide range of projects such as Business Economical Development, Knowledge Economy, Rural Businesses, Tourism Projects and Community Projects. In the years to come, I have no doubt ICBAN will continue to be at the forefront in facilitating organisations towards major strategic local government led regional development activities and also in lobbying key issues such as infrastructure investment and look forward to the part ICBAN will play in delivering the multi-annual plan 2008-2012 for the region.

ICBAN Mission Statement

ICBAN will continue to improve the quality of life and prosperity of the Central Border Region by creating a dynamic model of best practice and partnership in Cross Border Development.

Pat Colgan, Chief Executive, Special EU Programmes Body. Foreword



The INTERREG IIIA Programme and the projects it has funded provide clear evidence of the commitment of the European Union to regional development. The programme is one of over 70 programmes throughout Europe that have been created by the European Union to promote co-operation across borders and between regions in order to transfer knowledge and experience, to take advantage of development opportunities and to address problems that arise as a result of the existence of borders.

In Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, INTERREG IIIA has benefited from the existence of a unique group of partnerships between local authorities on both sides of the border. These include the East Border Region (EBR), the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCEB) and the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN). An additional two

partnerships have emerged over recent years to complement the work of these they are the North East Partnership (NEP) and COMET, a partnership group of local authorities around the Belfast metropolitan area. These partnerships have played a key role in implementing the programme. They have ensured that the support of the European Union reaches its citizens at the grass roots level and that the aims of the programme are achieved. They have brought local authorities together in a dynamic way to promote co-operation in addressing common challenges and taking advantage of opportunities.

One of the fundamental aims of the INTERREG IIIA Programme was to promote economic development in cross-border areas through the development of skills of individuals and encourage entrepreneurship in smaller firms. In aiding in the delivery of the INTERREG IIIA Programme the partnerships have been involved in the expansion of over 850 SMEs in the region. It is testament to the success of the partnership structure that 3,186 people have received both training in new-skills and retraining.

These partnerships will continue to play a valuable role in the INTERREG IVA Programme, delivering Multi Annual Plans in their area. The Multi Annual Plans will for the first time include partners from Western Scotland, the new region in the eligible area. This “bottom-up” approach, one of the major successes of the INTERREG IIIA Programme, will continue in INTERREG IVA, thus ensuring the legacy of the programme endures through the next programming period. I believe as the INTERREG IIIA Programme draws to a close the opportunity should be taken to commend what the programme and the projects funded through it have achieved.

Over three hundred projects were made possible by the programme and the examples highlighted in this document give a snapshot of the opportunities that have been created.

ICBAN is to be commended in its initiative in undertaking this compilation of successful INTERREG IIIA projects. In doing so it is fulfilling an important duty of those involved in programme implementation to promote the assistance of the European Union in the region.

I congratulate all members, officers and staff of the ICBAN partnership in their important contribution to the INTERREG IIIA Programme and wish all of those who continue their work in the INTERREG IVA Programme every success.



Since its formation in 1995 the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) has established itself as one of three local authority-led and sponsored cross border development organisations. Our raison d'être is to promote cross border cooperation as a means of developing the central border region as a whole.

Together with our sister organisations the East Border Region and the North West Region Cross Border Groups we have jointly managed 3 Measures of the INTERREG IIIA Programme:

- Measure 1.1: Business and Economic Development
- Measure 1.2: The Knowledge Economy
- Measure 1.3: Human Resources, Development & Skilling

The overall aim of the Ireland / Northern Ireland INTERREG IIIA Programme has been to promote sustainable economic and social development across all of Northern Ireland and the 6 Border Counties of the Republic of Ireland: Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. This has been achieved through funding a vast range of cross border activities which are providing essential infrastructure and services necessary for economic growth. Indeed, ICBAN has invested €23 million in the central border region through the INTERREG IIIA Programme. We have funded over 70 projects covering a wide spectrum of sectors spanning from tourism development projects to robotics engineering to environmental education projects.

This document is an anthology of the projects which have been supported by ICBAN through the INTERREG IIIA Programme in the period 2003 - 2008. As we reach the end of this European programming period, it is important to profile and acknowledge the extraordinary achievements of all those involved. The ICBAN Partnership, Management and Staff are delighted to have had the opportunity to work with these projects, building partnerships which will extend beyond the lifetime of the funding period.

This document clearly demonstrates the excellent work and commitment of these projects in creating real benefits, leaving a lasting legacy that will support the region's economy to perform well in the coming months and years. We hope it will raise awareness of the excellent work that has been undertaken and serve to encourage newcomers to get involved in cross border work so that they too can reap the benefits to be gained from cross border cooperation, which are to the benefit of us all.

The INTERREG IIIA Programme has enabled us to build on our collective strengths and meet some of the growing demand to cooperate across the border for mutual benefit. It has helped to transform the border from a line of separation into a place for communication between neighbours. This in turn is supporting ICBAN to achieve its vision of the central border region as no longer peripheral, but a truly central region which has the capacity to play a strong role and deliver results for both the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland economies.

As we look to the future, ICBAN encourages all those who have been involved in the INTERREG IIIA Programme to continue their cross border cooperation and communicate with ICBAN about how the economy is changing, whether current policies are working and what further needs to be done in specific areas or sectors to support the development of the central border region.

Priority 1: Integrated Local Development Strategies

1.1

Measure 1: Business and Economic Development

ICBAN implemented 41 projects under this measure.

Objectives

The Measure Objectives were:

- To strengthen the SME sector to make it nationally and internationally competitive.
- To develop sustainable initiatives in tourism which increase visitor numbers.
- To explore and develop new market opportunities for the business and tourism sectors.
- To promote effective cross border business linkages in work areas of mutual benefit.
- Enabling joint development and marketing of goods and services.
- Developing environmentally and economically sustainable initiatives that exploit the natural amenities and safeguard the natural endowments of the eligible area.

Activities

The Measure Activities included:

- Development of cross border economic corridors and business to business linkages/ sub supplier networks.
- Creation of networks/clusters of business co-operation, enterprise development and R&D.
- Develop opportunities for business expansion through product & technology transfer.
- Development of sustainable and environmental tourism & leisure infrastructure/products and area based marketing initiatives.
- Identification of joint strategic inward investment initiatives and opportunities for exploitation of new markets.

The following are submissions from Measure 1.1 projects and how they see their INTERREG story.



Promotion of Quality Indigenous Food Produce Promoter: Euro-Toques Ireland



The Euro-toques Small Food Initiative, established in 2004 by the Irish branch of the European Community of chefs, aimed to bring together small food producers with local chefs, encouraging chefs to recognise and source the 'good food on their doorstep'.

Beginning with extensive research to compile a comprehensive list of chef/restaurateurs and small food producers in the project area of the six Northern Ireland and six border counties, the project took the form of showcase events and workshops. Beautiful and diverse venues, including Castle Leslie in Monaghan, the Organic Centre in Leitrim, Ghan

House in Carlingford, Louth, Beech-hill Country House in L'Derry and Nick's Warehouse in Belfast hosted these fantastic events, which became more than just a business development exercise, but also a celebration of the wealth of wonderful locally produced food from across the region.

The aim was to encourage chefs to source as locally as possible, which sometimes meant down the road in the next county or across the border, and therefore the area was divided in local cross-border clusters for the events. Chefs were always surprised to discover the excellent produce which was available so close-by and producers learned valuable lessons on how to communicate with and market their produce to chefs and restaurants. Prominent chefs from the region teamed up with producers to demonstrate how some of the produce could be used in the kitchen and students from local catering colleges had the opportunity to taste the produce and see their mentors at work.

Toward the end of the project, which was completed after two years in 2006, a website, www.goodfood.ie, was established with regional listings of all the producers who had taken part and been endorsed by Euro-toques chefs. The purpose of the website was to act as a marketing tool for producers and a resource for chefs. But of even greater value to the busy chef was the magnetised laminated listing of local producers and their contact details, which is ready at hand on the kitchen fridge when it comes to ordering time.

The success of the project is evidenced in the lasting relationships between chefs and producers in the region, which has continued to filter through to other chefs and restaurants beyond the project area.

www.goodfood.ie

www.eurotoquesirl.org

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€192,380

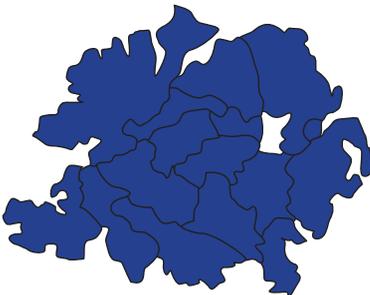
Total Project Cost:

€256,530

Number of Participants: 200

Themes Covered:

Food, Tourism, SME Support



Area benefiting from project

Image: Chefs Nick Price, Nick's Warehouse Belfast, Gearoid Lynch, The Olde Post Inn, Cavan, Martin Dwyer, Euro-toques Ireland and Noel McMeel of Castle Leslie sample some locally produced pork spit-roast at the Euro-toques Small Food Initiative Showcase Event at Castle Leslie, Co. Monaghan.

The completion of the new nursery extension at the Michelle O’Leary – New Hope Centre, Enniskillen was the final goal of the Manorhamilton, Enniskillen, Dungannon, Sligo around MEDS Project; a cross border community and trade union network set up in May 2004. The MEDS project focused initially on the development of childcare facilities and ICT employment in Sligo, Leitrim, South Tyrone and Fermanagh.

Since June 2006 the MEDS Network focused on working with the migrant communities in Fermanagh and Sligo, this work was greatly enhanced with the employment of a Polish Development Officer working out of the SIPTU office in Sligo and the setting up of a Migrant Support Organisation there. Over the past three years there has been a steady stream of migrants and their families coming to work in factories and other industries right across the counties of Fermanagh and Sligo. MEDS Network also worked with the trade unions and Further Education Colleges North and South in providing English classes for migrant workers. Working in cross-border partnership with the Transport and General Workers Union Education Partnership and the SIPTU Trade Union Education Trust, monies were made available to employ tutors to undertake this immensely important task that would help migrants improve their language skills, and in doing so improve their employability and help them integrate into local society.

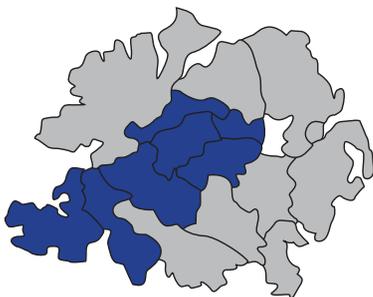
Since last July migrants have availed of the opportunities made available through MEDS building bridges between the migrant workers and trade union sponsored training programmes. The project also provided practical advice and assistance to migrants for example, those who wished to set up in business or becoming a registered childminder as well as working on a new economic partnership that will include Fermanagh Enterprise and Sligo County Enterprise Board and it is hoped that the roots that have been laid can be built upon.



Image: Ella Nawrot and Renata Klocek benefited from MEDS advice when starting up the Batory shop in Enniskillen.

Mr Hugh McConville, the Chairman of the MEDS project took the opportunity to thank all the staff who had worked on the project and said that although the project was at an end the cross-border roots that have been laid could and should be built upon.

Email: dkettyles@tgwu.org.uk



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€191,202
Total Project Cost:	€254,936
Number of Participants:	200
Themes Covered:	Social Economy, Community, SME Support, Ethnic Minorities, Childcare

Ballinaglera / Boho Tourism Partnership

Promoter: Ballinaglera Development Company Limited



Since inception, the Ballinaglera (Co Leitrim) Boho (Co Fermanagh) Tourism Partnership has accomplished a host of initiatives ranging from providing support and organising various local cross-border events such as the Lough Allen Festival, Dowra Fair Day and the Boho Festival to designing and producing new ecotourism packages featuring the region for submission to the Greenbox Ecotourism Body for accreditation.

Capital funding was obtained to provide a new commercial kitchen and a roof for an extension to the Ballinaglera Community Hall as well as for a meeting room extension for the Boho Community Centre.

The project has organised a series of meetings to explore the potential of ecotourism with tourism providers in both areas. Walks were developed in both areas which are now going forward for national certification. Web-based marketing for both communities was undertaken which led to the heritage and culture of the area being featured in a 'Ramblings' programme broadcast recently on BBC Radio Four.

Chair of the Ballinaglera Boho Tourism Partnership, Terry Gilrane, stated: "We've certainly learnt and gained a lot over the past few years – and not just in material terms such as the two Community Halls. People involved in tourism in both our communities now have a much greater appreciation of the potential benefits of ecotourism. We are learning how to encourage extra visitors to the area whilst safeguarding our natural resources. One of the most important outcomes for us all from the Project has been a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing both communities."

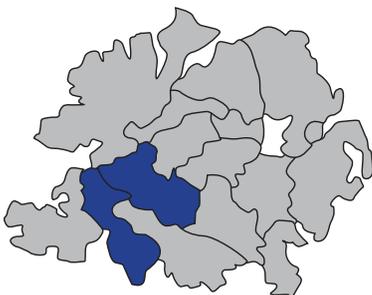
Looking to the future, partnership between the two communities is set to continue with new programmes and initiatives planned for the coming months as Gretta Farmer, the Project's Management Committee representative from Boho, explained:

"We aim to build on our existing relationships to the mutual benefit of both communities."

Image: RTÉ Presenter Ella McSweeney interviews local people during her visit with the Tourism Partnership

Email: info@bbpartnership.ie

www.bbpartnership.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€368,993

Total Project Cost:

€491,991

Rural Businesses Assisted: 35

Themes Covered:

Tourism, Community, SME Support

Extended Provision of LÁ (Irish Language Newspaper)

Promoter: Preas an Phobail / Comharchumannn Forbartha Ghaoth

1.1

This project marked an important recognition of the heritage of parts of the Irish Central Border Area and also of the growing vibrancy of the Irish language in the Northern half of this island. This was a cross-border project with cross-border benefits, which helped contribute to the critical mass of Irish language-medium activities being supported within the Gaeltacht in Donegal and throughout the eligible area.

Preas an Phobail already published a five-day-a-week newspaper in Irish called Lá; this project initiated its extension. The paper had been sold throughout Ireland but it was felt that there was a large potential market which could be tapped through the proposed elements of the project. A new product – an Ulster edition of Lá was launched in order to expand into the Ulster market of Irish Language users. The main elements of the programme included the production of a further 4 pages in an edition format (bringing the paper up to 16 pages), three days per week. This edition is tailored to the ICBAN region and provides the paper with more product credibility and broader appeal to the public.

The Project saw the opening of new staffed offices in Gweedore, Co. Donegal, creating 3 jobs in Gweedore; and also witnessed the creation and production of an electronic daily version of the paper (for web distribution). Lá later relaunched as Lá Nua and was the first Irish newspaper to offer podcasts.

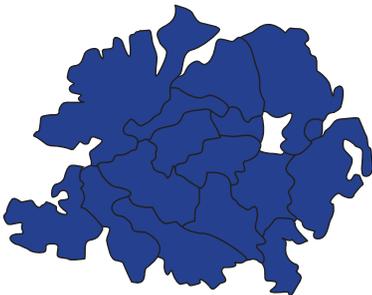
The project's goal was to act as a catalyst to stimulate a clustering of Irish language micro-media and other related businesses in the Gweedore area, to support collaborative marketing, facilitate the exchange of information, encourage reciprocal learning, increase specialisation and raise professional standards including that of the Irish Language.



Image: Hot off the press.

www.nuacht.com

Email: connlaog@nuacht.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€308,682

Total Project Cost:
€661,408

Rural Initiatives Established: 6

Themes Covered:
Private Sector, Media, Irish Language

Integration, Augmentation and Further Development Promoter: Errigal Fish Company

Errigal Fish, a Donegal company, which produce pre-packed cooked chilled fish and shellfish products such as crab, welks and periwinkles for export, is successfully holding its own in the Korean market. Despite a ferociously competitive shellfish industry, which faces increasing uncertainty due to rocketing oil prices, the company is continuing to drive its Asian export business. Errigal benefited from European funding which was invested in research into product development including technology transfer from Canada and mechanisation of key production processes. As a result, the company remains competitive despite a difficult marketplace and is retaining a healthy share of the demanding Korean and Japanese shellfish market segments.

Errigal Fish currently supply to the European, Korean and Japanese markets, where there is a huge demand for fish products from Ireland due to its unspoilt and natural image. The European Union INTERREG IIIA funding was invested in developing new portfolios in conjunction with other procurement and service companies cross-border to increase capacity to produce non-quota Shellfish Products for the future. It's an example of how the European Union is effectively investing in the sustainability of manufacturing in rural areas.

Errigal formed a cross border alliance with a number of cross-border companies to broaden its product offering by the addition of complementary value-added oriented Seafood Products. These products are sourced from the existing strategic supply linkages in Irish, Northern Irish and UK fisheries. All of Errigal's shellfish products derive from non-quota species, unrestricted by national or regional regulation and these are specifically targeted as the basis of the company's growth.

The EU project contributed to safeguarding 169 (seasonal) jobs and nearly 40 more in spin-off industries. Ultimately it has meant that Errigal were ahead of the market and prepared for more volatile times.

Mr. O'Donnell acknowledges the well skilled, committed, work force at Errigal Fish in Carrick for the company's continued success,

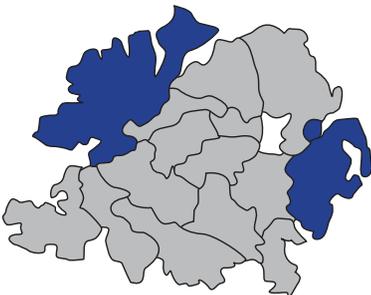
"Our agility to adapt in more challenging times is because we invested early and because of our skilled, loyal staff. They know this business. Errigal has cultivated a number of major customers, some of whom have been with us for 25 years; they trust our product and they keep us in touch with indigenous markets. Since we are based in a remote, unspoilt part of Ireland, this adds to the integrity of our product and makes us stand out from other producers in Scotland and the Scandinavian countries."



Image: Platter of Fresh Quality Irish Seafood from Errigal Fish Company Limited

www.errigalfish.com

Email: aodh@errigalfish.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€564,800

Total Project Cost:

€1,244,800

Jobs Created/Safeguarded: 169

Themes Covered:

Fishing/Marine, Economic Development, Environment, Food, SME Support



Erne Lakelands Tourism (ELT) is a community tourism project which has continued as a network to promote tourism in the border counties. ELT achievements during the funding of the project include the development of the Information Exchange Email Network post funding to promote tourism (120 members), a training and support role, newsletters, promotional website, attendance at trade fairs, an ELT brochure and the annual Calendars of Events and Cultural Fests. This successful work programme has played a vital role in promoting tourism in our Erne Lakelands area - Cavan, Leitrim and Fermanagh.

It acted as a Community Link between local communities, associations, groups, private tourist providers and regional and national tourism bodies. It is a unique community tourism network based on the ground, promoting tourism which links Cavan, Leitrim and Fermanagh, based around the River Erne and Lakes.

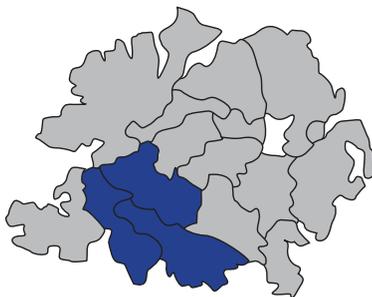
ELT operated an information exchange and training role, e.g. email network information exchange, website and training programmes. It also assisted with product development and in particular running a Packaging Course. Networking and Representational/Lobbying roles included issues such as transport infrastructure, Killykeen Forest Park and Open the Waterways.

The project acknowledged the changing face of tourism and in doing so were better placed to provide more activities for families of anglers, e.g. golf, good food and play/walk areas. It produced annually a Calendar of Events and organised Festivals such as Culture Fest which helped extend the tourist season. It actively promoted the region by inviting specialist journalists/agents to stay and then report on of what's available in the Erne Lakelands area.

Tom O'Dowd, Chair of Erne Lakelands Tourism stated that "We are at the crossroads in terms of tourism development in our border counties. We face difficult and challenging times particularly for our B & B and Guesthouse sector. However, there are great opportunities and potential, particularly in the farming and rural community and tourism sector to further develop tourism initiatives that will bring greater prosperity to our region. We can regenerate our region by opening waterways and managing the process in such a way that protects fishing interests and allows for leisure and recreational visitors to enjoy our rivers and lakes. A 'Wave Around The Erne' that benefits local communities, angling, recreational and cultural visitors is our ongoing objective".

www.ernelakelands.com

Email: ernelakelands@eircom.net



Area benefiting from project

Fact File
INTERREG Cost: €139,304
Total Project Cost: €185,958
Tourism SMEs Assisted: 51
Themes Covered: SME Support, Environment, Economic Development, Rural Development

Image: Selling our land - ELT stand at Trade Fair

South East Leitrim Farmers Group / Tempo Farmers Group Projects

Promoter: South East Leitrim Farmers Group / Tempo Farmers Group

Farmers in South Leitrim and in the Tempo area of Fermanagh took part in two projects the first was a three year project which the farmers are confident has delivered many economic and social benefits to them. Seventy two farm families took part in the South East Leitrim and Tempo Farmers Group Business Development Project which received €250,000 of grant funds and the farm businesses matched it with equal investment themselves.

During the project each participating farmer was provided with small scale funding of €2,000 each to implement a business development plan on their farm to improve the quality of breeding stock, farm health and safety and animal welfare. The farmers also met on seven occasions to share knowledge, experiences and develop an understanding and relationship with each other on a cross-border basis. The bulk buying projects of both groups were also consolidated through the efforts of the Project Co-coordinator Mr. Adrian Mc Keague and Administrator Mrs. Helen Faughnan.

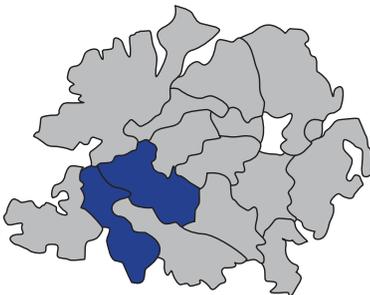
An evaluation of the project concluded that participating farm businesses have reduced their costs of production through bulk buying activity. The two groups of farmers have benefited from sharing ideas on production and marketing of their livestock and on farm health and safety and animal welfare on their farms. They have also become much more aware of the difficulties and differences of carrying on a farm business on different sides of the border. The groups have also established a strong cross border management structure to carry on developing projects and supporting the farmers in both areas. They have also built close relationships between the farming community and various public and semi public bodies on both sides of the border.



Image: Investing in the Future; George Smyton (Tempo Farmers Group Chairman) and his son Timothy on their farm in Tempo.

The Chairman of the Leitrim Group, Mr. Pat Monahan, said that this was a very valuable project as the funders allowed the groups to design and implement the project to respond to the needs of farm businesses in these challenging times.

Mr. Philip McDonagh, the Chairman of the Tempo Group, said that the project delivered very sound support to the farms while making it easy for them to take part and contribute to the success of the project.



Area benefiting from project

Email: selfarmers@gmail.com

Fact File

Total INTERREG Cost:

€414,902

Total Projects Cost:

€759,000

Farmers Assisted: 72

Themes Covered:

Agriculture, SME Support, Economic Development, Environment, Rural Development, Health, Social Inclusion, Food

Business Development - Animal Health Project

The second project was financially assisted to the tune of €164,902 to undertake a unique cross-border project, concentrating on business development and animal health issues, with the main aim being to improve herd health on farms and to reduce animal disease levels. The project ran from November 2006 to June 2008.

Initially, a business management tool was designed by Mr Frank O'Sullivan (Veterinary Consultant), to enable the individual farmers and their vets to record baseline data. The veterinary surgeons completed two reports on each participating farm – the first examining the history of disease and its cost, and the second identifying areas where diseases can impact. The project considered the whole farm system – examining the interaction of the animals with the physical environment of the farm and with other animals.

From this baseline data the local vets drew up an action plan for each of the eighty farms, highlighting and recommending areas which could be improved upon in terms of efficiency measures, cost base reductions, improvements in stock quality and most importantly disease level reductions. The action plan consisted of farm management changes, provision of mineral supplementation, provision of medication or vaccinations as required, structural improvements to buildings, or further investigations such as blood/soil/forage analysis. This was a preventative programme, involving an investment by the participating farm businesses in the future health of their herds. Alongside the farmer/vet questionnaires and on-farm surveillance and monitoring, it was considered imperative and desirable to avail of the excellent local laboratory services in Sligo and Omagh. The laboratories assisted with the initial screening tests to aid benchmarking of individual herds, and provided technical and veterinary advice to support the local veterinary practitioners engaged in the project.

The project evaluation reveals that while herd health had always been of concern to farmers, they had been much more likely to react to breakdowns in herd health rather than taking a positive preventative approach. Farmers who took part in the project reported that they are now much more aware of threats to animal health and of the financial cost to them arising from breakdowns in animal health. They say that, as a result of taking part in the project, they are better informed and much more highly motivated to take proactive measures to monitor and protect the health of their herds.

Farmers commented very positively on the value of the various networking events that the project organised. It is clear that opportunities to meet together, hear from experts, and exchange experiences are very important and worthwhile. In modern-day farming such opportunities to get together have become few and far-between.

The project also gave farmers from both sides of the border an opportunity to learn how much they had in common, and how their situations also differ in some respects.

Farmers saw the availability of grant-aid as a crucial encouragement to participate in the project. However, the real gains appear to have been in the development of awareness and motivation around issues of herd health, rather than any short-term financial assistance. Farmers thought that the real financial benefits of the project would become visible in the medium term. As such, the project was an investment in the future of their farm businesses.

Visual Design Promoter: Glenwood Business Services



Arts and craft have had a long history as a socially important activity in Ireland. Craft enterprises not only recognise the social importance of their trades but also contribute significantly to the economy on both sides of the border. Irish craft businesses are characteristically small in scale and are geographically widespread, but taken nationally, the industry is a significant employer. The craft industry's major cultural and social impact is as significant as its economic influence.

However the national and global marketplace for this sector has changed dramatically in recent years resulting in an ever increasing need to equip the craft sector with the information and skills needed to prosper in this dynamic environment.

Visual Design was a programme of activity designed to bring the craft workers of Lisburn and Leitrim together with the aim of creating a strong and sustainable craft cluster. The project was a cross-border partnership between Glenwood Business Centre and County Leitrim Enterprise Board and included a combination

of business residential and training workshops, best practice visits and business development events. Added to this the participants were given practical skills and marketing support tools including exhibition materials and an interactive website.

The project enabled 20 creative enterprises from Leitrim and Lisburn to participate in training and business development projects specific to the needs of their businesses. The craft workers and designers of Visual Design all work out of studios and workshops, the majority of which are rurally located throughout Co Leitrim and Antrim. Through direct selling, exhibition opportunities and cross border collaborations the works of Visual design has become more widespread and has opened up new markets North and South of the Boarder.

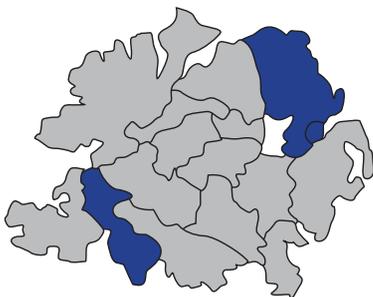
One participant Angela Hope setup her handbag company in 2002. Like many creative artists Angela found that working alone in a rural setting, though idyllic, could be isolating and frustrating at times. Through her participation on Visual Design she has overcome these issues and forged new relationships and have provided her with collaboration opportunities and enhanced her marketing and sales performance. "Working in collaboration with other like minded people allows you to develop products that you might otherwise not have thought of. It also means you can share costs of joint promotional opportunities and benefit from avenues of PR that might otherwise be closed to you", explains Angela. Of the 20 businesses that participated in the programme 96% stated that their participation gave them the opportunity to share the principles of best practice and 75% reported that the programme had contributed to their increasing sales levels.

Nikki Terlik produces her own jewellery range. She commented, "I was delighted to have generated sales of £800 at one of the craft fairs organised as part of the Visual Design programme"

Certainly the Visual Design Programme has created strong personal relationships and networks at an individual level and these have given rise to activities, which have benefited the craft sector between the regions. The investment by INTERREG IIIA has contributed to the sustainability of the craft sector in Co Leitrim and Co Antrim, supporting creative artists in the production of more creative, authentic and unique products that are design led and customer focused.

Email: info@leitrimdesignhouse.ie

www.intoleitrim.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€89,441

Total Project Cost:

€119,255

Number of Participants: 50

Themes Covered:

Arts & Crafts, SME Support,
Economic Development

Image: One of Project Participant Angela Hope's stunning designs



The main aim of this project was to boost the economy of the Glenfarne, Blacklion and Belcoo areas by promoting and utilising the Lough MacNean Basin which stretches from Northern to Southern Ireland through Fermanagh, Cavan and Leitrim. This involved employing a full time worker to research the full potential of the area to promote the culture, heritage and tourism sectors for the economic benefit of the local communities around Lough MacNean.

The partners of Lough MacNean Tourism Initiative, Glenfarne Community Development Trust, Belcoo Community Partnership and Killinagh Community Council celebrated

reaching its goals with a final showcase event in the Rainbow Ballroom of Romance. On display was an exhibition of photographs from the Lough MacNean Photography Class which provided a unique collection of images of the area for the project.

The new www.visitmacnean.com website was also formally launched along with a comprehensive touring map and brochure which was completed in conjunction with the local community.

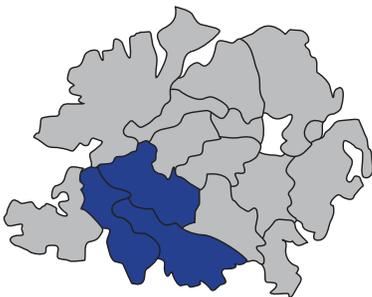
Speaking about the project, Committee Chairperson Raymond Doherty said: "This map and website are a first for the Lough MacNean area and are important tools in bringing the three villages of Belcoo, Blacklion and Glenfarne together as one tourism destination. Before this project commenced we were working separately in our own communities; now we are working together to realise our potential as a first class rural tourism destination".

Other achievements that were celebrated by the project partners included a piece of comprehensive research into future tourism development, hosting of events to promote Lough MacNean as a Tourist Destination, providing training programmes to locals, personnel and businesses to enable quality services, products and activities to be made available to tourists and also the successful signage project in the Cavan Burren, Glenfarne Forest, Belcoo Village and the Holy Well in order to make the amenities in the area more accessible - all initiatives that will further encourage tourism to the area and enhance the region's tourism product.

Image: The Ballroom of Romance, Glenfarne

macneantourism@eircom.net

www.visitmacnean.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€222,075

Total Project Cost:

€296,100

Tourism SME's Assisted: 43

Themes Covered:

Economic Development, Environment
Social Inclusion, Rural Development

Five Counties Holidays

Promoter: Five Counties Holidays Cooperation Project

A joint initiative between Horse Holiday Farm Ltd. in County Sligo and Ardmourne House in County Tyrone this project exploited the a niche market of tourism packages focused on horse riding and English language tuition. Both companies had considerable experience in this market and as a means to exploiting the cross border potential of their combined product offering formed a cross border company 'Five Counties Holidays Ltd.' with the aim of further developing joint tourism products, carrying out development in export markets and to share complementary networks, skills and infrastructure.

Targeting the Swiss and German markets and to a lesser extent the Swedish and French markets the project developed and implemented a tailor made joint marketing strategy focusing on the provision of horse riding and English language tuition. A part-time marketing executive was employed to implement the strategy, develop joint marketing support materials and to carry out market development work with agents in target export markets. The overarching aim of the strategy was to create tourism products which add to the sustainability of each partner via increased additional revenue enabling them to reinvest in their product offering and ultimately increase their market share.

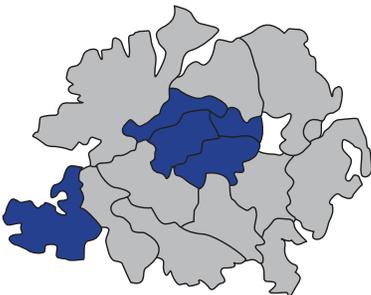


Image: European Tourists enjoying the surf in the North West

Marketing activities to the overseas market included Five Counties Holidays features in prominent publications such as Marina Tours – Germany, Shamrock Irelandreisen – Germany, SSH – Switzerland. Brochures were produced in German, English, Swedish and French languages. The project also attended prominent trade shows in Pferd and Gagd, Horse Fair, Olympia Christmas Show and Poard. The end of the project was marked with the launch of the website, www.five-counties-holidays.com.

Email: joemcelhill@btconnect.com

www.five-counties-holidays.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€38,500

Total Project Cost:

€77,000

Full Time Jobs Created: 1.5

Themes Covered:

Tourism : SME Support : Economic Development



Image: Rossinver Organic Tomato Relish.

Rossinver-Grass Root Organics' is a brand new range of Irish organic speciality food that has been developed, test-marketed and launched nationally with the support of EU funding. Atlantic Organics Developments Ltd is the company behind the cutting-edge new food range of organic porridge oats, organic tomato relish and regional organic sausages. The success of the company's funded period has resulted in organic oats and relish being available in speciality stores nationwide, and organic regional sausages on sale at Farmers' Markets across the North West from the Leitrim Organic Farmers' Co-op Mobile Butcher.

The EU funding received was split between two distinct projects that made up Atlantic Organics during its research and development phase; one focusing on Product Development and the other on Marketing and Development of the Organic Sector in general. As it became clear that the project had been successful and was within reach of commercial product distribution, a further award of INTERREG funding to the value of €72,497.25 enabled Atlantic Organics to make this a reality.

Atlantic Organics is a unique organisation which is owned by organic farmers in the North West and based at The Organic Centre in Rossinver County Leitrim. It was set up to provide an outlet for local produce and raise the profile of Irish organic food production. The three leading organic organisations in the region are equal partners in the project: Leitrim Farmers' Co-op, North West Organic and The Organic Centre. It is also supported by the Western Development Commission. Lucie Kennedy, Marketing and Communications Manager for Atlantic Organics commented: "We are delighted that we have been able to launch our Rossinver range of products commercially, thanks to EU funding. ICBAN has been so supportive as our business has developed into an entity of its own. Many organic farmers in the border region are benefiting from the publicity surrounding the 'Rossinver-Grass Root Organics' range, and we are playing our part in helping to increase understanding about what organic food means and why it is important for health, the environment and animal welfare."

Atlantic Organics was established to develop a range of organic products, and pass the benefits back to the local cross-border region. The brand name 'Rossinver-Grass Root Organics' comes from the townland of Rossinver in North Leitrim where Atlantic Organics is based. An important aim of Atlantic Organics is to support local organic producers, and each of its products has been produced with a focus on harnessing local artisan expertise and organic produce supply. You can find out more about the 'Rossinver-Grass Root Organics' range of products at www.rossinverorganics.com.

Added Value Organic Food Product Development
Promoter: Atlantic Organics - Western Organic Strategic Initiative

Post funding, Atlantic Organics has continued to be managed by the directors of the organisations which comprise the company namely Leitrim Organic Farmers Coop, North West Organic and The Organic Centre. The company has developed the sales of its products through the “Rossinver” range in health food shops and delicatessens throughout the Island of Ireland. Simply Wild has been engaged to distribute the products into this channel. North West Organic has taken on the

role of administrator relating to the products which compliments their own business. The directors of the company meet regularly to review progress and decide on strategies for the products. Atlantic Organics has engaged Siobhan Morris, the former Development Manager with the company, to carry out promotional and PR work on its behalf.

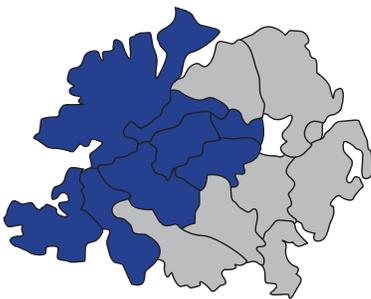


Image: Nevin Maguire Launching the new Brand with Project Staff Siobhan Morris and Lucie Kennedy

The company is currently working on an expansionary plan that would see it taking its Porridge Oats products to the UK and gaining a stronger foothold in the home market. The products are now taking pride of place in Ireland’s first Organic Supermarket in Blackrock and also for sale at Wrights of Howth shop at Dublin Airport. The directors of the company also give time to carrying out in-store demonstrations and other promotional shows throughout the island. The Product range has been extended to 4 products with a 3 minute oats product being added to the Jumbo oats, and a relish with “extra chillies” accompanying the original Rossinver Relish. The company remain optimistic about the future for the products and are looking for possibilities to expand the range taking into account the supply base of produce available that exhibits the characteristics of being regional, seasonal and organically certified.

www.rossinverorganics.com

info@rossinverorganics.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
Total INTERREG Cost:	€743,395
Total Projects Cost:	€553,703.25
Number of new Products in Market:	4
Themes Covered:	Agriculture : SME Support, Rural Development, Environment, Economic Development, Food, Health



Jak-a-Box was formed initially to provide research and development in order to develop a demountable system that will enable 20ft/40ft containers to be off-loaded from a trailer and set at almost ground level. At the time, the only product available to complete this same task was a large crane device using a chain mechanism to lift off a container, manufactured in Australia and costing approximately £120,000. Jak-a-Box wanted to provide a system which was much less expensive and available to any company handling containers and thus having world wide market potential. INTERREG funding

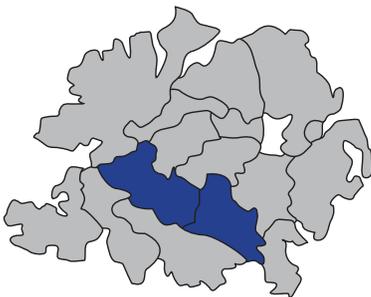
towards R & D and capital expenditure enabled the company to progress forward in partnership with Combi-Lift Forklift Trucks (Clontribret, Monaghan) to work on the design and development of the new system, combining their knowledge and experience of machinery and the industry.

As is common in R&D, when developing a product an off shoot can emerge and so came the idea for a demountable tipper body. A proto-type was created and soon after the product went on to the manufacture line. One of the first sales of the tipper body came from the company's website when a business from the Isle of Skye realised the potential of the Jak-a-Box systems and a new Volvo lorry had the tipper body fitted. The product has now sold all over the UK and Ireland including government bodies. In addition to the Tipper Body and Demountable Container system INTERREG funding was instrumental in the manufacture of 'Beavertail', 'Curtainside' and 'Box Van' systems and the company are currently working with the R&D Department of Invest NI developing a new lift mechanism for the demountable container system.

Image: The first tipping body prepared for Calum Morrison from the Isle of Skye

www.jak-a-box.com

info@jak-a-box.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€62,000

Total Project Cost:
€414,899

Units Sold: 100

Themes Covered:
Innovation, SME Support,
Engineering, Economic Development,
Research

Blackwater Natural Resource Tourism Promoter: Blackwater Regional Partnership



Over the past three years Blackwater Regional Partnership Natural Resource Tourism Project has played an important role in promoting tourism in the region, developing new products and marketing the council areas of Dungannon & South Tyrone, Armagh City & District and County Monaghan.

This period has seen the development of high quality walks, heritage trails, eco trails and the enhancement of activity based tourism. Particular highlights included the then DCAL Minister, Edwin Poots, launching the Blackwater Heritage Trail which takes you back in time to explore the hidden treasures of

Caledon, Glaslough, Tynan, Killylea, Middletown, Emyvale and Mullan and DARD Minister, Michelle Gildernew, launching four exciting new Eco Trails for the region which can be found in Gosford, Loughgall, Parkanaur and Benburb Valley. Recently published brochures about these developed trails let you learn about the environment in a fun and enjoyable way while exploring types of trees, wildlife and historical landmarks in each location. For further information, visit www.ecotrails.gov.uk. Due to the demand for activity tourism, a new cycling trail has been developed; now cyclists can explore the natural beauty running along the Ulster Canal from Maghery, following by-ways and country roads to Clones. In North Monaghan you can now enjoy walking the starkly beautiful Sliabh Beagh, starting from Knockatallon where you have a choice of four looped walks to choose from. The tourism projects have also supported works at the Coalisland & Ballybay Wetlands Centre.

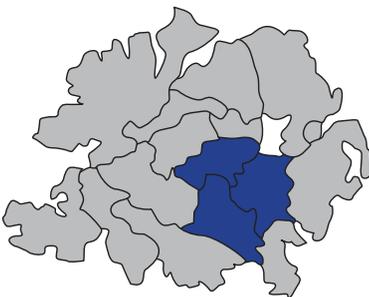
In addition to these physical enhancements, Blackwater appreciated the importance of promoting the region and developed a new website, one can go and explore www.visitblackwaterregion.com or pick up guides at your local tourist information centre.

Projects Officer, Julie Ann Spence, commented on the series of events held in the region which has clearly helped to raise awareness of the Blackwater, with a total of over 2,500 participants. "You may have taken the opportunity to Bike or Paddle the Blackwater, Walk or Run the Blackwater 10k, partake in one of the historical village tours, fish the Blackwater Classic and all else on offer". It was felt that these activities provided an excellent example of cross-border, cross-community spirit and exposed the many hidden gems that can be found in the wonderful region of Blackwater.

www.visitblackwaterregion.com

julieannspence@dungannon.gov.uk

Image: Launch of the Blackwater Heritage Trail



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€1,274,390

Total Project Cost:

€1,699,187

Number of Participants: 2500+

Themes Covered:

Tourism, Rural Development,
Economic Development, Environment

The Greenbox is a defined area in the North West of Ireland and is regarded as Ireland’s only developing Eco Tourism Destination. During the lifetime of this 3 year cross-border project the project has been able to promote the establishment of the target area as an ecotourism destination, a conceptual and spatial ‘Green Box’ containing environmentally sustainable products, accommodation and attractions within a context of clean natural resources. The type of tourism products and activity generated has a minimal impact on the ecology of the area, is of benefit to the community and matches the needs of environmentally friendly visitors and in doing so have encouraged economic development through low impact tourism.

The Greenbox Project has become the role model in Ireland for ecotourism, sustainable tourism and rural tourism development. When the project began in 2002 there were no coherent sustainable tourism or ecotourism policies existing in Ireland, yet now the project has been successful in promoting the area to the worldwide market. The website www.greenbox.ie has put together a range of Irish Ecotourism packages which has resulted in the creation of a strong niche tourism brand in Ireland. Visitor numbers to the site are encouraging, with a sample month seeing on average 5000 hits, with 18% of these returning.

The project trained accommodation providers for the upsurge in interest in the area and were the first in Ireland to offer the EU Flower – an eco label, a guide to greener products and services. It is a voluntary scheme designed to encourage businesses to market products and services that are kinder to the environment and for European consumers - including public and private purchasers - to easily identify them.



Given its record of delivery over the last three years, the Greenbox organisation has built up a substantial level of knowledge in ecotourism and sustainable tourism field and it is making this knowledge and best practice available to others in the tourism industry.

The Greenbox is a completely unique region and was a natural location for Ireland’s first ecotourism destination. It boasts unique ecosystems, an unspoiled landscape and significant centres of learning. These factors have contributed to attracting a high concentration of green and ecotourism products to the region and have succeeded in demonstrating the long term positive effects of EU INTERREG funding to the border region.

www.greenbox.ie

Email: info@greenbox.ie

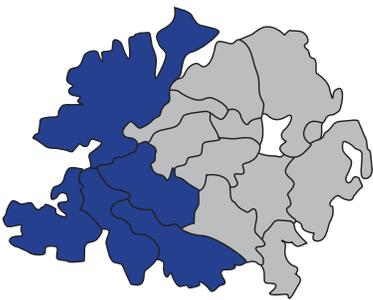


Image: Greenbox Members and Recipients of the EU Flower

Area benefiting from project

Fact File
INTERREG Cost: €723,550
Total Project Cost: €970,067
Number of Rural Businesses Assisted: 135
Themes Covered: Tourism, Economic Development, Rural Development, Energy, Environment, SME Support

Product Transfer Programme (International License) Promoter: North East Partnership

The Product Transfer Programme, which was led by the North East Partnership in conjunction with Údarás na Gaeltachta, has worked with a total of thirty companies. Each business was assisted in identifying an overseas partner with new products/ technology which was then acquired through a license or other agreement. This activity resulted in both the investment and expansion of each business.

The programme has received the approval of the 30 participating SMEs who collectively are likely to invest in the region of £1m in their businesses as well as increase their level of export activity. Údarás welcomed this kind of enterprise initiative, much needed in West and South West Donegal and the cross border business-to-business networking aspect of the programme was particularly beneficial.

Delighted with his participation on the Programme, Brian Armstrong, Managing Director of North South Marine Leisure, stated that he was able to avail of a range of specialist advice on identifying market opportunities and negotiating licenses and distribution rights. "We had already been successfully importing high-quality competitively-priced boats from mainland Europe but when my search for superior quality fibreglass boats to satisfy ever-increasing customer demand took me on an accompanied visit of the Grew boat-building yard in Canada, I immediately knew that the standard of workmanship in the building of the "Cutter" range of boats was of a quality I had hitherto not seen".

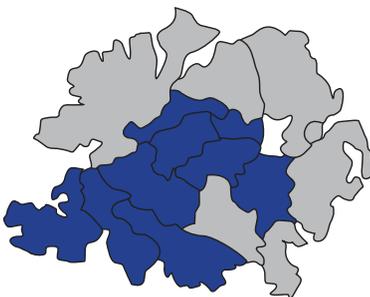
The new product has enabled North South Marine Leisure to expand its sales activities, attract a wider customer base and enhance the appeal of its range of products.



Image: Deal done. Brian Armstrong, right, with David Cameron, Grew, during his visit to Canada, with Cutter boat, background)

nepartnership@ballymena.gov.uk

www.nepartnership.org.uk



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€503,097

Total Project Cost:

€670,796

Jobs Created: 31

Themes Covered:

Innovation, SME Support, Economic Development



Image: Aughlin Cottage– Before & After.

The La Nua Eco Housing Project involved the establishment of a number ecologically renovated houses using sustainable methods and materials, part serviced by renewable and solar power as a cross-border tourism amenity. The project's aim was to use the natural rural environment as an economic resource, reinstating run-down buildings and converting this into a solvent business strategy aimed at the growing eco-tourism market in Ireland. The houses are spread

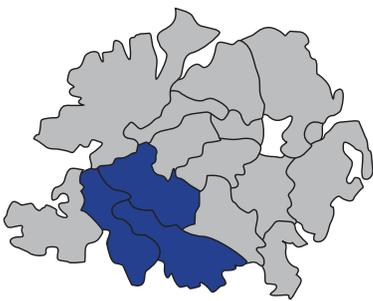
across the three counties of Cavan, Leitrim and Fermanagh, they are available for self-catering accommodation and can be viewed in detail on the website www.irishecoholidays.com

2 properties officially launched by SEUPB Programme Manager, Eimear Murphy were Aughlin Cottage in Leitrim and Charlie's Place in Cavan. Aughlin Cottage started out as a three roomed traditional country cottage over one hundred and fifty years old, it had a thatched roof with bog oak rafters and a stone flag floor. Later it was re-roofed with corrugated iron and concrete floors put in and for the past twenty years it was abandoned and empty, until the La Nua Eco-Housing Project and the EU funds brought it back to life. The house has been reconstructed maintaining the most of the original old stone walls and plastering them with a lime render and whitewash and infilled with hemp and lime mix. The roof is slated using Eco-Star recycled rubber slates and solar panels are used to heat the water and the main space heating is delivered from a wood pellet boiler system. It now has three bedrooms, two ensuite and sleeps six people comfortably.

Charlie's Place has four bedrooms two ensuite and sleeps eight comfortably. Built over one hundred years ago of stone and lime mortar, with a stone flag floor and a thatched roof, it was up to recently a small three roomed, iron-roofed cottage and was derelict for some time. It has now been extended with the extension constructed from timber frame with hemp and lime infill and roofed again using rubber slates from recycled rubber and plastic from the bumpers and interiors of cars. The windows and doors are made from cedar-wood, there is a half-door as it had when Charlie grew up and lived there for over eighty years. This property retains the old atmosphere and quaintness of the quiet rural cottage. One of the goals of the project was to reinstate the dwelling with minimum carbon footprint, on the site chosen as settlement by people hundreds of years ago, and it has clearly been achieved. Visitors can now stay in this special house sustainability reinstated with care and vision to be enjoyed and appreciated.

Email: martin@lanua.ie

www.irishecoholidays.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€691,181
Total Project Cost:	€1,267,296
Houses Renovated:	5
Themes Covered:	Social Economy : Tourism : Social Inclusion : Rural Development : Economic Development : Construction



Functional Food is a food that has added health or even medicinal qualities. Commonly known functional foods include probiotic drinks, cereals with added vitamins and spreads with omega oils. These all provide health benefits of one kind which have been added to the original product. Healthy eating is a growing trend. Increased awareness and knowledge is fuelling the public's interest and demand for foods which can provide real health benefits. The ICBAN Functional Food Project aimed to increase business competitiveness in the ICBAN region by being responsive to market demand through new processes or products which have a functional food value.

This initiative project aimed to enhance innovation capacity in the food sector through a four stage process of 'Information Dissemination', 'Audits and Needs Analysis', 'People Development' and 'Development Plans' over eighteen months and was facilitated by ICBAN and driven by CAFRE, Loughry Campus, the NI Centre for Food and Health (NICHE at UU Coleraine) and Food Technology Centre at St Angela's College, Sligo.

Twenty companies received audits on their products, processes and business management and a series of master classes took place. Finally, a number of companies were selected for a bursary to proceed to functional food development, either by product development or the adoption of new processes. Minister Brendan Smith announced the 4 bursaries, worth a total of £115,000, to pursue product development in Functional Food. Certificates were also awarded to 14 companies who attended a series of Master Classes on the development of their businesses with a particular focus on Functional Foods and new products.

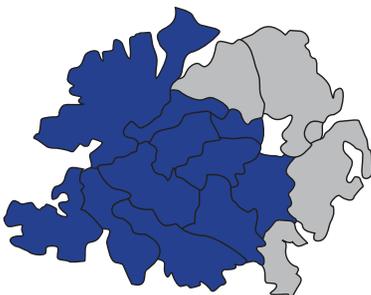
The successful companies were:

Irwin's Bakery, who undertook an analysis of the market to identify gaps for functional bread products. From this, the company developed two new products for market, namely a new bread roll and also wheaten bread. Waring Estate developed a cold pressed hemp oil, new to the market. Shalvey Poultry developed a range of functional cooked turkey products and finally Origin Seafood who worked on a range of pre prepared functional seafood.

Image: Caption: Michael Hartnett at Waring Estate.

Email: carol@icban.com

www.icban.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€303,800

Total Project Cost:

€527,000

New Products to Market: 6

Themes Covered:

Project Theme: Economic
Development : Food : Innovation :
Health

The Historical Buildings Regeneration Programme

Promoter: Castle Leslie

1.1



In August 2004 Castle Leslie and Caledon Regeneration Partnership were granted €1.2 million of INTERREG IIIA monies; this was the largest funding award granted to the private sector via ICBAN. This funding allowed Sammy Leslie to fulfill her dream of restoring Castle Leslie, bringing it back to its former glory. An integral factor in the planning process from the start was ensuring use was still made of the existing Castle whilst tailoring the area to deliver a tourism product. By doing this, all 28,000 square feet of the Castle is fully utilised and breathing life back into an historic property.

Responding to their guest's demands, work began with the creation of six more wonderful bedrooms, utilising space that had previously been servants' quarters, catering for those with accessibility difficulties which previously had not been possible in a house of this vintage.

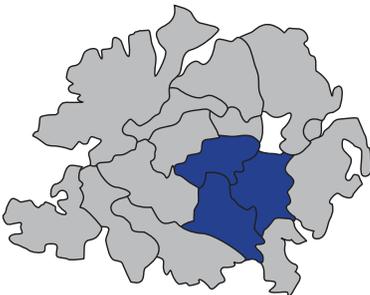
The restoration of the Long Gallery wing, incorporating the Conservatory, Billiard Room and Library opened up new markets by allowing Castle Leslie to cater for much larger groups such as conferences and events than previously possible, while also bringing back the original splendour of this area for future generations.

The opening of the new state of the art Cookery School based in the Original Victorian Kitchen wing of the Castle was the final piece of the jigsaw. Marrying the original cut stone of the Castle with state of the art facilities in the guise of their Molteni oven! Guests are once again given an even further choice of activities to avail of throughout their stay ensuring that the Castle Leslie Estate is truly diverse.

When Caledon Regeneration Partnership embarked on a cross border partnership with Glaslough Village in 1996, the regeneration of Castle Leslie has been just one aspect of the total investment. This partnership has also been responsible for furthering some major programmes in this peripheral region. The project has endeavored to jointly market the area, develop quality packages that utilise its strengths through acting as a catalyst for other resources likely to be of interest to tourists - specialist holidays, bird watching, walking, angling, heritage and archaeology, gastro weekends, etc. The 2 villages are about 4 miles apart and were separated by border closures for a long time. The area is made up of 'estate lands'; however, closure of the border, the railway and canal resulted in a lack of economic activity and this project used the distinctive vernacular heritage of the two locations as a catalyst for tourism development.

www.castleleslie.com

marketing@castleleslie.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€1,264,500

Total Project Cost:
€3,271,000

New FTE Jobs created: 19

Themes Covered:
Heritage, Tourism, Economic Development, Environment, SME Support, Rural Development

Image: The Long Gallery – Before & After

Fermanagh Donegal Tourism Partnership Promoter: Donegal County Tourism Committee



The Fermanagh South Donegal Joint Tourism Initiative developed a mutually beneficial working relationship between individual tourism product providers in Fermanagh and South Donegal by raising awareness of each other's tourism product through a programme of activities.

It was evident, from early in the project, that there was a great willingness for the industry to work together to capitalize on the synergy which already existed between the two regions. By working in cross-border partnership the project was able to promote effective and

sustainable cross-border tourism linkages to optimise expertise and resources so as to work in an effective and focused manner for a better return on marketing investment.

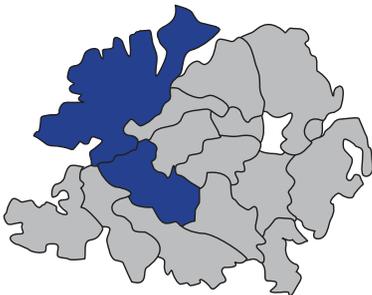
They developed a 'Short Breaks' campaign which increased visitor numbers – resulting in higher occupancy rates and customer spend, therefore improving the economic sustainability of these tourism product providers and addressing the under performance and lack of inward investment suffered by the tourism sector in the area previously. The campaign included activities such as joint advertising, print material, internet marketing, consumer promotions and familiarization visits to both regions to enable more efficient cross selling between Fermanagh and Donegal.

By developing cross-border co-operation through cross agency and cross-border dialogue they managed to promote real, effective cross-border linkages for the benefit of all concerned in this unique project. Relationships have formed and friendships have been strengthened during this initiative which will act as the foundation for future proposals in the areas of training and product development.

Image: Tanya Cathcart of Fermanagh Lakelands Tourism, hosting a familiarization visit

info@fermanaghlakelands.com

www.fermanaghlakelands.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€82,500

Total Project Cost:

€115,000

Joint Tourism Initiatives

Developed: 5

Themes Covered:

Tourism, Economic Development,
SME Support, Rural Development

The aim of this joint cross-border local authority project was to enhance the profile and significance of traditional seaside towns through support and enhancement and promotion of a sustainable tourism product and by doing so undertake Environmental Improvement Works in eight seaside towns in the partner areas and to undertake a co-operative marketing programme to increase international and national visitors to the area. This cross-border co-operation resulted in major infrastructural works being undertaken in five council areas north and south. The Seaside Towns Initiative was led by Sligo County Council and partnered with Donegal County Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Larne Borough Council and Moyle District Council.

The resorts that participated were: Enniscrone and Mullaghmore in Sligo; Donegal Town, Bunclraha and Bundoran in Donegal; Portrush in Coleraine; Glenarm in Larne and finally Ballycastle in Moyle.

Works in Enniscrone, for example put the finishing touches to a much loved family resort, providing soft landscaping and improved access facilities for visitors to the area. With its 5km of sandy blue flag status beach offering plenty of water based activities for the adventurous, championship golf course and Waterpoint Aqua facilities for family entertainment. A 19th century stone built harbour is the focal point of Mullaghmore and funding here was used to further enhance the spectacular views of this resort with its wild sweeping ocean and golden sandy beach.



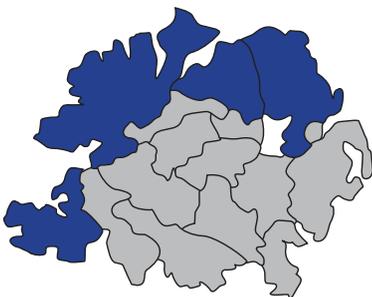
Image: Children enjoy the impressive sculpture in Antrim Gardens

Whilst in Portrush, beautiful Antrim Gardens were refurbished to make the grounds more accessible. A special enclosed walled garden has been constructed and the central walkway through the gardens leads to a magnificent piece of public art by local artist, Eleanor Wheeler and a small events space has been incorporated into the park, suitable for a summer band and children’s entertainment.

Ms Maura Hegarty, Project Officer, Sligo County Council praised her fellow partners in Donegal, Moyle, Larne and Coleraine for their commitment and support throughout the life of the project. She added that the new website www.discoverseasidetowns.ie would greatly support the enhancement works and this together with an intensive advertising campaign would raise awareness and boost the profile of the seaside town resort.

Email: mhegarty@sligococo.ie

www.seasidetowns.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€1,274,154

Total Project Cost:

€3,314,810

Tourism SME’s Assisted: 30

Themes Covered:

Tourism, Fishing/Marine, Economic Development, Environment, Rural Development

The project partners of the Glens and Lakelands cross-border marketing initiative included the Causeway Coast and Glens, Fáilte Ireland North West & representatives of the tourism trade in Counties Cavan and Monaghan, Tourism Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. The aim of the project was to create a cross-border network to enable co-operation between tourism development and marketing agencies and to increase competitiveness and sustainability of tourism businesses in the Glens and Lakeland areas of the north east through enhancing the existing infrastructure.

The most appropriate markets in terms of access for visitors, which the project identified, were the island of Ireland, the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and North America. Print/newspaper media, radio and TV advertisements, together with the dedicated website www.BrilliantIreland.com, were the platforms used to sell the very best of what the region has to offer. The Brilliant Ireland brochure was distributed through Tourism Ireland Offices overseas and via a dedicated office based in Dublin Tourism. A new photographic library featuring the best of the Region was unveiled during the project and gave a platform for journalists, media and the tourism industry to reflect the beauty of the Region through photography. As part of the project, destination brochures were also produced for Cavan and Monaghan.

The evaluators reported that there was a marked increase in visitors to the area through the statistical research he undertook on behalf of the project. In the wider context the project has shown positive results in terms of increasing market share of visitors, adding to tourism spend in the Region, increased booking and bed nights, etc. The product packages developed under the project have now become part of the mainstream initiatives. In addition, an excellent informative and interesting website was developed with an average of 3,000 visits per month in 2007.

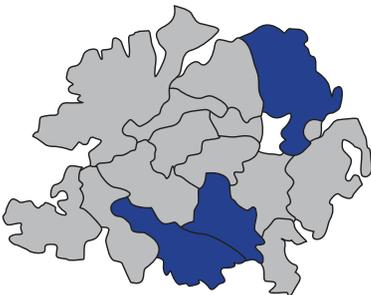
Don Wilmont, Chairman of the project, said "The Causeway Coast was delighted to participate in this inaugural cross-border joint marketing initiative. We had a range of networking opportunities with our Southern partners and the endorsement of the project by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland gave further added value to selling this Region in both the domestic and overseas marketplace."



Image: The Glens and Lakelands Project Team

Email: noelle.cawley@failteireland.ie

www.brilliantireland.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€393,750

Total Project Cost:

€525,000

Tourism SME's Assisted: 190

Themes Covered:

Tourism : Economic Development :
Rural Development : SME Support

The Gate to Plate project in which 40 suckler cow farmers from the M.E.D. region (encompassing the waterways of the Melvin, Erne and Duff) completed with participants confident that the project has delivered long term economic and social benefits for family farms along the border.

The Gate to Plate project was born from a desire to improve the quality of the stock on the small suckler farms in the Border region of West Fermanagh, North Leitrim, South Donegal and North Sligo. The project provided capital grants over two years and the capital investment programme supported the purchase of improved female breeding stock and encouraged the use of Artificial Insemination and supported a capital investment programme which improved animal welfare, environmental enhancements, good farming practice, business competitiveness, food chain safety, health and safety.

Additionally the project provided 'on farm' mentor support and technical assistance. Many participants have pointed out that one of the long term benefits which will ensure the sustainability of family farms has been the technical support and education in quality stock selection available through the project. Pat Johnston, who farms at Roscor, says” I think the technical advice available under the Gate to Plate project has helped me make ruthless decisions which have seen a significant improvement in my breeding stock. This has resulted in significantly better quality weanling stock for sale and definitely better prices for my weanlings. There is no doubt that this project has given me the confidence to invest in the future of my farm.”

Further to the capital investment, the Gate to Plate project has also contributed to focusing the family farms on profitability, the benefits of improved suckler cow quality, the need for improved marketing techniques to help achieve maximum price in the market place and increased cross-border co-operation. The severe climatic conditions and geographic isolation of the region, which contributes to excessively long wintering periods, was identified as one of the major common

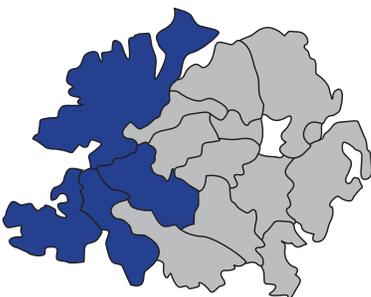
cross-border problems which affected the profitability of farms in the area. Participants agreed that the network events have helped to develop relationships and explore common problems/solutions experienced by neighbouring farms in the border region. There is no doubt that the project has laid the foundations for enhanced cross-border co-operation among the farming community.



Image: Participant John Barron at his farm in Donegal

Email: medpartnership@eircom.net

www.medpartnership.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€385,560
Total Project Cost:	€646,413
Farmers Assisted:	40
Themes Covered:	Project Theme: Agriculture : SME Support : Economic Development : Environment : Food : Health : Rural Development : Social Inclusion

Business Acceleration Exchange Programme Promoter: Acorn the Business Centre



Image: An Tánaiste Mary Coughlan admiring the range of ready meals at Lough Allen Foods

30 food companies benefited from trade development support, mentoring and networking under the specialist cross border programme, the Food Business Acceleration Programme.

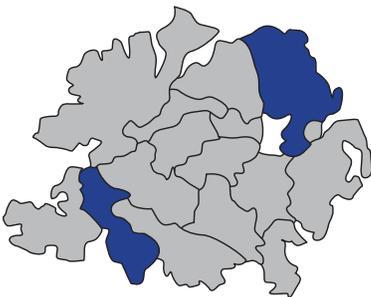
The project promoters – The Food Hub (Drumshanbo Community Council Ltd) in Co. Leitrim and Acorn, (The Business Centre in Co. Antrim) – are delighted with the outcomes achieved under the programme since its inception in October 2006. Fergal McPartland, Project Co-ordinator in Drumshanbo explains, “the programme has been instrumental in assisting the development and growth of 30 food companies north and south through business mentoring which has developed cross border & international export sales and has delivered a wide range of technical and financial advice to participants”.

Notable successes of the project include the launch of Glenview Foods, a potato chip manufacturer in North Antrim, in the Republic of Ireland market through a distribution agreement with a distributor in Co. Louth; the growth of Lough Allen Foods, a fresh ready meal producer based in The Food Hub in Co. Leitrim and the development of significant export sales in the Middle East for dairy producer, Fayrefield Foods. Raymond Todd of Glenview Foods said: “The Business Acceleration Programme offered us an excellent range of services which provided us with the support to develop the product in new markets and achieve increased sales”.

The promoters are delighted with the creation of 17 new jobs and significant sales development with the 30 companies over the course of the programme.

Email: ifdel@iol.ie

www.thefoodhub.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€200,000

Total Project Cost:

€266,667

FTE Jobs created: 17

Themes Covered:

Innovation : Food : Economic
Development : SME Support

Alternative Energy Support Programme

Promoter: Arigna Leader

1.1

The Arigna Leader/WREAN (Western Regional Energy Agency & Network) “Renewable Energy Support Programme” was designed to locally support and assist local businesses to include renewable technologies in their development plans throughout Fermanagh and Leitrim.

One of the first tasks of the project was to organise a cross-border Energy Conference, the aim of which was to springboard local businesses into taking the first step in considering Energy Matters within their company development. The first conference in Sligo boasted the first ever cross-border trade fair of its kind and attracted 30 stands displaying a complete range of renewable technologies and was attended by in excess of 500 people.

To compliment the Energy Conference, project staff were given the opportunity to develop a 50% grant scheme, through other sources to meet local business demands and are responsible for reducing their energy needs through the installation of technologies including wind turbines, solar water heating systems and biomass boilers.

Staff also worked in conjunction with Energidalen, Swedish Biomass Experts to develop training for the installation of Wood Pellet Boilers, offering local plumbers the opportunity to see first hand how Sweden has developed the technology over the past 30 years.

The project also offered an Energy Audit Service, encapsulating standard Energy Rating on the business premises which outlined energy saving measures and money saving tips to increase sustainability. Although contracted to carry out 4 Energy Workshops, due to overwhelming popularity the service was extended to all groups, business or community that wanted to learn more about Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency techniques.

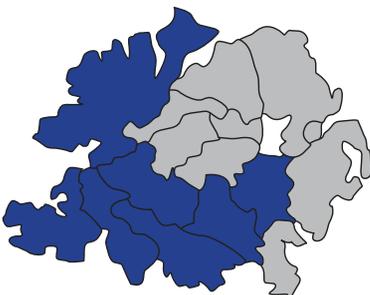


Similarly, prompted by the success of the first conference and as an event to mark the end of the project, a second Energy Conference was organised in Leitrim. Taking place over 2 days and with just over 1500 in attendance, the people from the North West Counties of Ireland stamped their approval on the need for a change in energy use across the region.

Image: Father and Daughter business, RenewIT, discussing their range of products with a potential customer at the Renewable Energy Support Programme Conference and Tradefair in Leitrim

Email: renewables@iol.ie

www.arignaleader.org



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€200,000

Total Project Cost:
€278,960

Conference attendees: 200+

Themes Covered:

Energy : Environment : Innovation
: Economic Development : Rural
Development : SME Support

Window on the West

Promoter: Soup Stone Productions (SEARCH)



The Window on the West project launched by SEARCH (Stralongford Education and Rural Community Help) and North Leitrim Women's Resource Group was delivered by Soup Stone Productions. The project was a cross border initiative aimed at raising the broadcast profile of the rural West while establishing Soup Stone Productions as a viable business. Critical to the success of the project operating was the need to build infrastructure and alliances within the border area and to promote the creation and development of networks of co-operation across internal borders.

This entailed providing training in Leitrim, Omagh, Derry and Donegal and raising the skills base in the area. It also involved a number of documentary productions in these areas such as 'The Last Mural', 'The Owners Called it the Mine' and 'The Writing on the Wall'. These were produced with a network of skilled workers from across the border area and Soup Stone now have a freelance database of workers from across Tyrone, Fermanagh, Derry and Donegal.

'Window on the West' used the media technologies not only as a means of reproducing facets of local life but also as a way of encouraging businesses and communities to explore their potential in terms of reaching a wider audience. This meant producing documentaries about aspects of rural life as well as promotional DVDs and adverts for use on web-sites targeted at SMEs, working with over thirty businesses during the last three years.

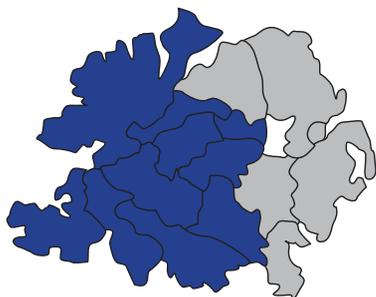
Soup Stone has also been making in-roads in the documentary sector. RTE broadcast 'The Last Mural' in 2007 and the sequel, 'The Writing on the Wall' filmed entirely in Washington, has been picked up by TG4 with a transmission date to be announced. Soup Stone is also in development for a further documentary project for TG4 and filming has already started on this.

Over the last three years the project has also completed documentary projects about a mining community in Roscommon, a special needs theatre troupe in Derry, Carers in Fermanagh, a rock musician from Cork and sporting achievements in Tyrone. "These programmes really give you a sense of the diversity of rural life in the West", said Cyril Kelly. Although the 'Window on the West' project is now over, Cyril is optimistic about Soup Stone's future and film production in the West.

Image: Cyril Kelly and Brendan O'Donnell in a break from filming 'The Writing on the Wall' in Washington

cyril@soupstoneproductions.com

www.soupstoneproductions.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€239,228

Total Project Cost:

€319,208

SME's Assisted: 30

Themes Covered:

Media : Social Economy : Economic
Development : Rural Development

The Community Transport Association of Ireland and the Community Transport Association UK joined together to manage a new cross border advice and information project, which was based in Stradone, Co. Cavan to respond to the need of local transport groups both North and South of the Border. Services were provided to groups and organisations throughout Ireland as well as all of Northern Ireland and the Border Counties. The project involved supporting local transport operators through handling advice and information enquiries, organising a programme of quality audits, developing advice notes, good practice guides, training materials and a training programme and improving cooperation across the border.

There were over 400 queries dealt with over the period of the project, 8 Newsletters and 6 legal bulletins produced as well as the new website launched; www.communitytransport.ie. Workshops were held regionally and over 200 people participated, with topics ranging from Manual Handling to Minibus Emergency & Evacuation Procedures. Under the Training Links Programme within the project, there were 100 trainees in up to 8 training courses.



Image: From left to right - Gerry O'Brien, Chairperson CTAIS Project, Ian Mottershead CTA UK, Gerald Calgie, Rural Lift for SW Fermanagh, winner of All Ireland MIDAS Driver of the year competition and Tony Regan, Transport & Mobility Consultants Ireland.

Additional funding of €15,000 was secured to undertake a Cross Border Local Transport Study. The aim of the study was intended to identify barriers to cross border local transport services, consult on the demand/need for such services, identify appropriate models from border regions elsewhere, report back to local stakeholders and the funders and to design and plan local cross border services.

Community Transport Advice and Information Service Promoter: Community Transport Association (UK)

Surveys were sent to Cross Border Rural Transport Programmes and a Workshop with key stakeholders was held to source the information. The results of the surveys, consultation workshops and feasibility studies clearly show that there is a localised demand/need for local cross border transport services by small numbers of people in specific and perhaps isolated settlements.

A Local Sustainable Transport Event was held in the Cavan Crystal Hotel as part of the delivery and conclusion of the CTAIS Project. The event gave an insight into local sustainable transport projects North and South of the Border covering such areas as Door to Door Accessible Transport, Community Rail Partnerships, Car Sharing Studies and Rural Transport.

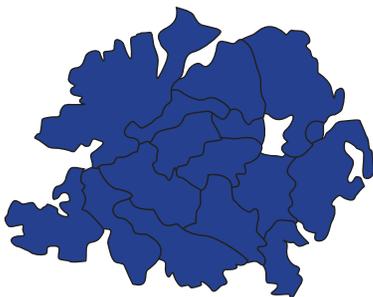


The day was wrapped up by announcing the winner of MiDAS All Ireland Driver of the Year 2007. This was the first ever MiDAS All Ireland Driver of the Year Competition. Congratulations to the winner Gerald Calgie from Rural Lift South WEST Fermanagh and also to the runner up Brendan Dunne from Vantastic, Dublin. It was concluded at the event and through the results of the evaluation report that, both projects were a huge success and all targets were met.

Image: 2 Speakers and special guests at the Winter 2007 Local Sustainable Transport Event.

anita@communitytransport.ie

www.communitytransport.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€210,861
Total Projects Cost:	€281,148
Publications Produced:	14
Participants Trained:	600
Themes Covered:	Social Economy : Transport : Social Inclusion : Rural Development : Economic Development

'Wave Riders' Factual Documentary Film

Promoter: Inis Films

1.1

The documentary film *Waveriders*, having won the Audience Award at the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival and critical acclaim at the Jameson Belfast Film Festival, had its North West premiere and the local audience was quickly caught up in good feel factor generated by *Waveriders* and expressed their rapturous approval in a standing ovation at the end of the screening. None could fail to be impressed by the skill and dedication of the featured surfers, the sheer beauty of the waves and the stunning images of the world-class surfing destinations available off the northwest coast of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which are now attracting the best international surfers to the island of Ireland.

The completion of *Waveriders* is the realisation of a long term ambition by Dublin director Joel Conroy of Inis Films who teamed up with Derry based Producer Margo Harkin of Besom Productions to create a highly successful cross-border collaboration. Inis and Besom are grateful to all their funders for recognising the potential impact of a film which tells a fascinating historical story while also promoting an eco friendly and visually stunning image of the border region.

The film reveals that it was George Freeth, the son of an Irishman, who re-introduced the ancient Polynesian art of wave riding in Hawaii at the start of the 20th century after it had been stamped out by missionaries. Freeth went on to transform and popularise the sport in California where he became the world's first lifeguard. History comes full circle as we see skilled Irish surfers link up with world champion Kelly Slater, pioneering Irish American soul surfer Kevin Naughton and the renowned Californian based Malloy brothers in order to ride some of the most exciting surf ever seen in Ireland. The story climaxes with a big wave finale using the newly developed technique of tow surfing as Gabe Davies, Richie Fitzgerald, Al Meanie and Duncan Scott ride a monster wave reaching heights of 50' off the coast of Mullaghmore on 1 December 2007.

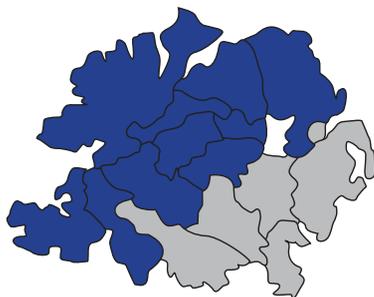
The many positive audience comments to date have included a comparison to 'Lord of the Rings' which attracted many new visitors to New Zealand on account of the beautiful landscape featured in the film. After its premiere at the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival, Irish Times critic Donald Clarke wrote:



Joel Conroy and Margo Harkin's cross-border collaboration has united a wide spectrum of talent, skills and resources to realise a shared objective – an award winning film which supports the growth of economic and social cohesion in the cross-border region through the promotion of discretionary tourism to those interested in a beautiful environment and world class water sports locations.

www.waveridersthemovie.com

Email: joel@inisfilms.com



Area benefiting from project

Image: Gabe Davis riding 60ft waves in Mullaghmore – part of the film's closing sequence. Courtesy of Mickey Smith.
www.mickeysmith.co.uk

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€250,000

Total Project Cost:

€736,752

SMEs Expanding: 77

Themes Covered:

Media : Tourism : Fishing/Marine:
Economic Development : Rural
Development : SME Support

Creative Tourism

Promoter: Erne Enterprise Development Company Ltd.



The tourism project, Creative Tourism, was set up as a cross-border project between Erne Enterprise Development Company and Belleek and District Partnership and based in Ballyshannon; the initiative covered the areas of Belleek and Garrison in County Fermanagh, and Ballyshannon, Bundoran, Rosstownlough and Pettigo in County Donegal.

The main aim of the project was to encourage tourism-related businesses on both sides of the border to 'partner' with each other in marketing their businesses and to package the overall area as a distinct tourism destination. "We are confident that

the groundwork has now been laid for tourism businesses in the area to recognise how much they can gain from establishing and maintaining links with similar businesses in their area", says Eimear Keon of Erne Enterprise.

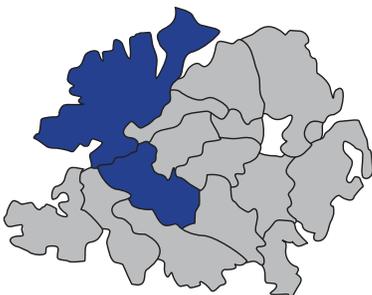
In meeting the aims of the project, Creative Tourism held two courses for local tourism providers called "Marketing on a shoe string budget" and "Partnership and packaging programme". In January 2007 they promoted the area at the Holiday World Show and the Outdoor Adventure Show in Belfast where they had good support from the trade. "Local tourism businesses were offered the chance to exhibit in our stand and there was such big interest that we couldn't accommodate them all", comments Eimear.

With help from 2 transition year students and 2 freelance journalists, Creative Tourism compiled articles into their own Travel Magazine. "While there was already a good selection of Tourism Brochures in the area, we wanted to do something different and felt that people would be more inclined to pick up a glossy magazine than a brochure", the promoters say. The free magazine covered 2007 and 2008 and is filled with articles and reviews about just some of the many tourist attractions in the area, as well as practical advice for people planning to visit the Island of Ireland. The magazine is available in Tourism Information Centres, tourist attractions and many other places including overseas Tour Operators aiming to raise an interest in this area for 2008 and beyond.

Image: Putting together the final touches to the Travel Magazine

Email: erneent@eircom.net

www.donegalbay.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€89,462

Total Project Cost:

€129,462

Tourism SMEs Assisted: 46

Themes Covered:

Rural Development : Economic
Development : Tourism : Social
Economy : SME Support

Cross Border Angling Tourism Development

Promoter: Leitrim County Council

1.1

This Angling Tourism project was initiated in response to a reduction in visiting angler numbers to the project counties, with significant effect on the local economy. Project partners – Leitrim County Council, Fermanagh District Council, Shannon Fisheries, DCAL, Leitrim Tourism and Fermanagh Lakelands Tourism with the assistance of Agri-Food and Bioscience Institute, Belfast and Central Fisheries Board, Dublin, felt that his drop in visiting angler numbers was associated with reports of declining fish stocks and reduced angling catch returns and the project set out to address these problems.

The project addressed problems by conducting new fish population surveys, collating data from surveys by other organisations, undertaking angling market research, developing angling infrastructure by installing new and developing existing angling facilities in the area and carrying out a marketing campaign, which resulted in the “Hooked” brand. As part of the campaign, a series of advertisements were run promoting the area in overseas Angling publications, attendance at angling trade shows across Europe and Angling Literature produced in many languages.

Another aspect of the angling project was the development of infrastructure works which was completed in a number of lakes and rivers within the project area. Angling facilities across Fermanagh and Leitrim were either upgraded or new structures installed to improve access to water. The development of facilities, with access for anglers with disabilities, was also constructed and a new disabled access boat officially launched.

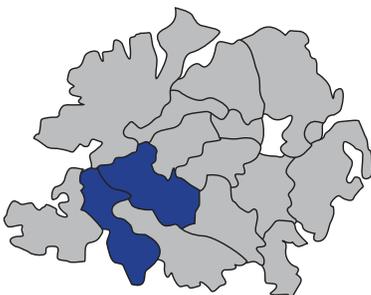


Image: Project partners at the launch of the Cross-Border Angling Competition

The final event of the project was the successful organization of a cross-border angling competition that attracted over 180 entrants over a very successful weekend.

Email: jgilhool@leitrimcoco.ie

www.anglingireland.net



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€328,800

Total Project Cost:

€600,000

SMEs Expanding: 6

Themes Covered:

Tourism : Environment : Economic
Development : Rural Development :
Fishing/Marine

Promoting Access to Coastal Tourist Attractions Promoter: Immeal Trá Teo



This research project, which aims to identify sustainable development plans for Antrim and Donegal sea cliffs, has shown that by implementing a joint approach can greatly enhance the opportunity for both areas. The Cliffs Feasibility study; “Promoting Access to Coastal Tourist Attractions” examines the potential of developing sustainable tourism at two sea cliff locations, The Gobbins cliffs in Island Magee, County Antrim and Slieve League in County Donegal. Both are incredibly spectacular areas, which many tourists come to see but up until now, have been marketed separately. The project was managed by Imeall Trá who commissioned consultants to conduct the feasibility studies.

The study took 12 months to complete and sought widespread input from local communities, local agencies as well as National Parks and The National Trust. It is the first of its kind to explore a joint approach to sustainable development for coastal cliffs from both sides of the border. The sustainability and preservation of the areas is a major priority. The process has proved very successful due to the commitment and participation from communities in Antrim and Donegal.

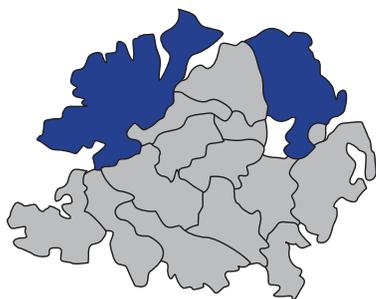
David O’Neill Imeall Trá speaking about the close relationships which had formed as a result of the Feasibility study said, “This is the future of tourism. The study has unearthed some interesting ways in which both the communities of Slieve League and The Gobbins can benefit from working together. We are very pleased with the enthusiasm we have received from everyone. There’s no doubt there is strong commitment for Antrim and Donegal to apply a joint approach in the future.”

“We are delighted that by pairing up, we can both benefit from the insights of this important research,” said Geraldine McGahey, Chief Executive of Larne Borough Council. “Both communities have gained so much from sharing their experiences and seeking ways of working together to develop these majestic tourism projects.”

The Cliffs Feasibility Study represents vast cross border cooperation from a huge number of organisations; Larne and Donegal County Council, Udaras na Gaeltachta, Fáilte Ireland, Northern Ireland Tourism Board, National Parks and Wildlife, The National Trust and community groups from both Sea Cliff areas.

The next phase is to develop a plan together which will incorporate these findings and promote the spectacular cliff experience in Donegal and Antrim.

Image: Representatives of ITT, Larne Borough Council, Islandmagee Community Development, and Countryside Consultancy meet against the stunning backdrop of the Gobbins Cliffs.



Area benefiting from project

Email: imealltra@eircom.net

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€72,000

Total Project Cost:

€96,000

Rural Community Initiatives Supported: 1

Themes Covered:

Economic Development :

Rural Development : Tourism :

Environment

This initiative which looks at raising standards, increasing online bookings and offering more activity or "themed" breaks has shown the way forward for the B&B sector. That's according to the Town and Country Homes Association, who led the project which part of a Specialist B&B programme. TCH chairperson, Ms Kate Burns says they are delighted with the project results saying; B&B owners themselves played a major part because "they were so innovative, and proved both willing and able to develop their business to meet future demands for "themed" breaks." Under the project, over 35 B&Bs took part in a year's training and support to help boost business in rural and regional areas. "The B&Bs got to know more about their own area by working with others locally to offer walking, angling, golfing, food and heritage packages. Now they can offer all this information to their visitors and they can spread their business across the local economy. In addition, they linked up across regions and across the border with each other to offer longer breaks for tourists who wish to sample more than one region."

An evaluation of the project has shown that all of the participants expect the commercial viability of their business to improve in response to rising occupancy rates and the value added by additional services. Other tourism providers in the area are also expected to benefit because the new product packages include services provided by them.

The project says that newly agreed quality standards for B and B's have been created and that as a result of intensive training, the specialist B and B's now use home baked and locally produced food that will leave a lasting impression of the region and the country on the visitor. "The participants



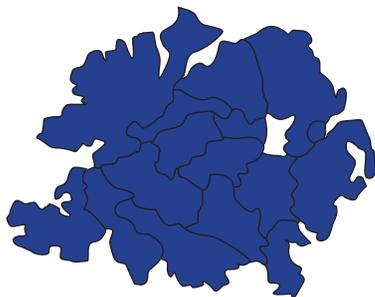
Image: Celebrity Chef Clodagh Mc Kenna demonstrates at the Food Workshop 2008 as part of the Specialist B&B Project

in the project believe that their capacity in IT, e marketing, food hygiene and safety, cost control and understanding of the needs of specialist groups had been improved a lot. Regional and cross-border co-operation has added value to their product for the visitor. And finally, the profile of the product has been raised through good coverage in both national and local media, including a special feature on RTE's Nationwide programme."

Town and Country Homes led the project in partnership with Irish Farmhouse Holidays, Fáilte Ireland, the Irish Tour Operators Association, the Northern Ireland Tourism Board and Tourism Ireland.

Email: admin@townandcountry.ie

www.townandcountry.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€80,137
Total Project Cost:	€106,850
SME's Assisted:	35
Themes Covered:	Economic Development : Tourism : Rural Development : Training





The Irish Traditional Industry and Heritage Co-Operative Ltd. was an All-Ireland market-focused consortium of small, medium, and micro enterprises. 33 members are located in Northern Ireland and the border counties (22 of these in the ICBAN Region). The Co-operative is registered as a not-for-profit organisation under the Registrar of Friendly Societies in Dublin and operated a contact and fulfillment centre in Falcarragh, Co. Donegal. Its purpose is:

“To support the growth of indigenous producers of traditional fashion and crafts industry in the Ulster province, Donegal, and bordering counties and thereby to contribute to the economic and social vitality of their communities, to assist traditional and sometimes threatened industries, often in deprived locations, to promote the development of new products, to facilitate contact, partnership and networking, and build upon a common purpose among producers representing traditions on both sides of the Border, to disseminate information and cultivate awareness, and to create and expand consistent access to international markets”

The Líonra Horizons Project's main aim was to build capacity of participant companies and facilitate a best-practice joined-up approach to product development and marketing, open new international markets on behalf of participant companies (research, testing, and entry) into the consumer

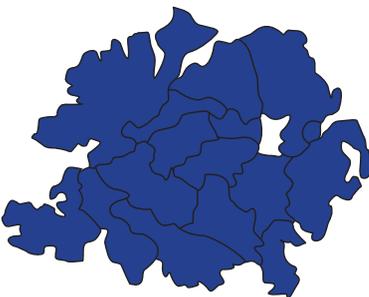


Image: Type of traditional product sold

markets of UK, Germany, Australia and the corporate market of USA, facilitate increased cross-border communication and collaboration among participant companies, create and implement a single 'international brand identity' for the project participants and the Co-operative; and to increase participant capacity in the areas of operations and marketing.

Unfortunately due to difficult trade conditions, at an Extraordinary General Meeting of The Irish Traditional Industry and Heritage Co-Operative Ltd on 18th April 2007 the decision was made to wind up the company voluntarily and the company was put into liquidation.

www.ancurragh.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€264,760

Total Project Cost:

€353,014

Members: 33

Themes Covered:

Economic Development : Rural

Development : Heritage : Training



The project has been based upon a cross border network involving the following heritage railways; Cavan & Leitrim, Downpatrick & Co. Down Railway, Fintown Railway – An Mhuc Dhubh and Giant’s Causeway & Bushmills Railway and has been concerned with the capital development, training, marketing and promotion of these Heritage Railways.

The project has been responsible for the delivery of new and enhanced locomotives, rolling stock across all four partner railways and in the case of Fintown Railway a 500m extension to the railway. The result has been the development of a safer product and giving the railways a wider appeal to visitors.

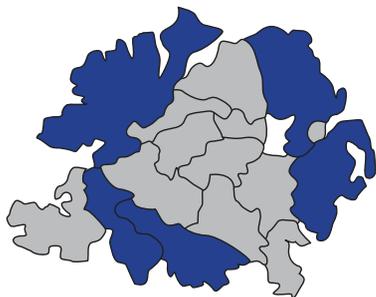
Training outputs have included workshops on permanent way (track maintenance) and has also focused on customer care and marketing. Staff and volunteers from all partner railways benefited from increasing their knowledge and subsequently applying these best practice models in the operations of their railways.

Attracting greater numbers of visitors and increasing the appeal of the four railways has been a key aim of the project. In consultation with the four partner railways the marketing brand “Ulster & Connaught Heritage Railways” was developed and used on all marketing materials. The outputs of the detailed marketing plan include targeted advertising, production of a dedicated brochure and effective Ireland-wide distribution, development of online presence via www.ucrailways.com and signage. Most significantly the development of the Ulster & Connaught Heritage Rail Trail encourages visitors to visit all four railways as part of their holiday or short break, indeed the 2008 visitor numbers are up over 30% on 2007 figures”.

The benefits of the project have been very visible to the four participating railways. Chairperson of Fintown Railway Oliver MacDevitt confirms this when he says “The project has been responsible for taking Fintown Railway and its project partners to a new level in terms of quality of product offering. Furthermore the joint marketing efforts have provided us with higher visitor numbers, one of the main legacies and success of the project is the willingness of the four partner railways to continue to work together to share information, expertise and also to explore future funding opportunities.

www.antraen.com

heritagerailways@googlemail.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File
INTERREG Cost: €442,875
Total Project Cost: €590,500
Heritage Railways Assisted: 4
Themes Covered: Heritage : Tourism : Transport

Image: Sean Quinn and John Boyle carry out track work on the Fintown Railway line.

Fashion from Fabrics

Promoter: Irish Fashion Industry Federation

A trip to Milan was one of the final activities of an 18 month programme designed to promote cross-border networks and relationship building for clothing based companies north and south. The Irish Fashion Industry Federation (IFIF) worked in partnership with its northern counterpart the Garment, Textile and Technology Association (GTТА) on completing the Fashion from Fabric business development. In total, twenty companies took part in the Fashion From Fabric programme – ten from the south and ten from the north of Ireland. Over the duration of the programme companies benefited from participation in a number of initiatives including individual mentoring sessions, trips to two international trade shows, and ongoing business training and networking opportunities. During each of the 6 weekend residential workshops participants received formal training from industry experts to support their ongoing individual mentoring sessions and most importantly, they had an opportunity to network and exchange business information.

The participating companies visited Paris for the Premier Vision exhibition, securing enhanced business connections and in some cases, national exposure and attended “Milano Unica”, a fabric exhibition which attracts over 30,000 international buyers every year. This provided local designers with an opportunity to access high end fabrics for the 2008 and 2009 seasons which were then unavailable in Ireland. Over 4 days the designers had the opportunity to view new fabrics, create new working relationships with international designers and exchange ideas with some of the biggest names in the fabric business.

The final evaluation of the IFIF Fashion From Fabric Programme confirms that participating companies have seen business relationships across the border notably strengthened through their participation on the programme, while business development at an individual company level has also been witnessed. Many participating companies who centrally operated at a local level prior to this initiative stated that while they continue to network and collaborate with other participating companies, further contacts are being developed through these initial relationships, opening up new cross border business opportunities and providing exposure for their companies at a national level.

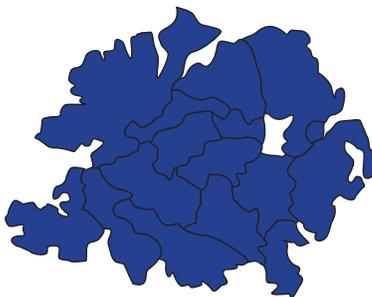


Image: Bronagh Flanagan with GTТА Manager, Mike Heath and IFIF Chairman, Terry Rowan.

Participant Bronagh Flanagan said of the programme; “The contacts I have made in the south are being used on a daily business to access new markets and I have hugely expanded my current list of suppliers which means I can produce more efficiently and creatively”.

Email: info@ifif-fashion.ie

www.[ifif-fashion.ie](http://www.ifif-fashion.ie)



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€364,500

Total Project Cost:

€486,000

SMES's Assisted: 20

Themes Covered:

Economic Development : SME Support



This project entailed the production of a report and action plan with the purpose of examining food sector issues of a cross border nature focusing on the North West as a research area. It has been compiled by the Irish Central Border Area Network Ltd. under the guidance of an intersectoral and cross-border food Working Group that engaged many of the main agencies and players in the food sector north and south of the border.

The need for such a piece of work emerged from the implementation of the INTERREG IIIA Programme. Subsequent to the completion of INTERREG IIIA, there

was an indication from participants of a requirement for clarification of the needs and issues facing the food sector in the border region, which could then be used to inform future grant aid decision making. It was also led by the importance of the sector to the economy in both regions and the apparent challenges faced by a small but growing artisan and Organic sector in the wider North West cross-border region.

A successful food sector is a vital component of the economy on the island of Ireland and is the largest cross-border trading sector. However, specific challenges affect growth forecasts, and the scope and breadth of the sector is such that a range of supports are required to meet the challenges of market pressures, the cost environment and international competitiveness. The report concluded that the main cross-border issues facing the sector are policy and its implementation, networking, supply chain and distribution challenges, human resources and training, need for greater levels of product development and innovation, energy and waste management and food tourism.

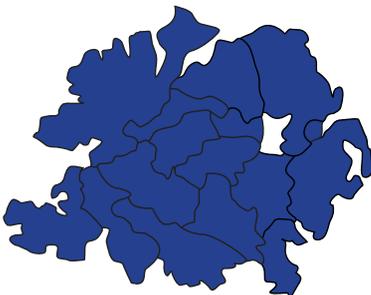
The report explored the very wide range of supports available through the various agencies, with particular reference to cross-border working. While it was difficult to cover the entire development and support needs of the sector and 'match' the organisations and programmes to needs, specific gaps in support were identified. These gaps included the need for more targeted networking support, widening of models to encourage and develop innovation, an all island approach to food technology capacity and support arrangements in respect of food technology centres; the need for greater food tourism development; sharing of knowledge in respect of meeting the skills gaps; and addressing current barriers to trade created by the border.

Taking the report findings an action centred set of recommendations and action plan proposal was provided for consideration.

Image: ICBAN has always demonstrated a commitment to the development of the Food Sector in the region

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www.icban.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€26,250
Total Project Cost:	€35,000
Agencies involved:	25
Themes Covered:	Agriculture : Economic Development : Food : SME Support : Tourism :t

Boho-Ballinaglera Farmers Network Development

Promoter: Boho Agricultural Producers Ltd

This project was promoted by Boho Agricultural Producers Ltd (Fermanagh) in cross-border partnership with Ballinaglera Farmers Group (Leitrim/Cavan).

The project's main aim was to stabilise and sustain the incomes of the members of both Boho and Ballinaglera Farmers' groups by improving the management capacity of the small businesses of the members of these groups and by encouraging these businesses to examine and achieve new ways of co-operating on a cross-border basis in marketing, business management and in reducing costs.

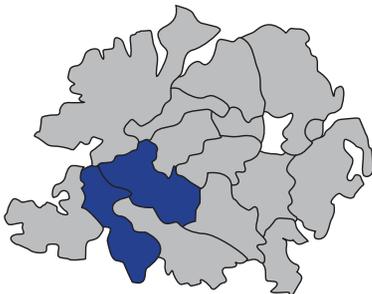
This was achieved firstly by consolidating and expanding the network and business networking activities of the members of the two groups on a cross-border basis. By providing business development opportunities funding to the members of both groups in order to examine and implement actions which improved their management and outputs in the area of stock health, animal welfare and health and safety.

20 members (10 Boho, 10 Ballinaglera Leitrim/Cavan) were involved and benefited from the project including in particular, the networking opportunities which allowed for meeting and discussion of each other's their businesses including best practice visits. They found that they could improve their management of animal health and welfare and received funds to make necessary improvements in their businesses and have increased their level of awareness and management of this aspect of their business in the process.



Image: The project looked at the area of stock health.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€8,763

Total Projects Cost:
€18,750

Number of Farmers Assisted: 20

Themes Covered:
Agriculture : Economic
Development : SME Support

Promoter: NORIBIC



The success of the Innovation Agents Network (IAN) is reflected upon as the programme, which has helped over 60 businesses to embrace innovation across Fermanagh, Tyrone and Sligo, drew to a close. INTERREG funding was key to the programme providing a one-stop-shop for advice on the range of innovation and business development support available for companies on a cross-border basis. The programme was delivered by NORIBIC and WESTBIC in conjunction with South West College and IT Sligo.

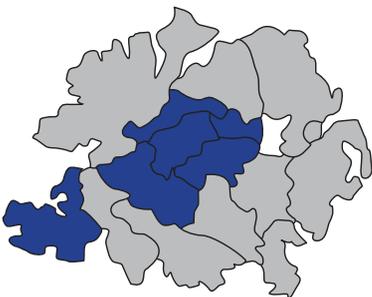
Through innovation seminars that took place across the region, awareness of innovation potential has been achieved and enhanced by sharing the experiences of peer companies. Strategic collaboration between all FE and IT institutions, government/enterprise agencies and delivery organisations has led to new found awareness and trust which has engendered an improvement of the business-academic interface and understanding of significant areas of non-competitive overlap. Improved cluster activity saw the development of new clusters and the expansion of existing clusters, improving constructive relations between cluster members, old and new. The programme identified that continuous research and development to identify new programmes and initiatives is needed, but without a higher level of encouragement and some structured incentive, R&D is in danger of taking a back seat when compared with day-to-day issues such as immediate sales and short-term production and contract schedules.

Clare McGee of the project offers her feedback on the findings of the project; “The numbers of businesses which the project has inspired and motivated has been very positive. By participating in support systems SMEs are indicating that they see cross-border innovation as a key growth strategy. The network has encouraged peer group learning, provided access to knowledge, introduced SMEs to online information resources, leveraged new support programmes, and raised awareness of the support infrastructure. We aim to maintain the momentum of the Innovation Agents Network by negotiating a similar innovation support package which we hope to have underway in the autumn.”

Participant in the program, Aaron McKeown, Director of Walleffects considers the help received from the Innovation Agents Network as invaluable. He comments: “The network has greatly broadened our horizons. The networking opportunities through the cluster we are involved in has put me in contact with buyers in the South who have helped us to establish cross-border links and have opened up the market for us. The programme has helped us to gear our business to be cross-border ready and then to enter the market for the first time. In the process our involvement in the network has added around 10% to our bottom line.”

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www.noribic.com



Area benefiting from project

Image: Original Launch of the IAN Project.

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€144,953
Total Project Cost:	€193,270
SME's Assisted:	60
Themes Covered:	E-commerce : Economic Development : Innovation : Research : SME Support

Priority 1: Integrated Local Development Strategies

Measure 2: Knowledge Economy

ICBAN implemented 10 projects under this measure

Objectives

- The Measure Objectives were:
- To build awareness of ICT and new media and the development opportunities they offer.
- To provide access to new technology and media.
- To promote the formation of networks and linkages to identify opportunities and methods of exploiting ICT developments within the region.

Activities

The Measure Activities included:

- Promotion of e-commerce and e-business solutions and support for the development of in-house education & training by the promotion of linkages to higher education centres.
- Improve existing levels of networking and co-operation in the ICT field, particularly those involving linkages between enterprise and educational institutions.
- SME and community training and awareness programmes aimed at increasing ICT understanding and usage.
- Development of telematics and support for the linkages of common public services in the provision of one-stop shop coherent sources of information sources for business and the community.
- Upgrading and development of facilities to enable linkages between businesses, educational and research agencies which promote co-operation on a cross-border and wider international basis

The following are submissions from Measure 1.2 projects and how they see their INTERREG story.



The Vital Signs pilot project was set up in 2004; a partnership made up of the Loughs Agency, ICBAN, Northern Regional Fisheries Board, Monaghan County Council and schools in the Blackwater, Foyle and Melvin Catchments along with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute in Maine USA. This partnership worked together to develop and test Vital Signs software to monitor water quality in streams close to schools within the aforementioned catchments. A website was developed to host the data recorded during these activities and also provide education resources and information on the partners and schools involved. The website also had enhanced map functionality that enables zooming, distance calculations and database queries and manipulations and provides an excellent resource for school teaching and the wider public.

Over the two year period the cross-border project over-achieved on all its targets by working in 20 schools with more than 500 children participating in the Vital Signs pilot programme. The school children used handheld computers to monitor the site, weather, water quality and stream characteristics, they also took pictures and made observations on the handheld device. These activities were closely related to the school curriculum and teaching resources were made available to teachers to support the learning in the classroom.

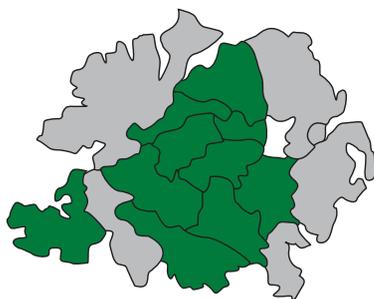


Image: Children use handheld computers to monitor their local streams

"It is really fascinating to see how quickly children learn the new technology. They love all the gadgets, they really are technology smart!", said Gretta McCarron Project Co-ordinator. The children also loved the fieldwork as many stated in their field observations "this is fun". Teachers found that the children become more aware of their local environment through the programme and their observation, technical, language and numeracy skills were developed and parents were impressed as their children identify and name different plants in the hedges when they are out walking.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€399,105

Total Project Cost:

€532,140

Participants: 500

Themes Covered:

Environment : Innovation : Youth :
Training : Rural Development

Armagh Monaghan Digital Corridor Strategy Implementation Promoter: Armagh Monaghan Digital Corridor



Image: The m:tek building in the heart of the Silicon Orchard

The Armagh Monaghan Digital Corridor’s three year strategy to drive the region’s ICT economy was a resounding success through attracting 1000 jobs to the region. Bernard Conlon who was the Business Development Manager for the project commented that the strategy implementation had achieved its key objective of further establishing technology industries within the area which would become a growing and major contributor to the local economy.

AMDC is a cross-border business corridor linking the counties of Armagh and Monaghan, through business centres known as a:tek and m:tek, located in Armagh and Monaghan respectively. These dynamic centres have some of the most advanced accommodation designed for technology businesses in Ireland.

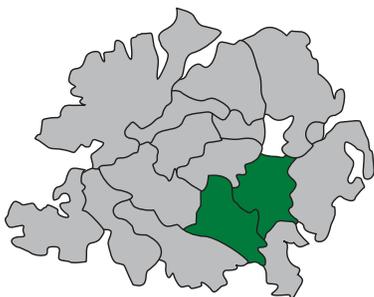
“The project has proven to very successful in the flow of companies setting up business at the a:tek and m:tek both from within and beyond the ICT sector” said Bernard. “It is an endorsement of the work and commitment that has been shown by everyone involved at the Digital Corridor, that companies such as Imagine, Viatrace and HCL are prepared to invest in the region and in our facilities in such numbers.”

With programmes such as the High Performance Computing resource (HPC) and the remote working facility we are enabling and supporting the circumstances and environment in Armagh & Monaghan in which companies can thrive. The corridor’s HPC was a pilot programme run in conjunction with Queen’s University’s NI Technology Centre and it enabled companies to utilize the resource to gain competitive advantage within manufacturing technology. Its remote working facility provided effective work, life balance initiatives for employees of blue chip companies based in Belfast and Dublin.

The Armagh Monaghan Digital Corridor has some of the most advanced accommodation designed for technology businesses in Ireland and its broadband 100MB link is now live providing both a:tek and m:tek based companies with superior access to the internet and cheaper leased-line rates to the republic and m:tek will no longer have to pay high rates for data connections to the UK.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File	
INTERREG Cost:	€163,639
Total Project Cost:	€218,185
Training Participants:	120
Themes Covered:	Innovation : E-commerce : SME Supports

'Innovate' (Innovation Enterprise Initiative) Promoter: Omagh Enterprise Company Limited (OECL)

1.2

Innovate, a dynamic cross border programme, which aimed to increase innovation in local business from Leitrim and Omagh, has had real impact. The 3 year programme set out to increase awareness of the importance of innovation in business growth, provide tangible support and encourage new business connections in both regions.

The Innovate Programme was implemented by Omagh Enterprise Company and Leitrim County Enterprise Board and far exceeded its targets by helping develop over 20 new products and created 21 new jobs in participating companies in Omagh and Leitrim and in addition 5 spin off industries have been established. An interesting aspect of the programme is the strong links between academic institutions and industry to create a Cross Border Innovation Research Network. This "action learning" approach meant that busy owner/managers could devote time and energy on 'real' ideas for their business. This will continue to transfer knowledge to industry and vice versa.

The impact can be seen on the ground with many local Omagh and Leitrim firms using new processes and products, new forms of marketing and increasing their networking and technological capacity. Innovate has been extremely effective in bringing Omagh and Leitrim companies together for the first time, with many now working regularly on joint opportunities.

Over 150 companies from Omagh and Leitrim benefited from mentoring and training which helped them to increase their knowledge and to realise their goals. The programme also included an imaginative combination of one to one mentoring, training and networking events to increase the innovative capacity of Leitrim and Omagh firms. Its effectiveness is largely due to the personalised guidance geared towards individual company requirements, in product development and in the use of new technology as an integrated business tool. Two Business Innovation Officers in Omagh and

Leitrim, acted as business 'match-makers', guiding local companies to relevant training/mentors and facilitating lucrative connections in each region.

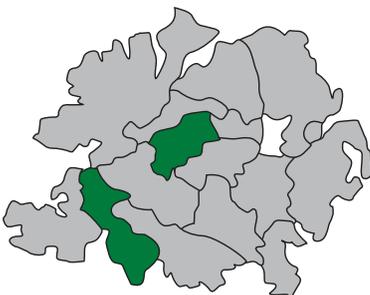


Image: Caption: The Innovate Team

This initiative also focused on making technology accessible and easy for local businesses through a series of seminars such as, marketing on line, which provided practical 'non-jargon' advice. This seminars generated a dynamic forum to meet and do business through on and off line networks, which were set up in both Omagh and Leitrim.

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www.improvethroughchange.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€856,391

Total Project Cost:
€1,141,855

SME's Assisted: 150

Themes Covered:
Social Economy, Community, SME Support, Ethnic Minorities, Childcare

North West Environment & Energy Consortium (NWEEC) Promoter: South West College - Omagh Campus

South West College in conjunction with the Institute of Technology Sligo and GreenFarm Energy received funding to conduct innovative research into the production, treatment and disposal of agricultural waste in the ICBAN region. The main objective of this project was to assess opportunities for nutrient recycling and energy from waste options for the rural sector. Key drivers for this project were the local implementation of the EU Nitrates Directive which will control land application of agricultural wastes as well as addressing the need for the agricultural sector to develop opportunities for farm diversification and sustainable land management.

The work of the NWEEC project involves cross border collaboration with researchers in IT Sligo carrying out the analysis, design and laboratory elements of the project. Their work involves the nutrient profiling of animal wastes and potential energy crops as well as the optimization of the physical, chemical and microbiological components to improve the efficiency of nutrient recycling and energy from waste systems. South West College carried out the management component of the project and delivered the agricultural waste survey and logistical feasibility studies required in order to better understand and model the options for decentralised waste management and energy production in the rural sector. In conjunction with the academic partners, GreenFarm Energy are working towards development of a farm scale energy from waste and nutrient recycling facility at their premises near Omagh.

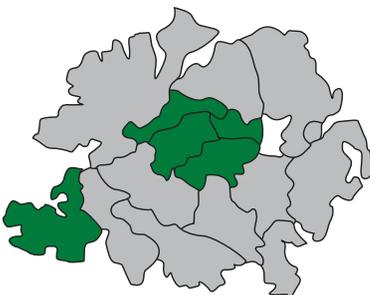
It was identified that there are currently limited waste disposal options for farmers on all scales within the ICBAN region. Through the work carried out by this project, a resource has been produced which encompasses all areas of on farm waste production, movement, handling, treatment, nutrient and energy content as well as the demonstration of current and developmental waste handling technology. Economic viability of solutions will obviously be of up most importance. It is the aim of the project to produce economic assessments for both the management and treatment of agricultural wastes at each step of the programme in order to provide models with potential for replication. Working in partnership with GreenFarm Energy Ltd., a novel farm scale treatment and handling system is under construction which will draw together all the aspects of the project and provide a unique demonstration of on site treatment of agricultural wastes and energy farming.



Image: Construction of innovative pre-digestion equipment in Omagh

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www.swc.ac.uk



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€529,755

Total Project Cost:

€708,025

SME's Assisted: 10

Themes Covered:

Innovation : Environment : Energy :
SME Support

Cross Border Youth ICT Development Programme

Promoter: Glenullin

1.2

For over two years Glenullin & Agivey Conservation & Development group in Garvagh, Co Londonderry, Sligo Northside Community Partnership Ltd and The North West Lifelong Learning Association in Limavady, ran a cross border project for young people aged 14-18.

The project was a great success with participants gaining knowledge in digital media, web design and most participants gaining an ICT qualification upon completion. The project has enabled 27 students from both sides of the community and from both sides of the border to come together, meet one another and create friendships. Ultimately this was one of the main objectives of the programme.

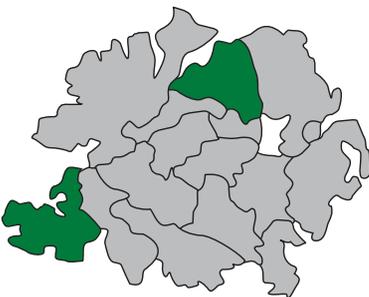


Image: The final few who managed to get to the last residential weekend in the Gorteen Hotel in Limavady, picking up their certificates.

The project involved workshops, exchange visits and joint projects utilising the technology learned. Using the medium of IT and media to make some fun websites, learn some useful computer skills and maybe even how to download music properly! Over the period the faces changed - different students, different tutors & classroom assistants as the project itself evolved. No 6-month period was ever the same as the one that went before. Some people got certificates while some came for the web skills they thoroughly enjoyed.

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www.web-spaced.net/interreg



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€110,921

Total Project Cost:

€147,894

Certificates Awarded :27

Themes Covered:

Youth : Innovation : Media : Social
Inclusion : Training

An exhibition of artwork produced by primary school children involved in a cross border creative project exploring the linen industry in Ireland took place at The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, Sligo in 2007.

This innovative exhibition shows work made in new media, using digital tools such as photography, projection, sound installation and video, as well as traditional media, like textiles and ceramics. A Kids' Own book on the project, *Beneath the Surface*, has been published and shares the experiences of the teachers, artists and children of the 10 participating schools and shows the quality of the creative work produced by each of the school/artist partnerships, and encourages others to find new ways of working with children in creative partnerships.

This programme sought to re-unite the communities of Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Armagh, and Belfast through an exciting, exploration of the history of the Linen Industry. It offered these communities an exciting and unique opportunity to explore ideas of place, culture and identity in the visual arts and new technologies with young people. New technologies are a powerful medium for exchange whereas the traditional craft of linen-making and its history provided a wealth of historical and artistic dimensions never before explored. The juxtaposition of tradition with contemporary, concept with process, the infusion of the tactile with new media, was integral to the artistic and historic dimensions of this project. The educational merit of the project was threefold in that it combined tradition with artistic process and training in new media. This three-dimensional approach was reflected in the outcomes of the project i.e. a website, exhibitions and a publication. Throughout this three year programme 10 schools, 11 artists and 600 children were involved.

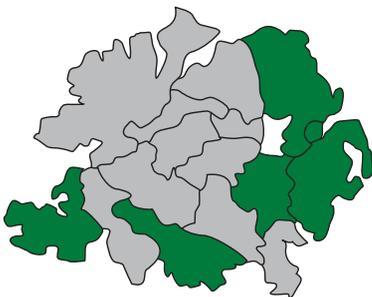


Image: The kids get to see their work on display

Orla Kenny, Creative Director with Kids' Own, is delighted with the project's achievements, saying, "The level of interaction between the children, teachers and artists was groundbreaking." Echoing this, Eina McHugh, Director of The Ark said "The Ark is honoured to showcase this incredible exhibition which arose from a truly innovative artists-in-schools programme created by Kids' Own Publishing Partnership. We hope this will be an inspiration to schools and artists going forward on what can be achieved in this field."

Email: info@kidsown.ie

www.kidsown.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€216,500

Total Project Cost:

€396,500

Participating Children: 600

Themes Covered:

Media : Youth : Training :

Innovation : Culture : Arts & Crafts



The Cross Border Digital Creativity Project was a collaboration between the NEELB and Monaghan Education Centre and during the first phase, over 360 pupils were trained in the use of multi camera television production made possible through 'The Truck', a complete outside broadcast vehicle owned by the NEELB and funded through the INTERREG IIIA programme. The success of this two year training project led to additional funding from INTERREG which allowed the team to offer a programme for teachers and pupils again and upgrade the Truck's facilities.

During the second phase of the project the team worked with 40 pupils from the Monaghan area to produce five programmes based on primary level CPD for teachers. The main thrust however was the multitrack audio production training of a small number of teachers in eight schools; four from the North and four from the South. The two courses run in Monaghan and Magherafelt concentrated on the educational uses of such technologies across the curriculum. Each school had the necessary equipment installed as part of the project and further training will be made available in the new school year.

The training was divided into 'hands on' sessions and time to explore possible uses of the equipment back in school. These included music recordings, radio production, radio drama etc. The portable nature of the equipment added to a number of activities that could be recorded.

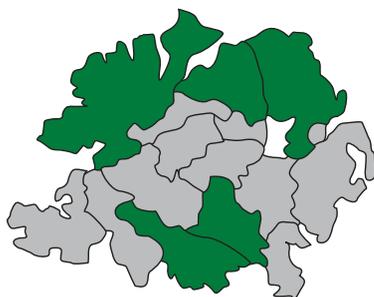
Phase two also saw the development of 'The Truck' with major work being carried out, including the removal of the truck body from its original 7.5 tonne chassis to a new 12.5 tonne chassis allowing a new air conditioning unit to be fitted and more production equipment to be fitted including a slow motion system, new recording facilities and enhanced production capabilities. These improvements will greatly increase the production and training capabilities offered through the vehicle.

Cross Border collaboration has been pivotal during this project and a strong working relationship has developed between the NEELB and Monaghan Education Centre. A group of fifteen educational decision makers from all over Europe commented after viewing the Truck, that this was a perfect model for the development of Digital Creativity to a wide audience and one they would be keen to introduce back in their home countries.

Image: Students at the mobile broadcast training 'Truck'

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www.thetruck.org.uk



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€386,831

Total Project Cost:

€519,432

Number of Students: 400

Themes Covered:

Media : Culture : Innovation :

Training: Youth

The Fis Uladh project was established to enable 16 – 24 year olds from Belfast and the Gaeltacht area, Gaoth Dobhair to learn about the culture and history of their area and to share it through multimedia and TV Skills, taught by professionals who are working in the Media Industry entirely through the medium of Irish. The project also facilitated a cross border network between the young people who participated to develop their knowledge of Rural/Urban life and recruited 64 young people in total between the ages of 16 – 24 from both areas.

Fis Uladh was set up to encourage young people who had an interest in the Television Industry to develop skills in order to enhance their chances of progressing into a media course or indeed finding work in the freelance media industry. Since then, Fis Uladh has also gathered old archive and logged all the footage shot on the course to date to develop a Visual Library in Gaoth Dobhair and North Belfast.

The initial idea came from Sonia Nic Giolla Easbuig who is a TV Producer /Director who has worked with major broadcasters on the Island of Ireland, from RTÉ, TG4 and BBC NI. Fis Uladh came from an idea in 2003 to give young people the chance to develop skills in the television industry while at the same time documenting their own area, the people in it and, in the process, learning about their own culture and the concept of archiving came from all the interviews that Sonia had filmed over the years and the stories that never got to air or perhaps lost forever.

With Fis Uladh established in Donegal to facilitate the project, Cumann Culturtha Mhic Reachtain (CCMR), Belfast also came on board. CCMR was formed to promote the Irish Language in North Belfast and to encourage its growth in music, literacy and teachings. It annually runs an extremely successful summer school that facilitates children, young people and adults on a wide variety of courses through the medium of the Irish Language. The combination of these two organisations has facilitated a very successful TV Skills course for the young people who were involved.

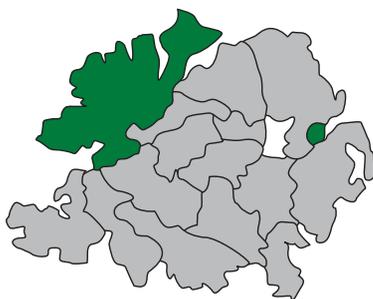
The course also gave the students an opportunity to gain hands-on experience on live shows and interview celebrities such as comedian Des Bishop, Q&A with Pat Butler -RTÉ, and work alongside a professional studio crew on the Music show Deis Roc for TG4. Since the project finished, several students have progressed towards accredited qualifications and some securing work placements within the media.



Image: Taking a break during Deis Roc

Email: sonianic@vodafone.ie

www.fisuladh.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€177,812

Total Project Cost:

€237,083

Number of Students: 64

Themes Covered:

Culture : Heritage : Innovation :

Youth : Media

Promoter: Travel Logic

Travel Logic has developed a software based online marketing and sales solution that is targeted specifically at the independently owned hotel sector in the Irish and European markets. The software has been piloted in cross-border partnerships with leading hotels since January 2007 and has already delivered € revenues to clients.

The Travel Logic solution integrates both online and traditional marketing functions. It includes web design and optimisation, customer relationship management, sales engine and dashboard of key performance indicators. It is designed to give hotel marketers hands-on control of their sales and business development. High profile pilot clients in the border region include Castle Dargan, Killyhevlin Hotel and Signature Park Hotel Group.



Image: Conor Daly, CEO of Travel Logic demonstrates the benefits of the Tourism Marketing Software platform to An Tánaiste and Irish Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Coughlan. T.D.

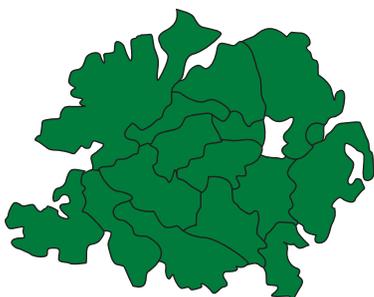
Signature Park Hotels has deployed Travel Logic and can directly attribute to it, a sales increase of 25% and a corresponding reduction in marketing expenditure. The solution provided to them includes a new website, a booking engine and the ability to gain complete control over their marketing campaigns by means of automated and ad-hoc outbound marketing communications and incentive offer alerts. It also enables them to track and measure exactly where their business is coming from and how each campaign is performing. It fully integrates with Signature Park Hotel's existing marketing campaigns, owner Tony McDermott, said, "The best thing about Travel Logic is that as we continue to build up our client marketing contacts, we will be able to do ever more marketing for no extra cost."

An Tánaiste Mary Coughlan said, "I'm delighted to see innovative hi-tech enterprise basing itself in North West region. It brings high quality direct employment and revenue into the region and at the same time helps regional hotels and groups to compete successfully with their urban multi-national counterparts. This is all very much part of the Government's ongoing programme for regional development"

Conor Daly of Travel Logic, said, "Travel Logic is creating a world where accommodation marketers can do as much incremental marketing activity as they wish for no extra cost. We provide independently owned hotels with the technical marketing infrastructure that enables them to compete on an equal footing with the leading hotel groups. In the long-term we hope to drive intermediary and booking engine commissions down to zero. We're developing marketing software and services that put marketers back in control of their businesses, at a sensible price. We're planning to extend our service into many other areas and markets in Ireland and abroad."

Email: conor.daly@travellogic.eu

www.travellogic.eu



Area benefiting from project

Fact File
INTERREG Cost: €200,000
Total Project Cost: €400,000
Information Linkages Established: 62
Themes Covered: Tourism : SME Support : E-commerce : Innovation : Economic Development :

Beyond Computing

Promoter: South West College - Omagh Campus



The Beyond Computing project was a collaborative cross-border project between the South West College (SWC) and the Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo) where the aim was to establish 3 strategically placed, interlinked and accessible new technology and media resource centres in Omagh, Enniskillen and Sligo. Grant aid was provided to enhance awareness and usage of new technologies and media among firms and community groups in the project area, which in turn would have a positive impact on employment opportunities in a region suffering from the legacy of the conflict.

Equipment capabilities included; Rapid prototyping that enabled production of full colour 3D models and 3D scanning for reverse engineering; Environmental mapping which provided support in the area of communication involving spatial distribution and also investigating GIS as an analytical tool; and lastly Media production services and support such as video production and sound recording equipment to enable professional media recording, mixing and mastering.

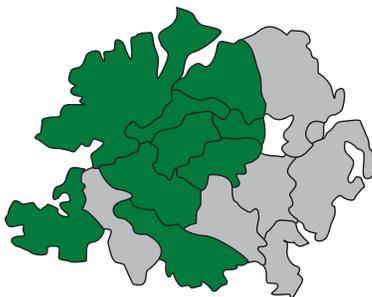
After a successful application for a project extension further resources were acquired to have an anaerobic Digestion training facility, energy monitoring equipment and thermal imaging facilities, PCB milling equipment, PLC/Scada equipment and additional GIS equipment such as a robotic total surveying station.

Beyond Computing has helped produce high calibre graduates capable of working with cutting edge technologies; who can contribute to the knowledge transfer from higher education to industry. Furthermore, by reaching out to second level schools, the project has undoubtedly helped attract prospective science and engineering students.

The project also hosted some high profile events with seminars from a former Director of the United Nations' Fund for Science and Technology within the UN, Rustam Lalkaka and Adrian Birrell, former coach of the Irish Cricket Team.

As the INTERREG IIIA funding period draws to a close it's not the end for the Beyond Computing at the South West College and IT Sligo as the equipment, facilities and knowledge transfer will continue long into the future.

Image: Beyond Computing Media launch in Enniskillen and has Fergal McKinney and Jim Fitzpatrick seated and from back left to right Garret McGinty and Fergal Tuffy.



Area benefiting from project

Email: malachy.mcaleer@swc.ac.uk

www.swc.ac.uk

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€552,500

Total Project Cost:

€736,750

Cross-border Seminars delivered: 15

Themes Covered:

Economic Development :

Innovation : Media : SME Support :

Social Economy : Training :

Priority 1: Integrated Local Development Strategies

1.3

Measure 3: Human Resource Development and Skilling

ICBAN implemented 19 projects under this measure

Objectives

The Measure Objectives were:

- To expand the provision of management and job-related training within the region.
- To promote business to education linkages to ensure that enterprise related knowledge and skills are developed.
- To encourage specialised training in areas and sectors with specific skills shortages.
- To promote enterprise and management skills amongst women in the region.

Activities

The measured activities included:

- Provision of tailored management and production training facilities in higher education centres in the region.
- Engaging the private and education sectors in providing training and mentoring opportunities through partnerships, exchanges and joint ventures.
- Development of cross border approaches to structural unemployment, early school leaver, mobility and particular needs e.g. women returning to work.
- Specialised training in sectors where particular skills deficiencies have been identified e.g. hospitality, tourism and rural leisure activities or in emerging technology fields.
- Enhancement of the professional capacity of managers, particularly in areas of product development, technological change and marketing through support for further education & training and inter-regional exchange programmes.
- Actions supporting the development of enterprise and management skills of women. Support for life long learning initiatives.
- Development of linkages between education/training centres that ensure the provision of a wide and complementary range of enterprise related training and education opportunities.

The following are submissions from Measure 1.3 projects and how they see their INTERREG story.



Tearmann (Sanctuary)

Promoter: Clo Ceardlann na gCnoc Teoranta

Cló Ceardlann na gCnoc (CCC), is a small arts organisation which successfully planned and delivered Tearmann - a training programme which advances long-term cross-community and cross-border contact. The course has given artists, arts technicians, future arts administrators and lifelong learners from the border counties an opportunity to access a modularised arts training programme in an outstanding facility and contemporary cultural resource in the Donegal Gaeltacht. Artists were trained in Etching, Lithography, Video Editing, Career Development and contemporary Gaelic.

The programme was delivered in three separate intakes of participants between 2005 and 2007. By the end of 2007 thirty six participants, had completed aspects of the modularised programme, with twenty three participants completing the full set of five modules. The National University of Ireland, Galway accredited the course in the second and third cycle and each artist was awarded a diploma in Arts Practice.

Tearmann made a significant impact in acquiring new opportunities for the participants, such as residencies, positions and creating new enterprises (such as a framing business, an Art and Crafts Gallery and an Art and Crafts Centre within a large local hotel). Since participation, former participants have been involved in four exhibitions and five arts fairs and as a result sales of works have increased. International opportunities were also abundant; four participants travelled to take part in the Úr exhibition in Paris while three participants journeyed to Georgia to participate in an exhibition and discussions on artists residency exchanges. The project has also enabled an increase in volume of applications for funding- it is estimated that over 50% of participants from the first and second cycles have made funding applications related to arts practice and arts administration. One past participant received the 'Maggie Hughie Scholarship' in 2007 and his work will be exhibited at the launch of the new CCC facility in 2008.

Many participants expressed the need to have further professional development opportunities and



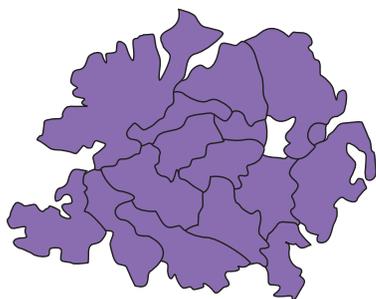
Image: Learning/Foghlaim.

further access to the CCC workshop. In response, and within the context of the upcoming launch of their new workshop and living archive facilities, CCC successfully applied to ICBAN for an extension to the project. The project extension offered further intensive training to both past and new participants of Tearmann.

The Tearmann course gave artists the opportunity to develop cross border links and secure exhibitions and projects on both sides of the border that will continue as a legacy of the project.

Email: cloceardlann@eircom.net

www.cloceardlann.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€398,942

Total Project Cost:

€556,110

Participants Trained: 36

Themes Covered:

Arts & Crafts : SME Support :

Training : Social Inclusion : Culture

: Economic Development : Rural Development :

Promoter: Co Monaghan VEC



Childcare practitioners from Co Monaghan recently completed a four year BA in Early Childhood Studies and went on to graduate from Queens University Belfast. The project was developed by Co Monaghan VEC, Monaghan County Childcare Committee, The Border Counties Childcare Network and Stranmillis University College Belfast and involved the delivery by Stranmillis personnel of a four-year part-time BA in Early Childhood Studies programme at MIFET (Monaghan Institute of Further Education & Training).

The EU funding enabled the project partners to bring this highly regarded degree programme to Monaghan and the first year of the course began in Sept 2004. In total, 24 childcare practitioners from North and South completed the degree programme.

The project had many strengths, most notably the structure of the programme, its impact on practice, the course content, its delivery and the peer support available to students. The most fundamental strength highlighted was the actual existence of this programme in the border region and the opportunity this provided for childcare workers. The EU funding made the BA programme accessible and affordable to childcare practitioners who otherwise may not have been able to participate.

There was unanimous agreement among the students that the course benefited them both personally and in their workplace. Many outlined that the training gave them increased confidence and self esteem. Their personal knowledge and skills also increased and it opened up career prospects for those participating. Indeed since starting the course, six participants have progressed in their careers.

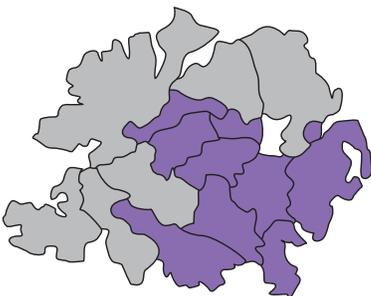
Many of the students outlined that the knowledge they gained made them better able to carry out their role in their workplace. The course content was very relevant to everyday work in childcare settings and a number outlined that they have implemented positive changes to their work practice and work environment as a result of what they learnt. This will have resulted in improved quality of childcare service provision in the border area.

Based on the success of the programme and the high level of interest in the project, it is planned to run the Degree (and Diploma) in Early Childhood Studies in autumn 2008.

Image: First tranche of BA in Early Childhood Studies students at the graduation ceremony in Queens University Belfast

Email: educ@monaghanvec.ie

www.monaghanvec.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€337,072

Total Project Cost:
€451,090

**Childcare Practitioners
Completing: 24**

Themes Covered:
Childcare : Training : Social
Inclusion : SME Support : Health
: Economic Development : Rural
Development :

Rural Men Project

Promoter: South West College - Fermanagh Campus

The Rural Men project, aimed at assisting men living in rural areas enhance their skills and seek alternative employment has successfully completed, it was managed and administered by Fermanagh College in partnership with North Leitrim Men's Group. A number of other key community and statutory organisations were also involved with the work such as Erne Gateway Centre, Belleek, Coillte & Teemore Training School.

The project was based on recognition of the problems that were caused by the decline in agriculture, size of farms or condition of land as well as recognizing that men who had spent time caring for elderly parents or lived in isolated areas were unable to enhance their skills and obtain employment and maintain an adequate quality of life. The project originally targeted unemployed single rural males over 35 from both Fermanagh and Leitrim but was later extended to include married men as well.

"Problems of isolation and lack of skills for men over 35 exist on both sides of the border. The Rural Men project has shown how combining expertise and experience of different organisations can help tackle and overcome these problems. In providing support and encouragement back into learning for single rural males living in isolation; the project focused upon a target group of people who require special support and whose plight transcends borders.", said Mr Pat Love of North Leitrim Men's Group.



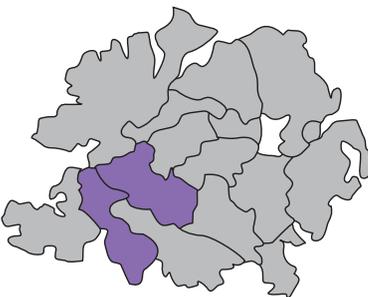
Although the original target was 60 the final number of men who participated in the programme was 95. There were 34 courses offered by the programme which included machinery handling, carpentry, ECDL and use of computers & internet skills. Out of these 34 programmes 17 offered the opportunity for beneficiaries to gain a qualification. 68% of the participants on these courses successfully gained a certificate in their chosen course. Of the 95 enrolled beneficiaries 4 progressed into part time employment, 10 into full time employment and 19 onto other forms of training programmes as a direct result of the Rural Men Project.

To increase social interaction and to raise profile of the project locally the project organised events including a Social Evening, Careers Guidance and Information Session and a Healthy Living Day.

One of the very positive outcomes of the project was the establishment of the Fermanagh Men's Network. This new group aims to maintain the work of the Rural Men Project by helping men of Fermanagh continue and achieve their personal goals within education and training.

Email: info@swc.ac.uk

www.swc.ac.uk



Area benefiting from project

Image: Project participant learning woodwork skills.

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€279,860

Total Project Cost:

€373,660

Rural Men Assisted: 95

Themes Covered:

Training : Social Inclusion : Health :
Rural Development : SME Support

Fiontar, the Irish language business faculty in Dublin City University developed the original proposal for this project as a means of promoting entrepreneurship in the Irish language community. A strong partnership was required to deliver the numerous outcomes expected and an agreement was reached with Oideas Gael and Forbairt Feirste as the cross-border partnership. The highly regarded and experienced business delivery agency WestBic was selected to administer the programme and Oideas Gael nominated as the lead partner. A substantial part of the project plan involved Gaeltacht companies, both private and community with Údarás na Gaeltachta as a funding partner.



The recruitment process, came to fruition with the launch of the programme in Gleann Cholm Cille by Mr Éamon Ó Cuív, Minister for Rural, Community & Gaeltacht Affairs and Tánaiste Mary Coughlan, TD. The participants represented both companies and organisations in the Gaeltacht and the wider ICBAN region.

The mentoring opportunities offered by the course were welcomed by all the participants and the mentors, by their experience and hands-on approach were an excellent support mechanism in the preparation of business plans and new enterprise strategies. The programme offered a HETAC Level 6 qualification developed by the third level, LÍONRA network in 'Advanced Entrepreneurship and Business' which was accredited by The Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

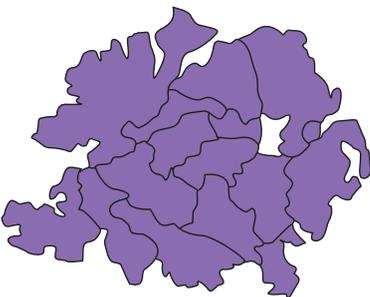
In total 61 participants on the project benefited from 34 Business lectures, 80 mentoring sessions and the opportunity to study abroad during 1 International Business module of one week's duration and 1 Entrepreneurship Tutors' programme at St Gallen & Babson College, Switzerland. The website for participants and students of entrepreneurship www.fiontraí.ie was created and 3,000, 8 page full-colour glossy newsletters were distributed to agencies, groups, public representatives etc.

Apart from the long-term personal benefits for the course participants and their organisations, other outputs are regarded as being significant. The 'Motivation towards Entrepreneurship' DVD comprises contribution from the programme's lecturers, participants and mentors offering guidance to those considering business as a career or indeed those in business seeking a new direction.

Image:Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D., Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs at the launch of Fiontar

Email: oideasgael@eircom.net

www.dcu.ie/fiontar



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€472,286

Total Project Cost:

€629,715

Participants on the project: 61

Themes Covered:

Training : Social Economy : Culture
: SME Support

An Evaluation of Cross Border Training Provision

Promoter: University of Ulster (Border Corridor Project)



The complexity of training provision and funding arrangements on both sides of the border impacts significantly on economic development in the areas, according to the research undertaken by the University of Ulster. The study into the provision of skills training in the Irish Border Corridor was conducted by academics at the Faculty of Business and Management.

The primary objective of the study was to provide an overview of current skills training provision for the underemployed, long term unemployed, returners to

work, people with disabilities, members of the traveller community and those running small and micro-businesses within border counties. Dr Emily Boyle, one of the 4 academics from the faculty involved in the project said that because of the complexity of provision, there is a serious need for a centralized point of access of information for all the training courses currently offered for these groups in the area. To this end the team has developed an online database and compiled a comprehensive report about the provision.

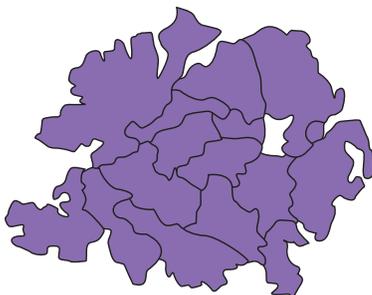
“To help simplify the picture for those seeking training in the border counties, an online database facility www.bordertraining.com offering access to a comprehensive directory of training courses and can provide information to both training providers and the target groups. The website is user friendly and simple to operate, it provides all the information needed to enable potential trainees to make an informed decision about a course and its relevance to their needs.” said Dr Boyle.

The second outcome of the study is a report which identifies the skills training provision on the border area both on a group-by-group basis and on a county-by-county basis, making it easier to reference. It reveals which groups and areas have better training provision than others and pockets of social disadvantage can be identified. Dr Boyle continued; “We have established that a key factor affecting economic development in border areas is a general lack of training and educational qualifications which in turn inhibits employability. The changing context for skilling and development has opened up a need for training for small businesses and for workers in non-standard forms of employment.”

Image: The UU Academic Project Team

Email: info@ernact.net

www.bordertraining.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€151,801

Total Project Cost:

€151,801

Linkages supported: 5

Themes Covered:

Research : Training : SME Support
: Economic Development : Social
Inclusion :

The Institute of Technology Sligo and Northern Regional College Ballymena completed a ground breaking manufacturing support project with major implications for industry in the North West and North East of Ireland.

At the project launch, Micheál Martin, TD, Minister for Enterprise, the then Minister, Trade and Employment said "Ireland must move from an enterprise philosophy of jobs and growth to one of competitiveness and productivity". He said the RIM 21 project clearly showed our determination to adapt to globalisation pressures and to do business more productively.

RIM 21 liaised with local manufacturing industry on both sides of the border, identifying technology gaps which were affecting company competitiveness. Ground breaking, 'cutting edge' manufacturing 'cells' and training laboratories, were set up in IT Sligo and NRC providing an opportunity for industry to access the latest robotic, automation and CNC technology.



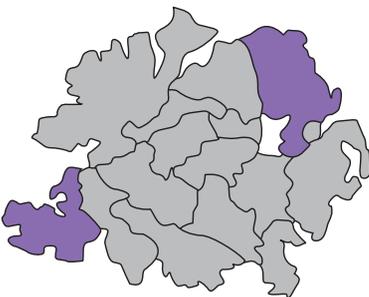
Extensive 'hands-on' training was delivered at both centres and further online training was also provided. Fourteen manufacturing businesses took part in the RIM 21 project with almost 800 people trained in these emerging technologies. One tangible benefit of the project is evident through collaboration with Ryobi Aluminium Castings based in Carrickfergus. NRC created tailored maintenance and operations training for 17 robot cell operators. This resulted in a production time saving of 63 days and the partnership winning a National Training Award.

As well as working with individuals and industry, the RIM 21 facilities were used as a showcase by development agencies such as Enterprise Ireland and the IDA, with a view to encouraging new companies to set up in the region and existing companies to expand. Through the establishment of an "all Ireland" Robotics Forum, the RIM 21 project also fostered linkages between like minded businesses on both sides of the border, enabling the sharing of experiences and best practice in the field of robotics and integrated manufacture.

RIM 21 demonstrated that the North West and North East regions have the levels of innovation, people and support infrastructure through third level institutions like IT Sligo and NRC to successfully develop and retain world leading innovative and hi-tech industries. The location of these training and research and development cells within their own regions played an invaluable role in the uptake of the facilities. Both centres continue to produce a steady stream of high calibre graduates capable of working in a modern production environment. The level of graduate employment from both education institutes involved in the project also reflects the successful transfer of technology from higher education to industry.

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www.nei.ac.uk



Area benefiting from project

Image: Stephen Reid at work in the Sligo IT RIM21 Facility

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€1,422,171

Total Project Cost:

€1,906,395

Participants trained: 800

Themes Covered:

Innovation : Training : Engineering : Economic Development

Cross Border Machinery Handling Training Service Promoter: Teemore Ballyconnell Business Partnership

South West Fermanagh Development Association and Ballyconnell Town and District Development Association came together to provide a range of certified training in machinery handling sector. The project is assisting SME's to conform to changing regulations for driver safety, creating enhanced opportunities for unemployed and underemployed.

The main objectives of the project were; to establish a cross border site for directed training to nationally recognised accredited standards, create opportunities for cross border mobility and employment in the construction sector, and to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation in both jurisdictions.

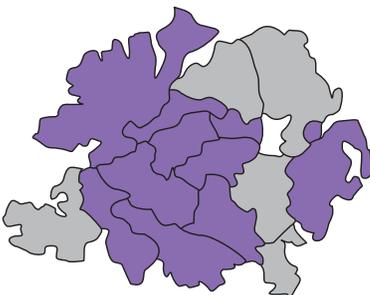
In order to achieve these objectives the project purchased plant and machinery to deliver accredited training to machine operators in the construction industry. They also recruited qualified staff to deliver training in Health & Safety to the construction industry and trained up suitably skilled persons to become trainers themselves.



Image:Project Partners and guests at the Launch of the International Health & Safety School

The project was concerned with the safety of machine operators within the construction industry and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions. They wished to improve the mobility of a labour force through accredited training in Health and Safety, that would be recognised throughout Europe; in order to do so the project networked with interested parties throughout Ireland in education and training to provide accredited training in Health and Safety in the construction industry and supported those who do not hold accredited training certificates in Health and Safety in the construction industry to retrain to accredited standards.

Email: teemorecomplex@hotmail.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€574,503

Total Project Cost:

€1,360,565

Themes Covered:

Training : SME Support : Economic
Development : Construction

'Growing Relationships' Leadership Programme For Farm Women Promoter: Irish Farmers Association (IFA)

1.3

30 participants from across counties Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh completed an innovative course for women in agriculture. The programme was designed and delivered through a unique collaboration between IFA and Women in Agriculture.

In the current agricultural climate there is a need for off-farm income to support the farm enterprise as well as learning new skills to enable the business to adapt to change and be sustainable in the future. The partners developed the programme concentrating on personal and social development and routes of progression for farm women within the border region.

The main aim of the project was to enhance women's movement into business through skills development spanning through a variety of training and networking activities (tailor made to the needs of each individual). The programme enabled participants to develop their existing agricultural business, develop new enterprises or avail of increased employment/income generation opportunities.

Training included self esteem and confidence building, communication skills, leadership skills, committee skills, enterprise and management skills, developing new business ideas, change management, action planning and networking.

The programme was particularly effective in how the Programme Managers engaged those who don't typically have the confidence or opportunity to normally participate on such programmes. Indeed, participants cited how the Growing Relationships Programme has contributed meaningfully to improved self esteem and confidence and how friendships have developed with women in other communities.

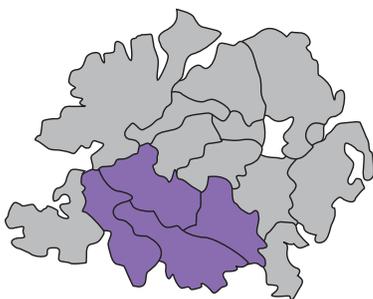


Image: Women in Agriculture

Ann Orr, Manager of Women in Agriculture said; "I particularly noted the enthusiasm of those women who came for the first time to training and the opportunity for those who became involved with others from across the border. It made them realize that as women they have far more in common than they have difference. Despite many years of troubles and closed borders this was a new beginning for this group through a small project. The role of women is similar no matter where they live and most of the issues discussed affected them all as rural dwellers. It was also very noticeable however, the appreciation of the 15 women from the Republic of Ireland on the programme because they have not enjoyed as many opportunities as their neighbours."

Email: info@womeninagriculture.com

www.womeninagriculture.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€41,626

Total Project Cost:

€57,695

Women Assisted: 30

Themes Covered:

Agriculture : SME Support :

Training : Rural Development :

Social Inclusion :

Mullaghmore House Enterprises

Promoter: Mullaghmore House Enterprises



Image: 'Unlocking the Artisan' - Learning Traditional Skills

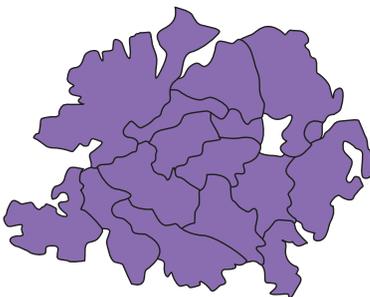
The Mullaghmore House Enterprises project based in Omagh, Co Tyrone main aim was to think POSITIVE by Promoting, Others, Skills, Ingenuity, Talent, Integrity, Vision and Enterprise. This was achieved by establishing Mullaghmore House as a unique Centre of Excellence, providing innovative vocational training. It promoted a lifelong learning culture providing participants with basic through to highly transferable skills, within a safe, supportive and secure learning environment without bias, within a unique business environment on all aspects of antique restoration, conservation, heritage, design and traditional crafts.

"Overall the project was immensely successful in helping individuals rebuild self confidence and belief in their abilities which in turn has led to several successful business start ups", explained Keith Kelly, Director for Training. We have also had many international students staying with us over the project period from as far a field as Switzerland, East Germany and Finland studying the methods of restoration we use on period antiques." he continued.

The evaluation report stated "This project is one of the most balanced, targeted and thoughtful training development structures in operation throughout the border counties. Their insightful composition embraces a long and proud family development of skills development...and we would like to complement MHE, project and partners on the delivery of a model of outstanding practice for skills development informed by an intrinsic understanding of the needs of the conservation and restoration sectors in the market place. We feel that this model holds a great deal of potential for the future."

Email: mullaghmorehouse@aol.com

www.mullaghmorehouse.com



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€341,475

Total Project Cost:
€806,248

Participants:

Themes Covered:
Heritage : Training : SME Support :



The results of the cross-border "Workability" Training Programme for adults with learning disabilities were celebrated at the end of project event. Almost 600 service users took part in this multimedia-based work skills training programme developed by New Horizons Partnership, Strabane.

The training programme is tailored to the needs of adults with learning disabilities, teaching them the broad range of general and interpersonal skills that they need in order to be able to secure and hold down a job or work placement.

The event was attended by a representative 100 students, together with their trainers, parents and carers. "It was truly an uplifting event," according to Lisa O'Hagan, one of the authors of the programme. This was echoed by Finola Keogh, co-author, who was delighted that "so many service users and trainers travelled from all over Northern Ireland and the six Border counties of the Republic of Ireland to participate in the event". In fact, several of these services users and trainers took the stage, sharing their experiences of the Workability programme with the 150 guests present.

"Workability" is a unique programme both in terms of content included and learning styles used to teach this material. All concepts are illustrated primarily using pictures and sketches and learning is further reinforced by the use of multimedia elements such as videos, animations and interactive exercises. Not only does the programme cater for issues that may traditionally pose problems for this target group, it also teaches this content in an accessible way.

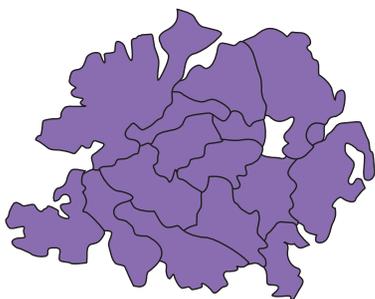
Workability consists of eight units of general work skills content -Work, Jobs & Skills, Appropriate Work Behaviour, Getting a Job & Preparing for Work, Assertiveness, Rights & Respect, Being a Good Worker, Health & Safety in the Workplace, Communication and Personal Hygiene & Self-Presentation

The series also includes four discs that teach introductory skills in the following vocational areas; Catering, Horticulture, Office/Administration, Retail (Supermarket).

Image: Francis Kelly from County Cavan who has completed the Workability work skills programme

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File
INTERREG Cost: €444,490
Total Project Cost: €600,189
Service Users Assisted: 570
Themes Covered: Training : Media : Social Inclusion : Health : Innovation

'Women in Construction'

Promoter: South West College - Omagh Campus



A cross border partnership project, led by South West College has developed and delivered training to support and develop enterprise and management skills for women working within the construction industry in Counties Cavan, Donegal, Fermanagh, Monaghan, Sligo and Tyrone. Sixty-four women participated in the two-year project.

Summarising the project, Mark McGuigan, the Women in Construction tutor from South West College said; "Initially we undertook research to identify

training needs, barriers to participation and gender issues in relation to management tasks. These findings were used to develop the Women in Construction multi-media training programme. This was run in Omagh and Fermanagh Colleges and Cavan Innovation and Technology Centre for women who had been targeted.

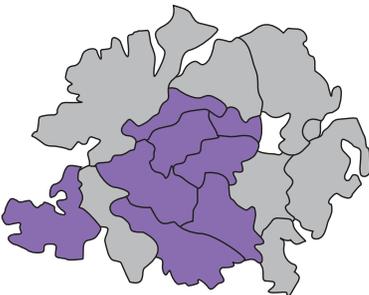
"We tailored the training to the needs of each participant and her business and also advised on follow-up training and qualifications. "The response to the programme was very positive. Working out in rural areas in family businesses, many of the women had experienced isolation and one of the main programme benefits reported was the networking aspect of taking part," Mark added.

One participant, Betty Rankin, is office administrator with her Omagh-based family business, Rankin Carmichael Mechanical Services Ltd, which services and installs stainless steel pipe work in factories. "I'm a jack of all trades: you need to know a bit about all areas of the work," Betty said. "I initially took part in the Women in Construction course at South West College because I needed training in writing reports and company policies, such as Health and Safety policies. These areas were covered on the course and I found it all beneficial. "It was helpful to be able to discuss business issues with other women who were in similar positions and the course helped build my confidence. "Since completing the programme I also did a follow up course on Health and Safety, recommended by Mark McGuigan, and have now written the Health and Safety policies my company needed."

Image: Betty Rankin, participant of the programme

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€150,279

Total Project Cost:

€200,372

Women Assisted: 64

Themes Covered:

Training : Social Inclusion

: Construction : Economic

Development : SME Support



The aim of this highly successful project had been to expand the potential for economic growth in the eligible catchment namely Armagh City and District, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough and Monaghan County Councils by enhancing residents opportunities to achieve qualifications and skills. The project worked towards developing cross-community, cross-border development in delivering of all training in the rural community as research has shown the catchment has a high traditional dependence on the agriculture industry. With a decline in this industry there was a need to encourage diversification to maintain quality of life.

Emphasis was placed on targeting women and on the value of self-development with linkages to SME business e.g. restaurants/hotels. A wide range of methods were adopted to encourage uptake with a clear branding to help participants identify training with BRP. Several events have been held to support participants and encourage new learners; these included Celebration Evenings and Information & Enrolment Evenings.

The overall number of participants on training courses over the lifetime of the course was 735, exceeding set target of 440. All courses offered have been both accredited and recreational and we can clearly see cross-border and cross-community development arising.

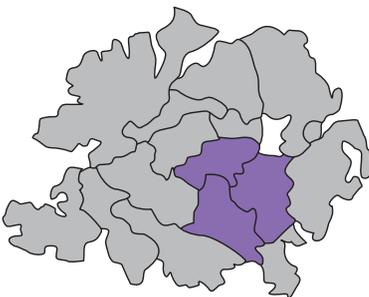
Working closely with EGSA (Connecting Learners to Learning) and AEGIS (Learning Opportunities for Learners) we have provided the opportunity for learners to attend guidance clinics thus supporting individuals looking to examine progression routes available.

With many participants wishing to progress on to further training with the partnership, adult learners are re-engaging and feedback suggests that the whole process was a positive experience. Julieann Spence, Project Officer commented that the evidence presented in the final report demonstrated that the overall aim of providing learning in a rural, cross border, cross community and cross gender basis was overwhelmingly achieved.

Image: Participants learn the skill of stone masonry

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€246,612

Total Project Cost:

€328,816

Participants Trained: 735

Themes Covered:

Training : Tourism : Rural

Development : SME Support :

Social Inclusion

Tourism is Us

Promoter: South West College - Fermanagh Campus



The end of the Tourism is Us project was marked by a dissemination & celebration of achievements ceremony at the Killyhevlin Hotel on Thursday 27th September 2007.

The Tourism is Us Project began in Spring 2006 with the aim of raising the profile and impact of the tourism sector in Fermanagh, Cavan, Monaghan and surrounding border counties.

The project offered a range of training programmes to people who are currently working within tourism, community and unemployed people who would like to work within the sector. The programmes on offer included: Management & Enterprise Skills, Marketing, Customer Service, Rural Tourism, Food Preparation, Patisserie, Food Hygiene, First Aid, English for Speakers of other Languages and Eco-tourism.

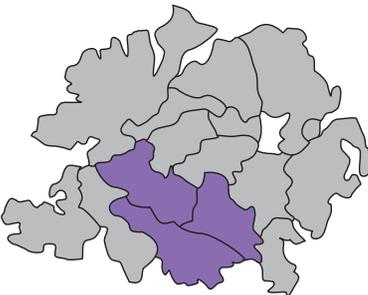
At the end of the ceremony, Victor Refausse Director of South West College presented certificates to a selection of those who successfully completed one or more of these programmes.

The project has been extremely successful, as project co-ordinator Ann Maria Curran explained “ During the life of the project, we had participation from 1,000 businesses and community groups from across the region, 428 people undertook tourism related training, 305 of whom successfully achieved a qualification. 80 people progressed to work or further training”.

Image: Guest speakers at the original launch.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€250,000

Total Project Cost:

€334,208

SME's/Groups Assisted: 1000

Themes Covered:

SME Support : Tourism : Training
: Economic Development : Rural
Development :

The development organisations representing butchers on the island have just successfully concluded a major cross border training and development project. Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Master Butchers Association first came together in 2004 in this innovative project which set out to take the first steps towards delivering a new qualification for this traditional craft 'on the job', and to a certified standard which would be recognized and accepted all over the island.

Project Director Pat Brady said that a very important foundation had now been laid for future North South co-operation which will contribute to the preservation of this vital part of our food heritage and Irish artisan food.

The project had six key outcomes, all a result of a highly successful collaboration between the two associations operating a joint management structure; the successful creation of an 'on the job' model for the training of butchers to an accredited standard, never achieved before in any part of Ireland and its delivery of training to 25 young apprentices. A programme of business and skills training for butchers on Customer care, Sausage Making, Cookery skills etc which attracted 400 trainees; production of on the job learning materials, including in DVD and CD Rom format; close collaboration with our sister organisation in Scotland; the SFMTA, agreement following the project to create a joint promotions initiative on a cross border basis using the common brand 'craftbutcher' in each jurisdiction and the sustained, ongoing liaison through the joint management body.

The first 'on the job' pilot group comprised 25 learner butchers on both sides of the border and, especially in Northern Ireland are well down the road to qualification. These are the first steps to a qualification that will be recognized across the border. At its final meeting each association undertook to recognize the qualification in the other jurisdiction in the absence of an all island system of certification. The Scottish Butchers Federation acted as general consultant and also training provider in Northern Ireland.

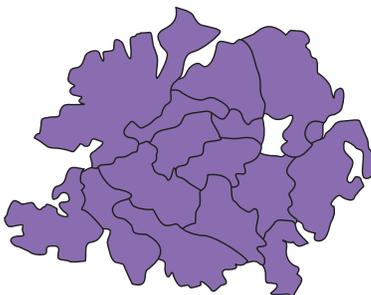


Image: 'Meals in Minutes' programme; aimed at improving butcher's cookery knowledge and skills for customer information

The programme of business and training events on both sides of the border will improve butchering, marketing and other business skills but also offered networking opportunities which will be continued after the project ended.

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www.craftbutchers.ie



Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€290,669

Total Project Cost:

€387,559

Trainees: 400

Themes Covered:

SME Support : Training : Health :
Food : Economic Development :
Rural Development

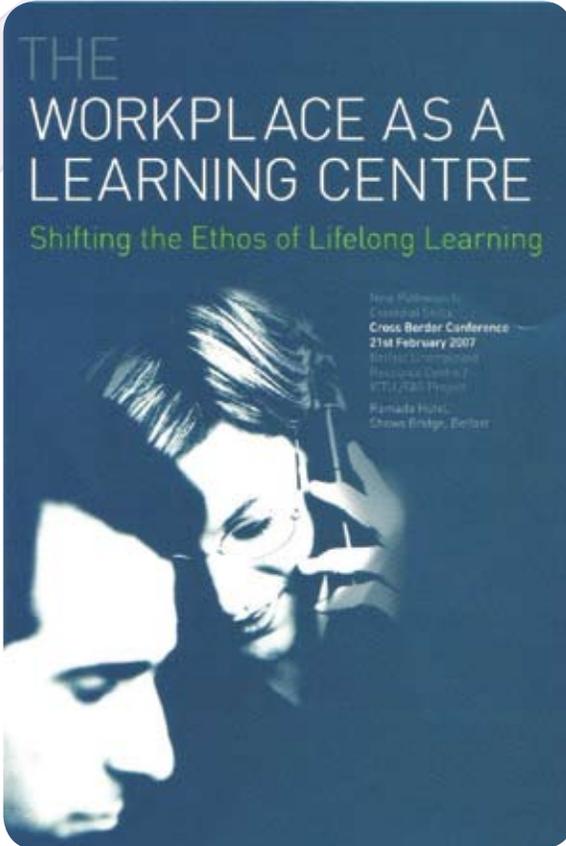


Image: Cross-Border Conference: "Work place" as a Learning Centre

The Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre completed a very successful cross border project addressing the needs of essential skills learners in the workplace. This project was part-financed by a total of €268,533 over 2 calls of the Programme with match funding provided by FAS. The programme came about because one in four adults in Northern Ireland and Ireland perform at the lowest levels of literacy competence. As an island we are looking towards knowledge-based economy, it therefore does not bode well for future economic stability unless we make further inroads into addressing this significant problem.

The countries of the Organisation for European Cooperation and Development (OECD) are placing even more emphasis on the devolvement of knowledge economies. The aim is to increase effectiveness, increase "good" jobs and sustain long-term economic growth. Although there is a marked increase in the rate of participation in adult education and training experienced in most OECD participating countries this is also accompanied by strong indications that many people with low skills continue to be excluded from further education and training. Research shows that investment in literacy / numeracy is three times more important to a nation's economic development than investment in physical capital.

The programme not only delivered training to potential essential skills tutors from both sides of the border but also awareness raising workshops for companies, around one hundred and fifty participants from various businesses on both sides of the border. A Learning Advocate training course was designed through the programme to shop floor workers to enable them to promote Lifelong Learning and in particular essential skills classes to fellow employees. As a result of increased awareness in the workplace over 500 individual learners received essential skills certificates through local providers such as the VEC and Access Skills Ireland.

The Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and their Essential Skills for Living Strategy has certainly had its up and downs over the past three years but it has made a positive impact on the professionalism of tutors and has gone some way to solving the problem of tutor availability. Seventeen of the original level two Adult Support tutors who received training on the programme have gone on to the higher level 4 City & Guilds Adult Literacy Tutor training funded through the programme and taking place at the North West Regional Institute.

Problems have arisen in Ireland where provision is still serviced by voluntary tutors, three times more than the number of paid tutors. The programme has highlighted the fact that if all potential companies and employees decide to engage in essential skills classes there would not be enough qualified tutors to provide classes. The programme has gone some to improving this situation with forty seven new tutors receiving accreditation. Certainly in Ireland there has been an increase in funding for essential skills provision in the workplace, but as no national essential skills operational plan exists there has been no consideration given to the lack of tutors or their professional qualification structure.

During the programme two certificated tutor training courses were designed and submitted to FETAC, Ireland's national accreditation authority. The level four course has received accreditation and is up and running, the level six course is still under review with FETAC.

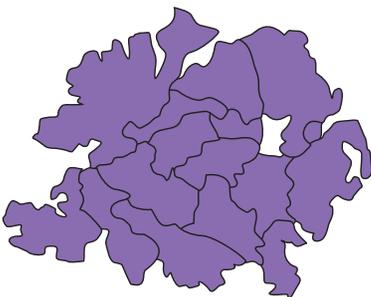
The programme has been successful in driving forward the essential skill agenda while also highlighting a number of issues that need further consideration. Most importantly a need for an Irish policy on increasing the number of qualified tutors and a national set of qualifications. The mapping of tutor qualifications in both jurisdictions, to ensure standards of provision must be addressed including the mobility of tutors, especially in the border regions. Recognition of the "equal value" of qualifications for essential skills learners also needs to be recognised.

The programme successfully hosted a cross border conference on the 'Workplace as a Learning Centre' and included speakers from all interested parties, such as the National Adult Literacy Association, the Confederation of Small Business and the Department of Employment and Learning. One of the participating tutors, Eileen, felt that she "would not have had this opportunity to re- skill if it had not been for this programme and was enjoying working with essential skills learners"

The joint programme having raised a number of issues, has however demonstrated that changes in labour force demographics, a changing economy and the need to up skill workers will drive forward an essential skills strategy and will focus policy makers, services providers, employers, trade unions and employees and educational bodies to look to work-based educational needs if we are to sustain economic growth.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€268,533

Total Projects Cost:

€366,544

Workplace Participants

Trained: 500

Themes Covered:

Social Economy : Social Inclusion

: Training

Cross Border Public Procurement Programme Promoter: Lestas Consulting

The way forward for many SME's across Ireland is to develop associate relationships and work together especially at a time of economic uncertainty. This is the only way they can safely and successfully compete in this type of global market. A major two year procurement programme concluded that concentrates on exactly this concept. The programme involved over 107 SME's across the island of Ireland who all identified public procurement as the way forward for their businesses in these uncertain times.

Nicholas Lestas, responsible for running the programme stated, "This programme has provided a clear opportunity for business to business and cross border economic co-operation that is already generating millions of Euro of increased trade for the businesses involved. It is set to grow as the participants become more confident in preparing tenders and working together on submitting them. With our economies across the whole of Ireland being so dependent on SME's and Social Economy Businesses it is precisely these types of initiatives that get to the heart of economic co-operation and growth and therefore help to combat the uncertainty in this unpredictable climate."

One of the participating companies Balloo Hire a local Belfast SME specialising in Industrial Hire Equipment stated of the programme, "we always found that completing a tender could be quite daunting and stressful, but after completing the programme, we have won several tenders and we felt we always had a helping hand if we were ever stuck. I would recommend any company to complete this course, only if they want more business."

As Nicholas Lestas said "All 107 companies involved with this programme from across the whole of

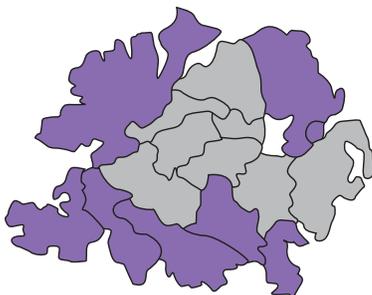


Image: Tender Support Programme organisers Nicholas Lestas, John McCarter and Michelle Lestas from Lestas Consulting at the conference held in November 2008 for 107 SME's from across the Island Ireland. The purpose of the conference was to develop associate relationships and get the companies working together on public sector tenders.

Ireland brought tremendous enthusiasm and energy to the programme. Each and every one of them approached the programme with a commitment that they had something to learn and that they wished to improve their knowledge of tendering practices, as well as their associate relationships in bidding for new work. The directory produced as a result of this programme is packed full of SME's who see the financial benefits of working together to bid for larger public sector contracts. Each of them understand the systems, procedures and requirements necessary to effectively bid for tenders and can use the information on a collective basis to compete in the global market."

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:
€125,936

Total Project Cost:
€317,458

SME's Assisted: 107

Themes Covered:
Economic Development : Social
Economy : Innovation : Training :
SME Support



Image: Shaylyn on Tour.

The aim of Shaylyn is to actively enable the local community to meet social, cultural and economic need through the development of a resource i.e. Irish Dance, Music and Song. Furthermore Shaylyn aim to increase national value, practice & appreciation of our traditional performing arts and to promote excellence in the practice of these.

For the INTERREG project Shaylyn developed a partnership with the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick to establish a dedicated Traditional Performing Arts centre in Ballinamore and the University would site a Diploma in Irish Music & Dance at the centre. Through

continued work with UL from the relationship formed via the project, courses in Irish Dance & Music at this level can be delivered locally and not just on a full time basis in Limerick.

Other innovative actions of the project included; delivering an intensive training programme in Irish Music & Dance Skills for adult beginners and improvers - the only one of its kind in Ireland, hosting an International Conference on the achievements and potential of Irish Dance & Music, a theatre performance tour by Shaylyn of the Central Border Counties and establishing Irelands first Traditional Talent Agency.

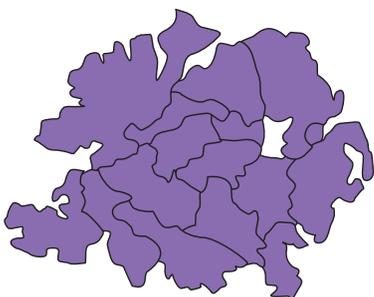
Through the actions of the project Shaylyn have established a centre for excellence in Ballinamore, Co Leitrim for the promotion of Irish Traditional Arts, the only one of its kind in Ireland. The project has delivered training in Irish Dance & Music and related areas to approx 100 adults on a cross border basis. They have performed for approx 1,400 people as part of their central border performance tour thereby educating audiences of different communities on both sides of the border on the history of Irish Dance & Music development through the ages.

A database of over 120 artists has been developed and new part time additional employment opportunities have been sourced/created by the project for these artists through the agency and the activities of the centre itself e.g. classes and training courses.

Their conference on Irish Dance & Music, its achievements and potential for development was a major success in that it aided Shaylyn's research into the needs and potential of the sector and has laid the foundations for a number of exciting future projects currently in the planning stages. Through the course of the project Shaylyn have developed existing cross border/community partnerships and added to these with new working partnerships based on a mutual love of traditional dance, Irish and/or Scottish.

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€221,940

Total Project Cost:

€295,920

Participants Trained: 100

Themes Covered:

Arts & Crafts : Health : Culture
: Heritage : Training : Economic
Development : Social Economy :



The Train 2 Gain and Go 4 Growth Programmes provided the means to build the capacity of 20 supervisors / first line managers and 10 of their line managers employed in small tourism related businesses (e.g. bars, restaurants, bed and breakfasts, small hotels, visitor attractions, craft enterprises etc) located in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Cavan, Monaghan and Leitrim to achieve and maintain operational excellence through participation on a contextualised programme of practical, co-operative activity centred on leading edge management development practices and good practice operational techniques.

The programme facilitated the sharing of experiences within the industry through a structured process of joint learning, networking and dissemination activities. The programme added to enhance more traditional forms of training for the sector by combining knowledge and accredited skills development with exposure to and experience of good practice and world-class techniques.

Lusty Beg Island saw the launch of a new exciting innovative training and development programme, "Train 2 Gain" with a two day residential aimed at developing the practical skills of team leaders and supervisors within the Tourism and Hospitality sector. All delegates completed and received their ILM level 2 Award Institute of Leadership and management and 16 delegates also completed their Welcome Host Plus Customer Care Qualification and received accreditation.

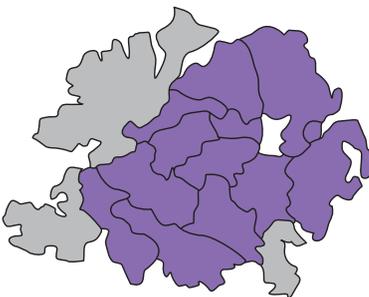
The Radisson SAS in Belfast saw the launch of a new exciting innovative development programme, "Go 4 Growth" aimed at helping businesses within the Hospitality and Tourism Sector increase their productivity and wealth. All delegates were successful and completed the programme and received an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Business Development Award at a Celebration Event.

Commenting at the launch, Dermot McBride from Hillview House said "I am extremely excited to be taking part in this programme and see it as an excellent opportunity to enhance my skills so that I can enrich my businesses and achieve its objectives."

Image: Participants on the 'Go For Growth' Training Programme

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Area benefiting from project

Fact File

INTERREG Cost:

€69,861

Total Project Cost:

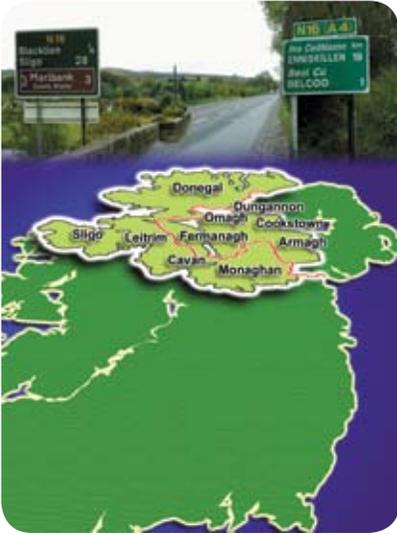
€176,106.65

Participants Trained: 30

Themes Covered:

Training : Tourism : SME Support :
Economic Development

And Finally...



ICBAN INTERREG FACT FILE

Established: 1995

Area Covered: 15829 sq kms

Population: 600,000

Projects Approved: 73

Amount Implemented €23m

Jobs Funded: 64 full time

Jobs Created/Safeguarded: 1067

Individuals Trained: 8662

Rural Businesses/SME's Assisted: 1819

Networks/Clusters Established: 226

Community Projects/Initiatives Created/Sustained: 47

Implementing Agent for INTERREG IIIA:

Measure 1.1: Business and Economic Development

Measure 1.2: The Knowledge Economy

Measure 1.3: Human Resource Development & Skilling

Member Councils

Northern Ireland

Armagh City & District Council
Cookstown District Council
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council
Fermanagh District Council
Omagh District Council

Republic of Ireland

Cavan County Council
Donegal County Council
Leitrim County Council
Monaghan County Council
Sligo County Council

The Future

While ICBAN has disbursed EU Cross Border funds under the INTERREG IIIA Programme 2000-2007, its future focus will be as a platform and facilitating organisation for major strategic local government-led regional development activities (such as Spatial Planning) which are seen as essential for the future competitiveness of the region and its progress within the context of an island economy. ICBAN's key activities will also include lobbying on issues such as infrastructure investment, and providing partnership with central government and civil society on regional development issues. ICBAN has worked in a spirit of cross-border consensus decision making, cross party co-operation, and partnership since 1995. ICBAN will utilise and build upon the sustainable/capacity building networks established via INTERREG IIIA for the benefit of regional cross border development.

Final Acknowledgement

ICBAN wish to take this opportunity to thank all the staff and partners from the aforementioned projects, without whose hard work, dedication and commitment to cross-border collaboration this document would not be possible, nor would the impacts of the EU INTERREG IIIA Programme be felt quite so positively across the Central Border Region.

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