

Sustainable  
Cork  
Programme



Building **Economic**  
Resilience

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# Foreword

**At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic the Chamber board and team committed to doing everything possible to ensure that the resilience and continuity of business was upheld throughout this crisis. To do this we initiated the Sustainable Cork Programme, to refine and focus our activities on building economic resilience through the lens of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.**

This report, was initiated to understand, sector by sector what recovery means to the business people of Cork. Through ten sectoral Think Tank discussions chaired by ten members of the Board, and an open public survey, almost 1,000 people took the time to share their views. What we found was a clear and stunningly progressive vision of a better Cork.

Deep and wide ranging state supports are essential to minimise the economic devastation being caused by COVID-19 and this understanding is deeply embedded in the day to day activity of the Chamber and the companies of which it comprises. Yet despite the intense and acute need to keep books balanced and people in work, in the creation of this report, the discussion passionately and relentlessly turned to the future vision of Cork.

Across each of our ten sector groups the same themes emerged time and time again. Better public and sustainable transport infrastructure. The delivery of Project Ireland 2040. The quickened rollout of the National Broadband Plan. More people living in the heart of our city and towns. Flexible working. Enhancement and protection of ecology, from the planting of trees to wildflower verges. Real equality for people of any gender, race or background. Childcare. Competitiveness and talent attraction. Focus on our international reputation and our approach to international markets.

Sound familiar? In 2019, over 1,000 students joined us and our partners in the Glucksman to set out their vision by creating art. They created the same, green, vibrant, happy and equal Cork through paint and sculpture that has now been described by the business and wider community in the creation of this report.

It is entirely possible and within our gift to make this vision a reality. There is a role for everyone in this, communities, businesses and Government to relentlessly pursue this vision. There is no shortage of vision or plans for Cork. Now our focus must be on delivery or we will fade to irrelevance.

There is one question this report cannot satisfactorily answer: What are we waiting for?

Thanks to the Chamber team and Sustainable Cork Programme Lead Michelle O'Sullivan for bringing this report from ideation to reality.



**Conor Healy**  
Cork Chamber CEO



**Paula Cogan**  
Cork Chamber President



**Sustainable  
Cork  
Programme**



# Executive Summary

**The Sustainable Cork Programme was initiated in May 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Designed to set a vision for a more sustainable and resilient Cork, empowered by a thriving business community and framed through the powerful lens of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the programme has been activated across every strand of Chamber activity. The initial phase focused on exploring the sectoral challenges and opportunities for a sustainable, strong recovery, in parallel with a discussion on a vision for Cork.**

In June 2020, Cork Chamber hosted 10 sectoral Think Tank discussions and this document presents the richness of these progressive findings, highlighting the unique sectoral activities and priorities identified by each group and the great commonalities between them. Namely businesses call for:

- » Sustained support post Covid-19
- » Climate action, Government policy certainty and support for climate innovation
- » Support to transition business skills, activities, production models and materials
- » A living City region with a connected, integrated public and sustainable transport network to support sustainable development, and affordable accommodation
- » Support for cluster and innovation hubs
- » Early education and role models as a key pillar of societal and workplace inclusion and diversity
- » Support for remote and flexible working

- » Business commitment and Cork commitment to support local, grow global

- » Affordable and accessible childcare

- » Delivery on established Government strategies namely Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework, Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, National Broadband Plan, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.

The sectoral Think Tanks were followed with a public survey titled 'Imagineer Your City, Your County' to which over 800 responses were received. The survey asked for views on the future vision for Cork in the next 5, 10 and 30 years.

The survey asked the questions "What do you want to see more of? What differentiates Cork when it comes to living and working here? What will be the biggest changes to our daily lives by 2030, and by 2050? If you were given one wish to shape Cork's development by 2050, what would that be?" The answers offer direction as to how Cork could be shaped as it develops, where we could excel and how we could differentiate. When asked how Cork will look by 2050, 43% of respondents highlight remote working as the norm and 42% choose public transport as the number one choice for commuting. 25% presume our towns will be connected with cycling, walking, greenways and blueways, and that the city will have more planting, trees, green spaces and amenity areas within 1km of home.

With responses across the board highlighting the importance of climate action, connected public transport, quality of life, affordable accommodation, and the opportunities for a Living City region, a picture is painted of the Cork that people want to live in, work in and enjoy. A picture very similar to the broad spectrum asks of the Cork business community.

As an economy we are just now emerging from the initial Covid-19 pandemic shock. Many businesses will not reopen, many have pivoted their operations to survive, and for many 2020 has effectively been written off. Supporting businesses to reopen and stay open, supporting livelihoods and communities is the minimum baseline for a resilient recovery. Meanwhile climate change and Brexit are the challenging backdrop to this recovery. While working tirelessly to solve the problems of today, we must also keep sight of our strategic plan. Without this foresight we will drift from firefighting to uncompetitiveness. When this foresight is mixed with delivery it becomes a potent combination that catalyses our long term resilience.

Cork as a leader, was the resounding note echoed in each Think Tank. As a location of scale, with a thriving and diverse business community, world class research and educational institutes and a growing population, we have the opportunity to get it right. Being a leader must be broader than any one area of expertise, we must support each other for a strong, diverse and multi-pronged economy and society.

The USPs of a quality location for investment and skills are those that create a location which are enlivened with culture, arts and community, are designed to support active and healthy lifestyles, that nourish communities and creativity, embrace



synergies, that support inclusion and diversity, that innovate within and across disciplines, that support individuals and nurture families to enjoy the richness of their surrounds. Skills no longer follow the job, the job follows the skills.

Climate action, innovation, skills and training feature strongly. The appetite to transition to a low carbon, to net zero carbon economy is there right across the board. This must be met with practical support and interventions, and policy certainty from Government. Certainty is key. Business needs to chart its course, and navigate in that direction with purpose, and ambition.

As a region, we can lead. Cork can be a location of excellence, to flatten our climate curve. The opportunity exists in Cork to identify Cork Climate Action Goals and there is a role for business, Government, communities and individuals in achieving this. Setting regional goals and being supported in the transition to achieve these could be pivotal.

Crystallising from the Think Tank sessions is the interest in the circular economy, and production models. This production model moves away from linear production of take, make, dispose. A circular model is a shift away from single use, it looks at the full lifecycle focusing on the materials and designs that support renewal, reuse, repair, upgrade or refurbishment.

The power of clusters, of creating platforms to innovate, create and be disruptive came to the fore. This was prominent for climate innovation, life sciences, energy, construction materials and building innovation right across the board.

From a Culture, Arts, Community and Media Think Tank perspective, the development of a Cork Cultural Innovation Hub, providing a location for artists to meet, to collaborate and to grow their skills, and to innovate could be a real differentiator for Cork nationally and internationally.

As a City region proud of its culture, arts and



heritage, an innovation hub would benefit up and coming artists, to established artists. Broadening STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) also featured in Think Tank sessions, in its opportunity to broaden the cross disciplinary interactions and collaborations. Social enterprises, their value in supporting communities and addressing social, and environmental issues carry an important role in identifying societal needs and building resilience at community level. Their importance was emphasised as a catalyst of social, environmental and economic resilience from grassroots up.

The opportunities for remote and flexible working to increase workplace participation and inclusion, supported by enabling progressive workplace policies. The national broadband plan, in tandem with a strong national strategy on regional co-working and business innovation hubs.

To the fore was the potential of hubs to support remote working, broadening workforce participation, while decreasing commuter congestion and transport emissions, alleviating pressures on urban areas, supporting work life balance, rural revitalisation, regional economies and rural towns.

Simply being pro diversity is no longer enough. We must be actively anti-racist or we will irrevocably damage Ireland's global leadership role. We must address the identified barriers to workplace participation, inclusion and diversity. Diverse, inclusive workplaces are stronger, more resilient workplaces. Strong leadership and policy making at Government level is needed. Access to affordable quality childcare is not a good to have, it is a must have. Government must lead.

AI, automation and the transition to a low carbon economy will bring new opportunities, but we must be proactive, reskilling, training and supporting businesses to make this transition. Quality of life can be strengthened through provision of amenities, public and sustainable transport investment and the revitalisation of urban centres.

Greening, parklets, enhancing and developing attractions were all to the fore in developing an attractive location for international and

domestic visitors and their importance from a living city, quality of life perspective. The Cork Events Centre is pivotal and must be delivered. Government must support City and town renewal and this must be a commitment now and for the longer term.

As a business community, we must support local, to grow global.

Government must deliver on established Government strategies namely Project Ireland 2040 which when delivered will support strong communities, livelihoods and a resilient Ireland across economy, environment, society and community.

The National Planning Framework, Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, National Broadband Plan, Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and Rural Regeneration and Development Fund must be expanded. These established strategies featured strongly throughout the Think Tank sessions, in some instances by name, in others by reference to the outcome in developing a strong, resilient region. Government must remain committed. These strategies must not be politicised. Government must deliver.

By developing a strong vision, we can identify a positive pathway for Cork to further distinguish itself internationally and to be a better place for companies and people locally. Quality of life, environmental awareness, and business competitiveness are intrinsically woven together. We have an opportunity, to lay the foundations for a stable and better economy and society and to leave a legacy of resilience and sustainability for generations to come. While we focus on the changes that need to be made, we can also recognise the benefits that these changes can bring to our daily lives, whether living, working or studying in Cork.

Now is the time to frame that opportunity with clear vision and ambition, moving forward with purpose. The Sustainable Cork Programme sets out to chart this course.

# Business and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

## The Role of Business

The business community has a major role in the long-term sustainability and the resilience of not only our economic future, but our social and environmental future. We must take urgent and radical steps to ensure that businesses survive. We must also ensure that they do more than just survive, that they thrive, in a more resilient and sustainable economic environment. We must make decisions that secure a climate friendly society that is inclusive and equitable, that protects our natural resources, our quality of life, and which embeds economic resilience and sustainability at the heart of all actions and strategic plans.

In recent years, Ireland has experienced intense weather events, with the frequency of these increasing year by year. These events are affecting economic activity and resilience across the country. The current global Covid-19

pandemic has uncovered the importance of sustainability and resilience across the entirety of our health systems, economy and society. It has uncovered the embedded ability of our environment to support social resilience, as well as the innate ability of our natural environment to recover. It has brought the opportunities of agile workplaces supported by technology into focus with businesses quickly pivoting where possible to remote working capabilities.

With a reduction in emissions from transport and industry, we saw the natural environments flourish. In the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, sustainability must be at its core, supporting for example inclusive workplaces, clean technologies and energy. As we develop, we need to ensure that economic resilience, founded on sustainability and the ability to be agile, and adaptive is at the heart of how we approach our business operations, national and local Government functions, and social cohesion.

## UN Sustainable Development Goals





## Sustainable Development Goals

A common misconception is that the UN SDGs are focused on the environment and climate solely. This is not the case. Also known as the Global Goals, the SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a global call to action. The UN SDGs are effectively the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable, resilient future long term and for all. They call on Governments, businesses, and individuals to make the necessary changes, to be proactive and to be progressive.

There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals covering a range of areas from poverty eradication, reducing inequality, economic growth, access to education services to environmental protection. The SDGs are interdependent. If you have for example communities that are experiencing the effects of increased catastrophic weather events, the local and regional economy will suffer, as will livelihoods, socio economic resilience, access to education, health and wellbeing. To be sustainable progress across all 17 SDGs is essential.

### Chamber SDG Commitment

Cork Chamber, and the national Chamber network via Chambers Ireland have committed to actively championing five SDGs. Honing in on five at the outset enables a focus that creates and encourages change and lasting progress.

Cork Chamber and Chambers Ireland have committed to driving positive change in these 5 SDG's:

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CLIMATE ACTION

## Climate Action

Climate change and its associated risks have become one of the major threats to the business community in Ireland. From increased flooding and more intense storms, to the shift in customer behaviour, the change in climate has profound impacts on Irish enterprises.

Although there are many risks, there are opportunities to be seized by companies who are becoming more sustainable. We need to facilitate the business transition to a low carbon economy, progressively moving towards net zero carbon, and carbon negative (removing more carbon from the atmosphere than generated) where possible.

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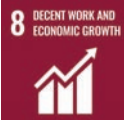
GENDER EQUALITY

## Gender Equality

In the Chamber network we are advocating for sound policies and enforceable legislation that promotes gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels in the workplace. For example remote working, and the opportunities this can achieve from the perspective of workforce participation for those that otherwise could be excluded.

Gender equality is about implementing or enhancing inclusivity for all. An inclusive workplace is also a creative, diverse workplace, and strengthens business operations.





## Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promoting Sustainable economic growth and full and productive employment is something the Chamber network advocates for.

For example, technological change is a major driver of innovation, jobs and economic growth. The advancement of technology in the areas of e-commerce, renewable energy and new digital skills have given Irish enterprises increased trade opportunities and entries into new emerging markets. However, this change has also contributed to the displacement of traditional jobs and industries. We believe that in order for economic growth to be sustainable, we must seek and ensure the enablers of a Just Transition for all, supporting businesses, communities, and our economy to transition to a low, to net zero carbon economy.

Just Transition encompasses a range of economic and social interventions needed to secure livelihoods when economies are shifting to sustainable production, primarily combating climate change and protecting biodiversity.



## Sustainable Cities and Communities

If Ireland is to become a more sustainable society, the way we build and plan our urban environment needs a revolution. We believe that cities and towns need a prolonged and intensive campaign to build more and better public transport connectivity, pedestrian, cycling, and social infrastructure throughout the urban built environment which integrates housing, transport hubs, and civic spaces (including schools and recreational amenities). Skills and investment are attracted to locations that provide a good quality of life, and progressive outlook for its workers, and for its operations. Developing as a location of scale that supports strong communities, strong business environments underpinned with a progressive approach to town, community, and city planning will benefit business, communities, the natural environment and quality of life.



## Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Investing in infrastructure and innovation have been crucial drivers of economic growth and development for all cities and towns across Ireland.

Throughout Ireland, Chambers are striving to develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and societal well-being.

## Think Tanks

To capture the perspectives and ambition of the Cork business community, Cork Chamber established ten sectoral Think Tanks to explore the road to recovery and the opportunities to build resilience using the UN SDGs as the agenda and framework for discussion.

Under each of the five SDGs, Cork Chamber facilitated Think Tank discussions to answer:

- 1) What is the problem we are trying to solve?
- 2) What can business do to distinguish Cork (to be leaders)?
- 3) What can Government do to help business?

Over 100 representatives<sup>1</sup> from across the Cork Chamber membership shared learnings, sectoral perspectives and ideas around the future recovery and pathway to resilience and sustainability for the Cork region.

By reviewing the depth of the current challenge through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals we will ensure that recovery in the short term and medium term creates a positive legacy that improves Cork rather than simply seeking to return to what we once had.

The following section provides an overview of the sectoral Think Tanks, blending the key points from the advance participant preparation and the approx. 2 hour facilitated discussion.

<sup>1</sup> Participating organisations listed page 57

# Sectoral Think Tanks



# Life Sciences & Manufacturing



## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Clair Murphy**, Site Leader, Pfizer Ringaskiddy API and Cork Chamber Board member



**Cork plays a leading role in Ireland's vibrant life sciences sector. Specifically, Cork employs over 15,000 people in the sector, more than any other region.**

Seven out of the top 10 global pharmaceutical companies are located in Cork. Today about a third of the country's exports are pharmaceutical and medical products - no region has contributed more than Cork to this remarkable success story.<sup>2</sup>

### Impact of Covid-19

The initial evidence is that the impact on pharmaceuticals has been negligible to date. In March, merchandise exports grew by 43 per cent year on year driven by a significant increase in the exports of pharmaceutical products.<sup>3</sup>

However, manufacturing has been adversely affected. Recent manufacturing Purchasing Manager Index (PMI data) shows a further contraction in May, with the reading coming in at 39.2. This reading indicates a continued contraction in manufacturing business activity as a result of COVID-19 and its associated containment measures.

Industrial production in the mainly indigenous 'traditional sector' fell by 19% on an annual basis in April. About 32% of employees in manufacturing are estimated to be on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) or Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS), down from 37% prior to Phase 1.<sup>4</sup>

The longer-term behaviour of Ireland's international trading partners while COVID-19 remains a threat to the global supply chain is uncertain and could have longer term implications for the sector in Ireland.

### Think Tank

Think Tank representatives highlighted the importance of Local. Supporting local will enable Cork to grow global. The potential for creating an innovation cluster and to develop stronger collaborations between start ups and larger organisations is highlighted. The importance of growing regional innovation capabilities are central to our ability as a region to be a disruptor, investing in disruptive technologies and being a leader.

The importance of the circular economy model, and the role of Government in supporting businesses was a key aspect of the discussion. Businesses need certainty and support to transition practices, processes, skills, technology and materials. Enabling the region through Government delivery of public/sustainable transport investment, the development of renewable energy capacity, Project Ireland 2040 and maintaining and growing a strong quality of life for all.

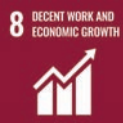
Government are called on to better legislate for gender pay and for businesses/Government and HEIs to invest in STEM initiatives from early education. Finally, the group called on Cork to initiate a Cork Commitment on Climate Change, to be leaders, disruptors, to be innovators and to be a location of excellent for climate action.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.growincork.com/invest/life-sciences/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.centralbank.ie/publication/quarterly-bulletins/quarterly-bulletin-q3-2020>

<sup>4</sup> <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Economic-Considerations-for-Reinstating-Economic-Activity-Update-for-Phase-3.pdf> 29 June

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Increased digitalisation
- » Ensuring talent attraction and retention
- » Competition from lower cost economies
- » Creating a location where people want to live. This is effected by factors such as transport, housing and access to services e.g. broadband.
- » Mobility around the city and in the N28
- » Ensuring supply chains are maintained

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support local services/producers, grow global
- » Accelerate focus on sustainable, circular, responsible economic growth
- » Capture opportunity for disruptive technologies, invest in skills/talent and strengthen collaboration across the sector with educational institutions

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support business transition to low/net zero carbon e.g. energy efficient remediation works
- » Upskilling/reskilling, supporting multi-annual support for lifelong learning
- » Targeted policy incentives for sustainable, inclusive and circular economic activities
- » Incentivise diverse small-scale manufacturing



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Ensure quality of life long-term
- » Public and sustainable transport, affordable housing, broadband & access to services
- » Lack of civic amenities in rural town communities
- » Broader City/town centre safety issues and broader social issues e.g. racism, anti-social behaviour & drug abuse

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Embrace and support remote working practices
- » Support City/town centre events, celebrate multi-cultural community
- » Develop Cork as the city of choice to work from virtually

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support start-ups/growing companies
- » Fast-track dedicated cycle and bus lanes for high employment areas
- » Invest in Cork as a living city region i.e. unlock over-shop living, deliver affordable housing, increase An Garda Síochána resourcing for safe city/town centres, deliver on commitments of Project Ireland 2040



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Ethical sourcing and supply chain
- » Position Cork to be a major centre for the offshore wind and solar photovoltaic (PV)
- » Carbon neutral by 2050

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Adopt circular economy model
- » Widescale visible projects that demonstrate use of renewable energy solutions
- » Ensure high level of sustainability in new builds and refurbishment projects

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Increase education/information campaigns with climate change focus
- » Protect City centre from extreme climate events
- » Financial measures and incentives to increase climate action, resource and consumption taxes and grants



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Delivery of key infrastructure projects in Cork e.g. M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy connection, sustainable and public transport options
- » Confusing industrialisation and innovation landscape
- » Develop ways to exploit synergies in industries

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Greater collaboration between R&D stakeholders to develop partnerships with start-ups
- » A Cork Lifesciences group
- » Develop an innovation cluster and R&D Hub sponsored by industry and Government to radically challenge and innovate to support climate action

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Accelerate digital capabilities and collaboration hubs within the country
- » Implement Project 2040, deliver ambitious large-scale regeneration projects, new employment, affordable housing, transport and support infrastructure development for Cork Docklands
- » Ensure manufacturing companies can access supports similar to other industries



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### CHALLENGES

- » Women underrepresented at all levels of society and decision making
- » Identify role models for upcoming generations to identify with
- » Primary and secondary level curricula to showcase female leaders in industry/academia

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Initiatives to facilitate women re-joining the workforce
- » Introduce four-day parental working weeks, provide childcare services and embrace work/life balance ethos
- » Develop further programmes that encourage and develop women in STEM e.g. IWISH

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Legislate for gender pay reporting and increase affordability of quality childcare
- » Encourage girls and women to pursue/sustain careers in STEM through grants, scholarships, and support agencies e.g. support Junior Achievement Ireland have urban and rural reach
- » Balanced gender representation at Government level



# ICT & Digital Economy

The South West region leads in terms of ICT sector growth and Cork has a proven track record as an international location for investment and as a hub for ICT companies, both indigenous and global.

Cork is already home to over 60 international technology companies covering Integrated Circuit (IC) Design, manufacturing, software development, and cybersecurity.

Overseas technology companies in the region currently employ 17,000+ people<sup>5</sup>. In a recently released fDi Intelligence report on Tech Cities of the future, Cork has been ranked number 5 in the top 10 Tech Cities for economic potential.<sup>6</sup> Business and academic collaboration with





## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Donal Cahalane**, Founder of Cork's Republic of Work, and Cork Chamber Board member



technology centres and Universities including the Tyndall Institute and Nimbus are the cutting edge of innovation.

Prior to COVID-19, the latest edition of the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) highlighted that Ireland has maintained a leading position in the use of e-commerce by SMEs, and in the integration of digital technology. SMEs in Ireland excelled in e-commerce and lead in all three indicators – selling online, e-commerce turnover and selling online cross-border. In fact 29% of Irish SME's turnover came from online sales, which is almost three times the EU average of 11%. Furthermore, Irish companies ranked relatively high on the use of big data (20%), cloud services (33%) and social media (44%)<sup>7</sup>.

### Impact of Covid-19

The impact on computer processors and ICT services exports is negligible to date. The aftermath of Covid 19 may be seen as an opportunity for Cork to diversify its workforce and truly embrace remote working and offer an alternative to locating in Dublin. With the pace of digitalisation across the economy quickening as a result of the pandemic, there are opportunities for businesses pivoting and embracing online.

### Think Tank

The importance of training and education was at the fore in the discussion. Access to employment opportunities and in education must always be central in the recovery and years ahead. Automation and the transition of a low carbon economy will bring new opportunities, but we must be proactive, reskilling, training and supporting businesses to make this transition to new/different ways of work, and a hybrid work model. Quality of life can be strengthened through provision of amenities, public and sustainable transport investment, provision of green spaces and the revitalisation of urban centres. Government must support City and towns to renew and this must be a commitment long term.

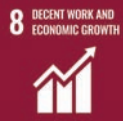
As a business community, we must support local. We must broaden our economic model, embracing a circular model, and doughnut economic model (living within social and planetary boundaries). In Cork we can be leaders, a region of excellence for green businesses. The importance of education on diversity and inclusion was discussed, this must be supported and regularised from early education. In relation to gender equality, transparent reporting on gender pay could be influential in addressing persistent issues in this space. Government were called on to not be risk adverse, to deliver Project Ireland 2040, and to facilitate regions to excel. In policy there is a need for flexibility per region, one size does not necessarily fit all. We must be facilitated to work to our regional USPs and develop these.

5. <https://irishtechnews.ie/corks-ict-sector-primed-for-growth-with-e300million-worth-of-city-centre-property-developments-underway/>

6. <https://www.itcork.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/fDi-Intelligence-Tech-Cities-of-the-Future-report.pdf>

7. <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Ensure a skilled workforce matched with good quality employment, access to third level education for all
- » Increasing rate of unemployment and in the longer term the transition of lower skilled, high turnover roles at risk of automation
- » Work life balance and managing a hybrid remote workforce

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Continued collaboration between MTU and UCC and industry to meet skills needs
- » Upskilling candidate pools at entry level/where a skill is becoming obsolete
- » Strengthening interpersonal/soft skills (find solutions through processes and understanding business problems)

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Develop a digital/technology training initiative for displaced skills
- » Third level education free and available to all (not limited to college or university) and continue innovation development
- » Lean/IEE applied to existing agencies - Support business hubs for start-ups/entrepreneurs with support and access to mentoring



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Placemaking and green areas for people, thriving communities
- » Improve public and sustainable transport infrastructure, city cleaning and maintenance
- » Depopulation, dereliction of city centre, retail closures and anti-social behaviour

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Refine behaviours and business practices to be more sustainable e.g. energy usage, travel
- » Support growth of green spaces, over-shop living, pedestrianisation in urban areas
- » Support local sustainable initiatives, get involved in the community initiatives

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Adopt Doughnut economic model (a thriving society within planetary boundaries)
- » Address cost of living, accommodation, broadband connectivity, public and sustainable transport deficiencies
- » Support remote working hubs to encourage living and working locally



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Decouple economic growth from climate
- » Educate on energy and transport impacts
- » Green the city in every respect (green space, pedestrianisation/reduction of cars)

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Encourage carpooling at work and track number of miles daily 'not travelled'
- » Support remote working hubs and adopt circular economic model approach to production and resource use
- » Incentivise and attract green business to locate in region (Promote region of excellence)

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Incentivise focus on a triple bottom line for business (accounting for social, environmental, and financial)
- » Support companies to think local while growing global
- » Support circular economy with policy and legislation



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Address lag between innovation, market needs/ demands through Government policy and legislation
- » Encourage innovative thinking on improvements – digital/ tech as enablers
- » Management of remote teams with technology, and workforce support/training

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Embrace opportunities for accelerated remote working
- » Programmes for displaced workforce as economy transitions to low carbon
- » Create facilities to promote cycling to work, showers, secure lockups and invest in solar/wind energy/carbon offsetting

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Funding for educators to support technology development for blended learning and refine pathways for entrepreneurs on completion of accelerator programmes
- » Clear direction on wind and solar
- » Do not be risk adverse and lag behind curve in terms of funding and legislation, develop policy by region (versus one size fits all) for housing, infrastructure, enterprise development and environment



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### CHALLENGES

- » Stereotypes around gender and employment e.g. education has a key role, promote STEM
- » Grow the mentor network with links between business and HEI's
- » Address gender pay inequality

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Female role models – school and industry collaboration/ mentor programme
- » Business mindful of leadership teams, boards, event panels in terms of diversity and gender
- » Adopt transparent reporting on gender pay and champion D&I initiatives in workplaces, recruitment, education

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Continue to support national awareness and education on D&I e.g. information programmes
- » Incentivise gender balanced workplaces
- » Address social inclusion, homelessness and direct provision



# Tourism, Hospitality, Leisure & Retail

**Tourism and hospitality is a significant employer in the South-West region, with 28,400 people employed in accommodation and food service activities alone, making up nearly 9% of the total workforce<sup>8</sup>.**

The South-West region attracts the highest numbers of overseas visitors after Dublin, with nearly 2.5m tourists travelling to Cork and Kerry generating €968m in revenue accounted for in 2017.<sup>8</sup>

The South West consistently ranks as a top tourism destination in Ireland. As the biggest county in Ireland, the historic walled towns and harbours of East Cork form a key part of Ireland's Ancient East, with Cork also the starting point of the internationally renowned Wild Atlantic Way. The region's tourism offering also makes an important contribution to enhancing the quality of life and attractiveness of the South-West as a place to live and work.

Retail is one of Ireland's largest employers, with a presence in every city, town and village in the country<sup>9</sup>. Despite pressure on the retail sector, Cork can claim that approx. 70% of retailers are independent or family businesses trading alongside big brands<sup>10</sup>.



## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Rob Horgan**, Owner of Velo Coffee Roasters  
and Cork Chamber Board member



### Impact of Covid-19

The tourism and hospitality sector has a high proportion of employment supported by Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) or the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS). Looking forward the Tourism sector will be challenged for a variety of reasons including travel restrictions, the significant decline expected in international tourism, lower customer demand, and reduced productivity on foot of social distancing requirements.

A high level of seasonality has always been a challenge in Cork's tourism sector and now the sector is evermore challenged to employ creative ways to extend the season, and promote sustainability of the sector and thus maximise tourism's contribution to the quality of life, economy, employment and local community development of the region. This sector has been flagged as strategically important for the broader Irish economy and will require ongoing focus and support.

In terms of retail, there was an increase of 28.4% in the value of retail sales in May 2020. However, in April 2020 there was an annual decrease of 29.1% when compared with May 2019<sup>11</sup>. Although, the Covid-19 crisis has challenged and changed the interactions between customers and retailers, it has also presented opportunities for transformation. This includes the acceleration of online sales and digitalisation, as well as a strong focus on customer experience and differentiation.

### Think Tank

In the short to medium term, the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme was discussed in relation to the initial failure to support businesses that are dependent on seasonality and seasonal workers. Businesses need support to pivot operations and update skills and processes to meet needs in longer term. The Think Tank called for proactive support from Government to enhance business ability to adapt to more sustainable models through grants and tax mechanisms.

City and town centre revival, and appeal as a place to visit featured strongly. Greening, parklets, enhancing and developing attractions were all to the fore in developing an attractive location for international and domestic visitors and their importance from a living city and quality of life perspective. The Cork Events Centre is pivotal and must be delivered.

Businesses have a role to play in highlighting female leaders. We must proactively address gender equality and the wider diversity and inclusion of our region.

Businesses could be leaders in supporting a Carbon Neutral/Low Carbon City policy, with Government support. Broadband connectivity, the potential of energy prosumers (adapting businesses to be producers and consumers with attractive payback rates to the grid) and the objectives of Project Ireland 2040 were highlighted as levers in underpinning our regional potential.

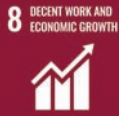
8 <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/South-West-Regional-Enterprise-Plan-to-2020.PDF>

9 [https://www.retailireland.ie/Sectors/RI/RI.nsf/vPages/Retail\\_in\\_Ireland~retail-at-a-glance/\\$file/Retail's+positive+contribution+to+Irish+economy.pdf](https://www.retailireland.ie/Sectors/RI/RI.nsf/vPages/Retail_in_Ireland~retail-at-a-glance/$file/Retail's+positive+contribution+to+Irish+economy.pdf)

10 <https://www.wearecork.ie/live/retail-therapy/>

11 <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/services/retailsalesindex/>

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Summer seasonal employees and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme
- » Support businesses to pivot their services and reconfigure/update products/skills/services
- » Longer term secure employment in the sector is needed

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Promote local, shop local ethos
- » Upskilling and training for employees
- » To promote a Safety Charter to assure customers of service standards with alignment to Covid-19 operating guidelines
- » By creating sustainable business, this creates sustainable and decent employment

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Tax incentives and grants to enhance businesses ability to adapt to more sustainable models, products, processes
- » Financial supports post-Covid; start-up and scale-up supports
- » Measures that avoid austerity (need to invest and encourage spending in the economy)
- » Support better mobility and connectivity



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Need to increase public amenities, attractions and improve City Centre safety to entice visitors to the city
- » Insufficient public transport in the City and County
- » Make Cork a living city with affordable city centre living, transport links and civic spaces and address dereliction in the City Centre

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support the reenergising of streets and locations
- » Support creativity and culture to attract footfall into the City
- » Support local initiatives e.g. Visit Cork, Customer Service Charter, initiatives to enhance City living and appeal to visitors via parklets, neighbourhood gardens

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Enhanced regional resourcing of An Garda Síochána
- » City Council long term commitment to the placemaking fund
- » Explore opportunities for water-based transport in the harbour and marina
- » Support the local vision through the delivery of infrastructure in bus network, park and rides, cycleways and pedestrianisation along with enforcement of dereliction orders



### Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

#### CHALLENGES

- » Broadband challenge, poor investment in public and sustainable transport networks
- » Developing visitor attractions

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Implement rooftop solar, be prosumers as well as consumers
- » Market and position the uniqueness of cork
- » Develop and drive clustering and innovative strategies/ understand the gaps across our industry and business sectors

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » National broadband plan to encourage flexibility
- » Increase services and amenities in line with population projections
- » Urgent need to address policy instruments and pivot to meet current economic crisis
- » Deliver Project Ireland 2040

13 CLIMATE ACTION



**Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**

**CHALLENGES**

- » Access to high speed broadband is an issue in facilitating remote/home working
- » Identifying business pathways to carbon neutrality
- » Address the haphazard, reactive approach to encouraging sustainable forms of transport
- » Identifying the sustainable capacity of the city in the future

**ROLE OF BUSINESS**

- » Incentivise staff to commute by bike or public transport
- » Support remote working opportunities
- » Assess own business to reduce carbon footprint, use of plastics and single use products, and support carbon-neutral/low-carbon city policy
- » Support biodiversity initiatives in the urban areas

**ROLE OF GOVERNMENT**

- » Meaningful investment in proper bus network, park and ride, cycleways and pedestrianisation
- » Integration of public and sustainable transport hubs (train and bus station)
- » Investment and support for developing compact, connected cities
- » Support retrofitting of the housing sector, encourage renewable energy prosumers with buy back of power to the grid

5 GENDER EQUALITY



**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

**CHALLENGES**

- » Ensure women and girls have equal access, opportunity, and participation in society
- » Availability and affordability of childcare
- » Flexible working and return to work programmes for primary care givers

**ROLE OF BUSINESS**

- » Remove barriers that prevent women re-entering the workplace
- » To provide equality of opportunity
- » Eliminate gender bias - equal wages to all
- » Highlighting female leaders

**ROLE OF GOVERNMENT**

- » Legislation to remove gender imbalance
- » Mandatory equal pay for equal work
- » Affordable Childcare



# Culture, Arts, Community & Media

**The Cork region has a rich and diverse cultural offering that is an important part of its past, present and future. The proportion of employment in arts, entertainment and tourism jobs in Cork stood at 10% in 2019<sup>12</sup>.**

In Cork and nationally, the Arts sector is a job-intensive sector intertwined with other activity such as in aviation, hotels, B&Bs, pubs and restaurants, festivals, museums, exhibitions, and conferences. With a focus on SMEs, the Arts sector provides a unique and locally embedded complement to Ireland's more widely publicised sectors with multilateral benefit. The Arts is recognised as not only vital for the economy, but its development is at the heart of the Project Ireland 2040 aspirations to build a more sustainable and resilient economic model.

The role and value of the community and voluntary sector is crucial to the social and economic fabric of Cork. Across the county thousands of community and voluntary organisations work together with State bodies, schools, postal service and frontline services to bring supports to those in need, while helping to inform policy on protecting the most vulnerable at national level.

There are an estimated 189,000 employees in registered charitable organisations in Ireland. Over half of all registered charities have between one and 20 volunteers, with three per cent having 250 or more.

It is estimated that the value of this volunteering work, using the minimum wage, is €648.8 million per year (this increases to €1.5 billion when using the average income.)<sup>13</sup>

## Impact of Covid-19

The Arts and Entertainment sector was one of the first and most severely hit, along with the tourism sector. The Arts, Entertainment and Other Services sees around 57% (down from 60% prior to Phase 1) of those previously working in this sector estimated to be on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) or Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS).





## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Shane Clarke**, CEO, Nano Nagle Place and Cork Chamber Board member.



New EY research commissioned by the Arts Council shows that the negative and long-lasting effect of the Covid-19 crisis on the arts. Specifically that without additional financial support the arts sector could contract by up to 42% in 2020 compared to a 11% decline for the wider economy, and that the arts sector could take until 2025 to recover from the current crisis. However, Covid-19 has also brought the importance and value of community into focus and in many ways the arts sector is synonymous with community as a place and an expression of positivity.<sup>14</sup>

Like businesses across the country, independent radio and print media have experienced a sharp and sudden decline in revenues due to a decrease in advertising and sales. However, many have reinvented their online and multi-platform offering and the importance of independent radio and media endures.

Media as an agent in informing and supporting communities and enhancing social awareness and understanding of public health measures is not to be underestimated.

The crisis has also shone a light on the role and value of the community sector. The ongoing impact of COVID-19 creates both challenges and opportunities for the sector in obtaining the necessary level of commitments, policies and resources to enable it to survive through and develop during the post COVID-19 period. The provision of a €40m Stability Fund for charities, community and voluntary organisations, and social enterprises is an acknowledgment of the role and value that community-based organisations play, and need to play, in society.

## Think Tank

Through Arts, Culture, Community and Media we differentiate ourselves, giving colour and energy to our lives through creative expression. Exploring the challenges ahead, the group highlight the uncertainty of work, and the low pay paradigm as a deterrent to talented people pursuing careers. We are losing out on opportunities, skills and talent.

Dedicated funding, and certainty of funding is needed to provide people with job security and a secure income, and quality of life.

The potential for a Cork Cultural Innovation Hub was resoundingly echoed across the group as holding massive potential for the region. A hub that supports up and coming artists and performers. A dedicated central focal point for creativity, that is secure in its tenure and provides certainty to the sector. We can be leaders in Cork.

A strong culture and arts sector supports community and is crucial to maintaining the character of our City region as it grows. We need to support diversity and inclusion for all, employment opportunities for all within our communities. Cork can be a Living City with a vibrant, safe, populated core, with green spaces and strengthened, protected biodiversity, and amenities connected with public/sustainable transport options and with affordable housing.

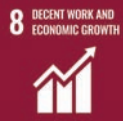
Government legislation to support equal pay and equal parental leave could be pivotal in rebalancing society and addressing persistent issues. Support for remote working and flexible work should be accelerated and enabled.

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.arts council.ie/uploadedFiles/Employment\\_and\\_Economic\\_Impact\\_Assessment\\_of\\_COVID-19\\_on\\_the\\_Arts\\_Sector\\_in\\_Ireland.pdf](http://www.arts council.ie/uploadedFiles/Employment_and_Economic_Impact_Assessment_of_COVID-19_on_the_Arts_Sector_in_Ireland.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/media/1564/indecon-social-and-economic-impact-report-2018.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.arts council.ie/uploadedFiles/Survive%20Adapt%20Renew\\_A%20response%20to%20the%20Covid-19%20crisis%20for%20the%20Arts%20in%20Ireland.pdf](http://www.arts council.ie/uploadedFiles/Survive%20Adapt%20Renew_A%20response%20to%20the%20Covid-19%20crisis%20for%20the%20Arts%20in%20Ireland.pdf)

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Sudden loss of income, ability to retain staff and pay staff, freelance arts sector has been decimated
- » Sector needs consistent, dependable funding
- » Not attractive for employment, more income and employment certainty needed, lack of employment opportunities in all sectors for people with disabilities

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support events/performances and engage local artists
- » Commit to supporting living wage
- » Lead by good practice, social and employment diversity
- » Support social enterprises and community enterprises

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Commit to a Cultural Innovation Hub for Cork
- » Address sectoral challenge with pay, job security, career pathways
- » Support employment opportunities for those with a disability



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Doughnut effect, an empty centre and a busy outer ring of activity
- » Address safety concerns in the City centre & engage Arts and Culture projects to reenergise the centre
- » Access to affordable housing, transport links and internet connectivity

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Embrace CSR that engages Arts, Culture and Community projects
- » Utilise culture to build lasting links with different communities in local environs
- » Develop a Citywide charter to address gaps and identify opportunities in developing as a Living City

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Long term investment and support for a Living City, and towns
- » Involve artist, design, cultural, community sector in strategic development of the region, increased proactive community focused engagement with public consultations
- » Apply tax incentives for charitable donations



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Companies becoming greener and more conscious of their environment
- » Climate change Impact and climate justice
- » Cork being best place to live, study, work and grow old
- » Reduce the climate impact of arts and inclusive activities
- » Need to increase biodiversity/trees/green spaces in the city

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Initiate regionwide organisational climate impact audits
- » Prioritise green amenity spaces with seating in City/town centres
- » Embrace opportunities for home/remote working
- » Businesses to include an environmental strategy in all policy documents and initiatives

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Encourage businesses to include an environmental strategy in all policy documents and initiatives
- » Increase investment and support for biodiversity projects in city/town centres
- » Support business make the switch to low carbon/to net zero carbon



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Smaller acts and performers need platforms for live performance across the city and county
- » Green spaces to encourage people to live/stay in the city, better cycle lanes, more efficient parking options, Park and Rides

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Develop a Cork Arts and Culture Innovation hub (similar to business innovation hub), supporting new artists, training, career development, synergies
- » Create options for live performance and emerging artists

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver Cork Events Centre funding
- » Support new developments becoming carbon neutral and incentivise businesses to adopt green practices and technologies
- » Deliver broadband network to facilitate opportunities for remote working
- » Invest in cycle lanes, Park and Ride options to keep traffic out of the city centre



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### CHALLENGES

- » Ensuring women are supported in a sector that has non-conventional hours
- » Affordable and flexible childcare for women in the workplace
- » Supporting women sustain careers in Culture and Arts sector

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » More women in senior roles and entrepreneurs
- » Lobby Government on childcare costs, equal pay and equal parental leave
- » Develop STEM to embrace STEAM (incl. Arts)
- » Support flexible/remote working options

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » The Government front bench should reflect gender balance
- » Gender focused legislation
- » Tax incentives to provide childcare on site and extend paternity benefit entitlements



# Built Environment

**In early 2020, the construction and building services sector was poised and investment ready in Cork and the southern region, both in terms of delivering Project Ireland 2040 projects and FDI development.**

The Construction Industry Federation reports confidence in Cork's significant capacity to deliver the essential housing, infrastructure and specialist buildings underpinning the ambition outlined in the National Planning Framework. In addition, there are brownfield development opportunities in Cork of 179 hectares and the complete regeneration of the City Docklands area is laden with potential to employ up to 30,000 and create homes for 30,000 people<sup>15</sup>.



## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Liam Luddy**, Director, ARUP  
and Cork Chamber Board member.



### Impact of Covid-19

Construction was one of the first sectors to reopen, with 77% of CSO responding enterprises in the Construction sector trading in some capacity on 31 May 2020.<sup>16</sup> Considering 80-90% of sites are now back open, the sector is likely to return to high levels of activity given strong underlying demand. However in total, Construction sector activity is expected to decline by approximately 25 per cent in 2020.

The past has shown that pandemics somehow force architecture and city planning to evolve. Architects and planners have called on public agencies and local authorities to take the opportunity of crisis to develop short-term work schemes to improve the public spaces in cities, towns and villages and to address balanced regional development by moving the focus on growth to regions other than the greater Dublin area. The RIAI has also urged that the feasibility, design and planning stages of essential infrastructural projects identified in Project Ireland 2040 should go ahead. Planners are also well positioned to work in tandem with national and local Government to develop plan led regeneration for sustainable mobility and healthier places.

As the majority of architectural practices are small and medium enterprises, the sector has availed of Government Covid-19 supports. Initiatives such as retrofitting to upgrade at least 500,000 homes to a B2 energy rating by 2030 in the programme for Government could go a long way to support businesses across the construction sector while improving the energy efficiency of housing.

### Think Tank

The Think Tank discussed the return to pre-Covid economic and employment levels, and the transition to new ways of working and production which present immediate challenges though longer-term opportunities. Business supports, reskilling/upskilling and supporting the business transition to low carbon, to net zero carbon economy must be a priority. The Cork business community can be leaders, supporting the region to grow sustainably with strong resilient communities.

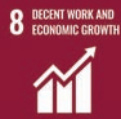
The Think Tank highlighted the widespread benefits of supporting a strong food, and cultural sector in Cork, supporting local, supporting our culture and heritage to differentiate Cork as a location of choice for quality of life, skills, talent and investment. There was consensus on the latent potential of our City region, to unlock over shop living, plan for mixed use development, public and sustainable transport, all of which add to quality of life. There are opportunities in embracing remote and flexible working to increase workforce participation for all. Broadband connectivity and the potential of strategic remote working hubs must be delivered. Government must do their part, and address the affordability of childcare.

Cork could be a centre of excellence for energy and carbon footprint efficiency. Business can lead the way. The potential for targeted tax incentives and refunds to support retrofit and refurbishments of office/business premises to encourage accelerated action could be instrumental. Tax depreciation on sustainable office development projects could again be a strong fiscal instrument. There was strong consensus that we need to flatten the climate curve, Government must support business in this and lead in policy and investment.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/news-room/latest-news/cork-city-placed-5th-in-europe-for-economic-potential.html>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/multisectoral/businessimpactofcovid-19survey/>

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Return to economic growth, employment levels
- » Building consumer confidence
- » Transition to new ways of working/production
- » Adapt infrastructure to provide for future needs

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Cork has enormous potential to be the first-choice location to work, live and enjoy
- » Utilise empty industrial units within the city, encourage new businesses through rates breaks
- » Create centres of excellence, leveraging off the expertise that is available within the city region

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Stimulus to help business get back on its feet
- » Government bodies need to increase promotion of Cork to international investors
- » Support businesses to transition to new ways of working, and support for upskilling/reskilling, support for manufacturing
- » Encourage, develop and support food and cultural sector



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Segregation of housing, employment, education, retail, leisure and transport infrastructure
- » Heavy dependency on car based transport places stress on entire community
- » Infrastructure deficit for public and sustainable transport
- » City requires renovation and upgrade, and efficient use of space e.g. over-shop living

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Develop optimal solution to upper floor mixed tenure occupation and living in City
- » Develop and encourage pedestrian and cycle infrastructure with employee facilities
- » Ensure critical mass of services, amenities and places of work and education within the core to facilitate residential development

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Invest in multimodal transport infrastructure
- » Encourage residential (remove obstacles to over shop living) commercial, retail mix in City core
- » Accelerate national strategies for Living Cities
- » Deliver Project Ireland 2040



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Changing the way we live and work to improve the climate, protect and enhance it for future generations
- » Identify opportunities for business in this space
- » Reduce the amount of carbon and waste being produced
- » Air quality issues

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Cork as a centre of excellence for energy and carbon footprint efficiency
- » Be vocal calling for investment in public transport and sustainable transport network
- » Construction developments, new or retrofit that meet tried and tested climate specific standards such as Passivhaus
- » New developments must demonstrate clear climate benefits to the City region

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support Green Bonds
- » Targeted Tax reliefs (enhanced mortgage interest relief for loans which are certified as enhancing BER ratings, 13.5% refund on sustainable refurbishment work, tax depreciation for sustainable office developments)
- » Responsibility to flatten the Climate Curve, ensure that only energy and climate efficient projects are delivered with state funding



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### CHALLENGES

- » Gender pay, equal work for equal pay
- » Not enough girls pursuing education in STEM areas
- » Lack of gender diversity in senior roles and in national Government
- » Access to affordable childcare for families

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Be leaders in championing gender equality, lead from the front
- » More active strategies focused on STEM challenges and solutions
- » Sustainable agenda to encourage females into the engineering area
- » Adapt to new ways of working and support flexible/remote/home working where possible
- » Support female leadership in management teams and board level

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Encourage and reward flexibility in the workplace
- » Bring forward sound and enforceable policies on gender equality
- » Promotion of women to senior positions/Senior Ministers in Government
- » Address affordability of childcare to support participation in the workforce for families



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Ensure plans for Project Ireland 2040 are climate resilient
- » Flood risk in Cork City centre due to tidal flooding
- » Lack of infrastructure investment in sustainable/public transport modes
- » Issues with broadband connectivity

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Create centres of excellence, leveraging off the expertise that is available within the city
- » Bring innovation centres into the Metropolitan area
- » Initiate a steering group with industry and centres of excellence to encompass different types of industries and areas of expertise, creating linkages between

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Ringfence funding for major infrastructure such as Dunkettle Interchange, Irish Water, Broadband, renewable energy infrastructure e.g. car charging points
- » Invest in multimodal transport infrastructure
- » Interagency working with leadership focus on role of the local authority
- » EU funding (especially Covid - 19 funds) for delivery of sustainable infrastructure
- » Increased pressure through policy and mandatory code to address sustainable design solutions

# Agriculture, Food & Drinks

**Agri-food remains Ireland's largest indigenous sector. The food industry plays a major role maintaining employment and prosperity, forming the backbone of many communities in Cork and across Ireland. In the South West region 9.1% are at work in the agri-food and beverages sector (primary occupation)<sup>17</sup>.**

Nationally, the industry has grown steadily over the last decade, culminating in €13 billion of revenue from exports last year. The produce from the Irish food industry is enjoyed in over 180 countries worldwide.<sup>18</sup>

Cork plays a pivotal role in this success story through its rich food and drink ecosystem spanning agriculture, food processing and food production with many international food giants calling Cork home. Cork is also a critical research base for food innovation and has significant activities across both business and academia in the area.





## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Maxine Hyde**, General Manager, Ballymaloe Foods and Cork Chamber Board member.



### Impact of Covid-19

The food industry's primary threat shifted from Brexit in January 2020 to survival during the pandemic with focus from supply chain to operations, incorporating lean practices, in addition to looking at innovative ways of doing business and routes to market, from pivoting their business model to raising finance.

The majority of respondents to a recent industry survey have indicated that they forecast a decline in revenue as a result of COVID-19, with businesses also challenged with supply chain and people management issues. However it is important to note that there is also a cohort who see opportunities arising as a result of COVID-19.

Without doubt, business model agility is part of the new normal within the food industry and will be instrumental in businesses pivoting their operations and realising potential opportunity areas.<sup>18</sup>

### Think Tank

The importance of ambition, clear targets and regulatory certainty remain key right across the board. We need to drive forward green credentials, and be leaders. As a society, the role of agriculture must be acknowledged and supported to reduce emissions, and transition farming methods and processes. Government support for innovation and research in this area must be continued and accelerated.

We can be innovators and early adopters. The importance of supporting local was highlighted throughout, from supporting local town/city centre to supporting local producers. We need a vibrant, thriving city and town centres and the food culture is central to this. Delivery of the Cork Events centre was highlighted as a priority.

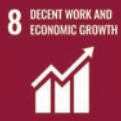
The merits of equal maternity and paternity leave to reset cultural norms was highlighted, with strong focus on the role of Government in leading by example, supporting female participation in senior political positions. The opportunity of flexible/remote working must be embraced to broaden workplace participation for families. There is an opportunity to develop an initiative with female leaders in the sector, linking with schools and universities. This could be instrumental in attracting broader gender participation.

The role of Government in giving certainty, setting clear climate targets, milestones and pathways while supporting climate innovation and supporting new technologies to mitigate emissions. Delivery of public and sustainable transport, waste/recycling infrastructure and support for a circular economic model was highlighted.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.ibec.ie/connect-and-learn/media/2019/11/19/food-drink-ireland-launches-new-10-year-strategy-for-industry>

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.grantthornton.ie/globalassets/1.-member-firms/ireland/insights/publications/covid-19-impact-on-the-food-industry-in-ireland\\_final-030620.-pptx.pdf](https://www.grantthornton.ie/globalassets/1.-member-firms/ireland/insights/publications/covid-19-impact-on-the-food-industry-in-ireland_final-030620.-pptx.pdf)

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Food industry needs green credentials to go above and beyond peers (in clean water, reducing carbon emissions, and biodiversity)
- » Working capital, the need to address this in the short to medium term, Brexit is still a concern
- » Cost of implementing social distancing throughout the supply chain and retrofitting facilities

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support the local economy & raise awareness of local businesses in the community
- » Focus on trends e.g. the digitalisation of agriculture and food service, potential of blockchain
- » Build closer collaboration between multi-nationals and indigenous Irish companies

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support the sector with grants
- » Funding for Bord Bia and Enterprise Ireland
- » Continue and grow academic research



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Emissions targets pose challenges for meat and dairy sectors
- » Huge issues for the industry around waste, efficiency (packaging) and PET recycling
- » Sustainable and public transport investment

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Adopt new practices at farm level to reduce carbon emissions
- » Support research e.g. measuring carbon sequestration, opportunities for carbon neutral farming and reducing methane emissions
- » Implement circular economy practices, responsible consumption and production, sustainably source commodities, and shorten food supply chains

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Ensure that Government policy addresses climate targets, with ambitious goals and stringent penalties
- » Support new technologies to mitigate emissions
- » Removal of barriers to innovation and invest in climate action measures and technology, work with producers to support, carbon pricing without business support to pivot operations could be detrimental



### Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

#### CHALLENGES

- » Public and sustainable transport infrastructure and network deficits
- » Waste and recycling infrastructure needs investment
- » Support climate action research and innovation in food, packaging and manufacturing technology/processes and materials

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Build cross sector partnerships to unlock synergies for the FDA industry
- » Transparent supply chains to gain consumer trust e.g. end to end carbon footprint of products
- » Lead in supporting research, development and innovation in processes & packaging, and skills training

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support infrastructure development for biomethane and compressed natural gas
- » Invest in physical infrastructure such as schools, universities, healthcare, research and innovation hubs
- » Invest in connectivity to close the rural/urban divide
- » Delivery of the Events Centre for the Munster region



## Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### CHALLENGES

- » Cost of insurance is an inhibitor to the development of activities
- » Ability to change from traditional sales channels to e-commerce channels
- » Availability and ease of transport to and from cities to rural Ireland and towns
- » Social infrastructure remains critical to creating a living city e.g. amenities, community spaces, green areas, cycle lanes, pedestrianisation
- » Enhance vibrancy, nightlife and “food energy” in the city

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Increase city centre vibrancy e.g. extend English Market hours to evening/night
- » Producers core to vibrancy of the city e.g. through a food and activity trail
- » Build up Cork’s brand through Pure Cork and Taste Cork
- » Remote/flexible working hubs

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver Project Ireland 2040, housing provision, city/town renewal, investing in social infrastructure, transport
- » Harness rural links through enhancing connectivity, enabling people to live and work in rural areas and close to food production.



## Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### CHALLENGES

- » Challenge the cultural tendency to apply a gender to a specific role type
- » Develop robust career guidance at schools
- » Lack of female representation on boards and senior management of FDA businesses
- » Affordability and availability of family childcare

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Facilitate flexible/remote working to support family childcare
- » Continue to encourage young girls in STEM
- » Opportunity in the agriculture, food and drinks industry to develop an initiative similar to IWISH STEM programme with female leaders in the industry
- » Report on Board and Management team representation

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Government needs to make childcare more accessible
- » Paternity and Maternity leave need to be made equal, forcing a critical cultural shift
- » Need to offer supports for female entrepreneurs specific challenges and needs
- » Lead by example though representation in leadership positions, develop policy that works to close the gender gap, encourage female students to choose STEM subjects

# Education & Training

**Cork is a university city with over 35,000 students. Broadly, the Education and Training sector in the Cork region creates positive spin off effects in key areas across the local economy in terms of the workforce, businesses and society.**

University College Cork (UCC) generates €2.3 million per day for the Irish economy and the University supports almost 15,000 jobs on an annual basis, which equates to approximately 1 in every 15 jobs in Cork city and county<sup>19</sup>.

In addition, Munster Technological University (MTU) will be formally established on 1st January 2021, presenting a significant opportunity for the South West which is of critical importance to the region's future economic prosperity.

Cork Chamber membership spans the spectrum of education and training including English language education providers to international students, corporate education, training and skills providers. With reference to English language education, more than 150,000 individual students attend courses with English Language Teaching Organisations (ELTO's) in Ireland every year and the total value of the language school sector to the Irish economy is estimated to be at least €880m. The sector employs 3,000+ workers full time and a further 7,000+ seasonal and part time workers<sup>20</sup>.



## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Gerard O'Donovan**, Head, Faculty of Business & Humanities, Cork Institute of Technology, and Cork Chamber Board member



### Impact of Covid-19

Although the social and economic impact of Covid-19 on the Irish economy is vast, it is widely acknowledged that education and training will have a key role to play in successfully rebuilding post-Covid and re-launching the economy and civic society over the coming period. Positively, investment in Government programmes such as Springboard+ and the Human Capital Initiative aim to focus on upskilling and reskilling to meet priority skills needs.

However, funding problems in the third level sector are compounded by the potential fall in the number of international students in the coming academic year. In addition, course provision, examination and assessment online or remotely have the potential to fundamentally challenge and change the sector.

The crisis has also impacted the English Language Industry significantly and it hit the industry at the worst time possible as approximately 70% of revenue is generated during the peak season from March to September. Based on current modelling the industry estimate that the decrease in revenue for the industry as a whole for 2020 will be in the region of 80%.<sup>20</sup>

Conversely, with Ireland now the only English-speaking country in the EU there are great long-term opportunities to consolidate Cork and Ireland's position as Europe's premier English language learning destination.

### Think Tank

Pivoting operations through reskilling and re-tooling to a blended learning model are critical in the current Covid scenario. In the broader sense, the opportunities for delivering training on sustainable sourcing and circular economy models to business leaders is highlighted, with the potential this holds for supporting local businesses, employment and strong communities.

The sector will be the pivotal in the transition to a low carbon, to net zero carbon economy and must be supported in this. Supporting Local, while Growing Global was emphasised, and its role in reinforcing a thriving, vibrant region that attracts international students, talent and investment.

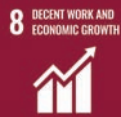
The importance of broadband, sustainable and public transport and the creation of people friendly urban spaces are key to developing a location of scale that works for business, the community, and quality of life. Government has a role to play in incentivising development projects that are climate positive. Cork can be a leader with collective agreement to be carbon neutral by 2050.

Cork could be a Global Centre for Green Innovation. In relation to gender equality, Government and business can lead. Government should better legislate for equal pay, support workforce participation for all through flexible/remote working and through leading by example with female representation at Senior Ministerial roles. Finally, delivery of existing strategies was highlighted as critical, namely the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and Project Ireland 2040.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/mandc/2018mampcwebsite/ExecSummary09052018.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://mei.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/English-Language-industry-of-Ireland-COVID-19-recovery-document.pdf>

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Immediate issue of unemployment, and facilitating physical/social distancing
- » Certainty and the ability to anticipate the direction of Government, reskill and retool to tech driven future
- » Challenge to deliver hybrid model of education
- » Impact on local economy with no international students arriving to Cork

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Identify key education training needs and continue commitment to Lifelong learning and Cork as a Learning City
- » Embrace remote working practices
- » Circular economy and sustainable sourcing training for business leaders to harness positive local knock-on effect on supply chain

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support (financial supports/ stimulus/tax breaks) for businesses to assess supply chains and transition to circular economic model
- » Support Lifelong learning, early education, upskilling and cross skilling education
- » Reduce commercial rates for retail and lower the VAT rate for businesses for a limited period



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Attract customers/businesses to come back to the city
- » Deficient in public transport/ cycling infrastructure, affordable housing and broadband connectivity
- » Address concerns about anti-social behaviour

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Encourage people to use public transport/walk/cycle
- » People friendly urban spaces, prioritise public transport, incentivise more sustainable behaviours
- » Pedestrianise the City Centre
- » Continue to support Lifelong learning

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Address issues in planning and policy which support unsustainable planning, building decisions
- » Support (with tax incentives etc) planning and building in cities and towns that is more sustainable, prioritising more sustainable procurement
- » Invest in community policing
- » Deliver Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy



### Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

#### CHALLENGES

- » Gender equality from student participation at early childhood to post-doctoral level, staff recruitment, retention, promotion across all levels
- » Women and girls continue to be under-represented
- » Challenge now regarding all unconscious biases in gender, ability, ethnicity

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Replicate the success of IWish
- » STEM initiative in all sectors, highlight successful women leaders
- » Supporting remote/flexible working

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Ensure that legislation regarding gender pay and equality is complied with
- » Support research on the impact of gender diversity in education, business, society and programmes such as the Athena SWAN Charter
- » Support initiatives through the Education centres to support STEM and entrepreneurialism for women and girls
- » To have at least 50% female councillors



## Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

### CHALLENGES

- » Greening supply chains and procurement
- » Proactively addressing traffic congestion, water management, air quality and waste management causes, prevention and infrastructure deficits
- » Protect Cork City from future flooding and other climatic events
- » Ensuring national Government's long term commitment to the Paris Agreement for a low-carbon future are not abandoned at this time.

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Reduce the impact of climate change/CO2 emissions through local policies and initiatives
- » Make Cork a regional leader with collective agreement for Cork to be carbon neutral by 2050, supporting work towards Cork as a progressive, sustainable City region
- » Cork as Global Centre for Green Innovation

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, net zero will never be achieved unless there is a strong public and sustainable transport network system
- » Deliver Project Ireland 2040, Cork City and Cork County Climate Adaptation Strategies and the National Development Plan investment
- » Support innovative and creative thinking to drive sustainable solutions to policy challenges (circular economy etc)
- » Listen to voice and experience of SME owners



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Poorly designed infrastructure having an impact on the vibrancy of towns and communities
- » Issue of connectivity between regional towns and cities, implement infrastructure and placemaking that enhances quality of life (amenity leisure and strategically located remote working hubs)

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support development of local high tech, innovative supply chains
- » Work with the support agencies, HEIs and existing entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem to improve product, process, organisational innovation in their organisation
- » Adopt green innovation in supply chain and address gaps through social enterprise model

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver enhanced Cork-Limerick connectivity and the Cork Events Centre
- » Invest in rural towns and village revitalisation through broadband connectivity
- » Invest in creativity with public infrastructure e.g. Reflective paint on roads to highlight cycle tracks, green planting concrete sides of overpasses, roof/canopy in public realm

# Transport, Energy & Maritime

**The South-West region has a wealth of natural resources, which contribute to the social and economic fabric of the region. The blue economy is a growth sector, reaching into a range of areas including enterprise and entrepreneurship, tourism, technology, renewable energy, and sustainability, among others.**

As one of the largest ports in the country, Port of Cork plays a vital role in securing the supply chain and flow of goods in and out of the country. A new €86 million Cork Container Terminal in Ringaskiddy is in final stages of completion and has the potential to grow cargo volumes and further develop Ringaskiddy as a modern logistics hub. The Port also has Ireland's only dedicated cruise berth at Cobh, with capacity to increase the number of cruise liners over the coming years.

Prior to the pandemic passenger numbers at Cork Airport were thriving with new routes and service expansions planned for 2020. The numbers are now down by over 95%. Numbers using public transport in Cork have grown at a faster pace than anywhere else in the country. Figures from the National Transport Authority show bus and rail commuter journeys in Cork were up 14% in 2018 to almost 15.3 million<sup>21</sup>.

Cork accounts for approximately 13% of Ireland's energy use and supplies approximately 25% of Ireland's national energy requirements. Cork has significant natural resources which provide great energy potential that can be further enhanced by policy instruments. Options include natural gas, oil, hydroelectricity, onshore and offshore wind, ocean energy, geothermal, anaerobic digestion and solar energy. Further development of renewable energy must be the cornerstone of the low carbon transition.

## Impact of Covid-19

The Transportation and Storage sector sees about 35% of those previously working in this sector estimated to be on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) or Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS), down from 41% prior to Phase 1.





## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Seamus Downey**, Tax Partner EY Ireland  
and Cork Chamber Board member



The Transport sector will continue to be tested considerably for a variety of reasons including travel restrictions, lower customer demand, decrease in commuters and international tourism. Constraints on public transport capacity could result in a growing lack of availability as the reopening of the economy continues. Reduced capacity also poses economic viability issues for public transport providers and private operators, due to reduced fare revenue.

Air transport faces the most challenging outlook in the sector with ongoing concerns about viability while advice against non-essential travel and quarantine on entry measures continue to be in place.

Support will also be required for important sectors which remain critical to an economy so dependent on the international flow of goods and services. The transport sector is an obvious candidate which is experiencing a severe and profound shock.

The arrival of Cruise Lines to Cork have been temporarily suspended. However, in a vote of confidence, a new weekly direct container service from Cork to USA was announced in June 2020, giving Ireland its first direct container service to the USA in many years.

Essential energy services continued to be supplied on an uninterrupted basis, though the COVID-19 pandemic has stalled much energy project construction and development.

Positively, there has been an increased emphasis on sustainable transport – walking, cycling and access to water.

## Think Tank

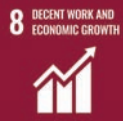
The transition from fossil to renewable fuels, and transition of skills must be an immediate priority. Government must give regulatory, policy and fiscal certainty to businesses on the pathway for this transition. It is critical to unlock the natural capacity in the region to make this transition. Investment in academia, research, supporting communities, broadband, provision of public/sustainable transport must be delivered to increase our capability to transition.

Cork can be leaders in renewable energy, Government must support with regulatory certainty and planning guidelines. Just transition policy, funding and support is needed for all. Flexible/remote working holds opportunities from a workforce participation and emissions reduction perspective. This must be enabled and there is a role of business and Government to support this. In relation to gender equality, Government has a role in legislating for equal pay. Gender norms must be challenged.

Education to accelerate behavioural change has a critical role to play across the board from climate to diversity, equality and inclusion. Government must deliver on established strategies.

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy is critical for the Cork region to be enabled. The opportunity exists in Cork to identify Cork Climate Action Goals, there is a role for business, Government, and communities in achieving this. Setting regional goals and being supported in the transition to achieve these could be pivotal. Cork can be the European Green Capital.

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Build the economy and people's confidence in travelling safely again
- » Support local where possible
- » Transition employment from fossil energy sources to new and reinvent jobs
- » Ensure reskilling pathways
- » Unrestrained and unlimited growth cannot be sustained

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Identify pathways to increase sustainability and adopt sustainable business models
- » Industry has the opportunity to make changes and adjust accordingly
- » Seek out international best practice
- » Support local where possible
- » Transition employment from fossil energy sources to new and reinvent jobs
- » Ensure reskilling pathways

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Give certainty to business with national policies and milestones to support climate action and a net zero carbon economy by 2050
- » Invest in our third level institutions, investment in apprenticeship programs, capital infrastructure and broadband network, research, development and innovation in renewables
- » Just Transition policy, funding and support



### Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

#### CHALLENGES

- » Improved energy utilisation and efficiency
- » Explore community heat projects
- » More and better investment in public transport, cycling and walking
- » Identify pathway to net zero-carbon economy

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Better urban planning to bring business, amenities and living spaces together, connected by public and sustainable transport
- » Support flexible working arrangements and hence an enhanced life work balance
- » Encourage domestic tourism

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver high speed broadband and decarbonise heat and transport with clean renewables
- » Deliver the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy
- » Funding resources and education to accelerate behavioural change, supported by interventions to enable people to change behaviours



### Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

#### CHALLENGES

- » Ensuring that all females are treated equally, get paid accordingly in the workplace
- » Address societal conventions which place gender norms on specific occupations
- » Too few women in senior roles in this sector

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Introduce quotas to 30% and towards 50%
- » Lead the way, champion equal opportunity, remote working and flexible working
- » Engage with schools in primary and secondary on STEM subjects and careers e.g. build on initiatives such as IWish
- » Measure and report progress of gender pay equality
- » Flexible working hours to promote workforce participation and inclusion for all

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Ensure equal pay for equal work. Role to incentivise transparency
- » Legislate that D&I policies are part of business strategies and annual reporting
- » Broadband and digital hubs supported



## Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

### CHALLENGES

- » Accelerate pathways to fuel substitution from fossil to fully renewable
- » Identify Cork climate change goals and strategies to achieve
- » Lifestyle behaviours and current economic model
- » Insufficient incentives and policy certainty for renewables

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support a Cork bid for Irelands European Green Capital
- » Fund research and innovation in renewable technologies through UCC and MTU
- » Adopt renewable energy to power company fleets and to heat buildings
- » Measure carbon footprint and climate impact of business activities and develop reduction pathways (Cork Sustainability Audit system)

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Implement appropriate carbon tax policy to encourage change
- » Clear policy, regulatory certainty and fiscal prompts for renewables
- » Role for Enterprise Ireland and IDA to assist companies transition to low carbon to net zero carbon
- » Become an energy exporter
- » Protect against a global disruption
- » Just transition support mechanisms, and support businesses to be carbon neutral
- » Support Cork's bid to be European Green Capital



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Insufficient incentives for renewables
- » Policy certainty to become a renewable energy exporter
- » Identify current/future infrastructure needs

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Embrace Artificial Intelligence and developments in robotics
- » Lead in promoting/developing sustainable solutions for intelligent/integrated infrastructure
- » Encourage new user behaviour and adopt new/innovative technology

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support integrated systems especially in transport
- » Give policy certainty in renewable energy development
- » Policy and incentives must support businesses in driving the change
- » Transition to carbon neutrality will happen faster if made easier for society, Government must support this with investment, policy and regulation

# Services including Financial

**The Global Business Services Sector in Cork has over 60 companies providing a range of services from shared customer and technical support services to sales. Over 20 global players have based their European or International Headquarters in Cork.**

Cork is also Ireland's second-largest financial services hub, 14 IFS companies employ over 1,300 people with 1000+ more employed in financial roles in shared services and related audit and financial firm. It must also be noted that the service sector comprises of every solicitors office, every accountant, PR consultant, designer or business advisor. Professional services is a broad and highly skilled church that keeps every element of our indigenous and multinational economy running smoothly.



## THINK TANK CHAIR

Mark Fitzharris, Head of Direct Banking, AIB and Cork Chamber Board member



### Impact of Covid-19

In Finance, Insurance and Real Estate, around 26% of those previously working in this sector are estimated to be on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) or Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS), down from 28% prior to Phase 1. Numbers on the PUP (which were relatively small to begin with) have decreased by 15% since Phase 1, although it is possible that some of those will have moved on to the TWSS.

The Covid-19 lockdown measures dramatically reduced the number of transactions across all sectors, including in the real estate market where there have been operational challenges for developers, landlords and tenants. Due to changing consumer demands, the more long-term impact on demand and supply in the sector is still unclear.

Though in general, the services sector including financial, insurance and professional services has responded well, enabling remote work, business continuity, risk management as well as customer and employee support. The services sector is now challenged to use the crisis to innovate and reimagine its services through continued digital transformation, data and privacy management and cybersecurity.

The financial services sector has been quite resilient and is faring well in terms of a boost to ecommerce, cyber, fintech and Anti Money Laundering (AML) compliance. As a sector, its risk and business continuity plans were invoked and it is well set up for remote and home working. The sector is reportedly turning the experience to their advantage and building the capabilities required to thrive in a new reality. For example,

the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of financial technology (Fintech) by many financial services firms with existing Fintech companies having a clear head start on others. Cork is well placed to capitalise on a move to 'digital-only' financial services and to be a hub for AI, IoT and other fintech enabling companies which deliver software solutions for the financial services industry. That said, fintech only accounts for one element of services. Only once the Wage Subsidy Scheme has tapered off, will the full impact of the pandemic on this sector which is woven intricately throughout our economy be fully understood.

### Think Tank

The service sector has short term requirements that are highly dependent on the COVID-19 business supports being comprehensive and fit for purpose. However, in discussion the focus invariably shifted to the long-term vision for Cork. Under each SDG, conversation consistently reverted to sustainable travel and urban patterns, equality, quality of life and respect for nature. Integration of the SDGs in business operations. International benchmarking. Ending Direct Provision. Emulating successful innovation support models. Upskilling and evolving are focal points for this group alongside improving and celebrating our quality of life and reputation.

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Closures, employment and footfall loss
- » Safe and secure working
- » Consumer confidence
- » Discontinuation of COVID supports
- » Broadband
- » Lack of networking, social and mental challenge
- » Reskilling

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Create safe, healthy workplaces and customer environment
- » Upskill for long term flexible working, and online commerce
- » Adopt sustainability and Inclusion commitment
- » Celebrate and market quality of life, city, harbour and county, high quality education, sectoral mix, cultural diversity and excellent workforce
- » Facilitate credit for suppliers

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Robust COVID-19 supports that promote green growth
- » Interest-free loans, debt-relief funding, SME focus and upskilling
- » Regional Strategy for Financial Services
- » More and better e-governance



### Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

#### CHALLENGES

- » A deep rooted societal issue
- » Childcare exacerbated rather than improved by pandemic
- » Equal opportunities for all members of society
- » Inequality in pay
- » Visible women leaders

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Role models, networking and conferences that champion women across every sector
- » Increase the share of equal opportunity businesses in supply chain
- » Targets for gender balance among employees at every level
- » Eliminate discrimination AND promote inclusion with policy such as childcare, flexible working hours and WFH
- » Equal pay for equal work

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Voices of vulnerable women are reflected in decision making
- » Female representation across all strands of business
- » More female politicians and ministers
- » Equal maternity/paternity leave
- » Supports to assist business with flexible working
- » Improve early childcare, transition to public provision
- » Equal pay for equal work
- » Meaningful data on home working



### Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

#### CHALLENGES

- » Quality of life and environment are inseparable
- » Inefficient homes, carbon fuelled vehicles, throw away consumption, diet and travel
- » Deliver a net zero carbon region
- » Screen investment for climate compatibility

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Support local enterprises with natural products
- » SDGs integrated into strategic plans, operations, board agendas
- » Reduce non-essential business travel and meetings
- » Make mileage expenses less attractive. Incentivise walking and cycling
- » Indigenous planting

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Climate compatible COVID-19 recovery plan
- » Incentives, funding and finance for green technology
- » Capital investment in existing transport plans for Cork
- » Incentivise private sector indigenous tree planting
- » Support renewable energy



## Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### CHALLENGES

- » Ensure safe, sustainable, inclusive pandemic recovery
- » People, quality of life and natural environment at the core of planning policy
- » Address traffic congestion. Grow sustainable and public transport options
- » Accelerate alternative to Direct Provision, welcome international citizens, recognize the significance of Black Lives Matter

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Provide SDG leadership
- » Engage in community life, youth services, events and attractions
- » Long term flexible working
- » Champion diversity, inclusion, and minorities
- » Inclusive employment programmes
- » Onsite facilities for walk, run and cycle to work

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Counter the prejudices faced by immigrants, those with disabilities, and from challenged socio-economic backgrounds
- » Fund the City & County Climate Change Adaptation plan
- » Invest in green spaces, parklets, regeneration, green and blue ways
- » Reliable and fast public transport with e mobility complement
- » Data led planning
- » Incentives for sustainable development patterns and retrofit
- » Eclectic fine grain urban zoning mix



## Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

### CHALLENGES

- » Infrastructure delivery timelines
- » Infrastructure that supports economic development while protecting quality of life and the natural environment
- » Single occupancy vehicles and road capacity
- » Lack of sustainable tourism infrastructure such as greenways
- » Commuter rail service and infrastructure underdeveloped

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Focus on technological innovation in the fields of data analytics and AI
- » Increase collaboration with 3rd level institutions
- » Utilise green investment funds
- » Support resumed growth of Cork Airport
- » Integrate equality and the SDGs in infrastructure design

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » SDG checklist for all investment decisions
- » Incentives and funding to promote technological innovation
- » Emulate Singapore tax incentive for those who buy products and invest in start-ups.
- » Deliver Cork Events Centre
- » Review and positively affirm NDP.
- » Deliver NDP projects, complete the N25 junction, Dunkettle, M28, and M20
- » Enhanced local authority autonomy to raise capital locally
- » Deliver broadband
- » Policy, regulation and investment support to utilise river and harbour amenity e.g. for commuting

# Health





## THINK TANK CHAIR

**Hugh Smiddy**, Head of Business Development at Tyndall National Institute and Cork Chamber Board member



**This sector is interacting with other relevant sectors such as ICT, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and materials to encourage new healthcare solutions from technology convergence and digital transformation “smart health” approaches.**

Specifically, Cork University Hospital is the largest university teaching hospital in Ireland with the only Level 1 Trauma Centre in the Country. It has a supra-regional catchment of 1.2 million people. In addition, Cork is served by the Mercy University Hospital and Bon Secours Hospital - the list is non-exhaustive, and the track record is strong.

Led by UCC, and partnered with CIT, Cork’s Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) works across the health sector with Irish businesses. The HIHI harnesses innovation through development of new healthcare technologies, products, and services, creating jobs and exports.

### Impact of Covid-19

As part of the national effort to address the Covid 19 public health crisis, the healthcare sector saw a considerable shift with the private hospital network entering into an agreement to provide capacity to the public health system, effectively creating one single healthcare system in response to Covid 19.

The health sector also saw significant innovation. Cork based Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HIHI) worked with Irish businesses through a COVID-19 Solutions Portal to creatively solve problems and capture nearly 200 innovations to support healthcare during the pandemic and improve patient care through the development of new healthcare technologies, products, and services.

### Think Tank

The intrinsic link between health, wellbeing and sustainability was the running theme in the Health Think Tank. The pandemic uncovered a supportive network between healthcare, business and academia in Cork, though significantly one which is not curated. Improving care quality and efficiency through technology such as telemedicine and sharing market and research internationalisation learnings are areas that can be improved. Focus on the relationship between the natural and built environment and the living patterns it creates ran throughout the discussion as a baseline for good quality of life and proactive health and wellbeing.

## Overview of key priorities and opportunities:

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

#### CHALLENGES

- » Alignment of health actors in the city and county
- » Attracting and retaining talent, attracting valuable investment
- » Sustainable development of the region, protecting natural assets, providing affordable accommodation options, public, sustainable transport links
- » Continuity of supply

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Flexible working and WFH in the medium to long term
- » Build on huge collaboration over the last period and continue to support local suppliers
- » Share international growth and funding application experience and provide learning opportunities
- » Embed the SDGs in across business strategy and operations

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Incentives for companies to embrace sustainability
- » Continuity of COVID-19 supports to include rates waiver
- » Concerted shift towards e-governance, remote apps and platforms

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



### Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

#### CHALLENGES

- » Ensure that Cork remains attractive for existing and new investors
- » Enhance reputation as responsible healthcare providers
- » Diagnostic units separated out from hospitals as works so well in Singapore
- » Low uptake of telemedicine

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Forum for collaboration between healthcare actors
- » Telemedicine: targeted phased focus to be a leader in remote service provision
- » Engage in the rollout of SláinteCare ensuring strong allocation of services, infrastructure and supports

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Enable and divest state land that supports sustainable economic development
- » Sláintecare implementation must ensure system capacity for current and future needs
- » Invest in medical infrastructure

5 GENDER EQUALITY



### Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

#### CHALLENGES

- » Healthcare should lead with 75% women but it has the same challenges as every other sector
- » Equality for all
- » Equal pay for equal work
- » Fragmented childcare services

#### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Actively promote gender equality
- » Balanced gender representation on Board of Directors
- » School workshops
- » Encourage candidates from Deis schools to interview
- » Flexible working and coaching on performance management of virtual teams

#### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Support density. Living close to where you work is an international preference
- » Improve and integrate childcare
- » Actively encourage business to attain gender balance
- » Support youth club development for growth, skills, community and achievement

13

CLIMATE  
ACTION

## Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

### CHALLENGES

- » Rapidly increase proportion of renewable energy on the grid
- » Integrating sustainability into business strategies
- » Instigating behavioural change in attitude of businesses and employees to environmental issues
- » Single use plastic, carbon footprint and consumption
- » Climate Change is a huge challenge

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Clear measurement and deliverables for climate action required within health service which creates huge amounts of waste
- » A move to telehealth to reduce commuting and emissions
- » Ban on single use plastics in offices
- » Cultivate wildflower meadows, and ban pesticides and weed killers

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » Deliver infrastructure
- » Communicate clearly and effectively on what measures businesses should be taking
- » Incentivise encourage, and reward progressive business practices
- » Incentivise indigenous tree and wildflower planting, and ban pesticides and weed killers for landscaping
- » Support sustainability initiatives of Chambers (as business representative organisation, platform for change)

11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

## Make cities, towns and villages inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

### CHALLENGES

- » Increasing pop. density while maintaining and creating healthy spaces and workplaces
- » Address traffic congestion and quality of life impacts of commuting
- » No disincentive to using car. Public transport options (bus/rail) are insufficient
- » Infrastructure not capable of handling transport needs
- » Pedestrianise city centre. Facilitate park and ride
- » Active indoor pursuits essential

### ROLE OF BUSINESS

- » Safe, healthy wellbeing oriented workplaces
- » Bike and sustainable mobility incentives
- » Encourage the people of Cork to come back to the City
- » Remote working hubs get people together and alleviate commuting
- » Gather remote working data and trends

### ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

- » More recreational planning focus, essential for residents and attracting investment
- » Incentives for businesses that reopen, or newly open
- » Focus on international benchmarks
- » Attract health conferences

# Imagineer Your City, Your County

## Survey Results



Launched in June, the public survey titled 'Imagineer Your City, Your County', to which over 800 responses were received, asked for views on the future vision for Cork in the next 5, 10 and 30 years.

The survey captures public sentiment of how Cork could be shaped as it develops, where we could excel and how we could differentiate our City region.

### Your Top 3 asks for what you want to see more of in the next 5 years:



**1.** Connected public transport networks (bus, light rail, and suburban rail)



**2.** Cycleways, greenways & enhanced walking environment



**3.** Green spaces, trees, wildflower planting & green infrastructure such as living walls

This is followed by more outdoor dining, amenity access to the river and coastline from Cork City, enhanced resourcing for An Garda Síochána for urban centres.

### The differentiators for living and working in Cork



**57%**

Quality of life



**42%**

The tourism, cultural & hospitality scene (café, theatre, gallery, restaurants, heritage)



**34%**

Diverse business types & activities (from indigenous home grown to large multinational)

## The biggest changes to our daily lives over the next 10 years as we approach 2030, will be:



### GROWTH IN REMOTE WORKING

Opportunities for remote working will become the norm. While the shift to remote working has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the benefits from an environmental (cutting transport emissions) and work/life balance perspective will see remote working become more commonplace.



### ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

We need to flatten the climate curve. Unless we work collectively to bring forward solutions, change behaviours, consumption, adopt new technologies and fuels we will suffer more extreme weather events, biodiversity loss and miss the opportunity to make the changes needed to secure a sustainable future for generations to come.



### MORE PEOPLE USING PUBLIC/ SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

We face growing traffic congestion unless there is considerable investment in public and sustainable transport. We cannot continue to develop or grow as a city region (population, development footprint) without a viable public and sustainable transport network.

## Your Top Choices on how 2050 will look:



**43%**

Remote working will be the norm



**25%**

Cork County towns connected with cycling and walking greenways and blueways



**42%**

Public transport (suburban rail, light rail and bus) is the number one choice for commuting



**25%**

A living city: more planting, trees, green spaces and amenity areas within 1km of where you live



## Cork as the European Green Capital in 5 years:

■ **86%** Yes

■ **10%** No opinion

■ **2%** No

■ **2%** Other

Asking respondents if Cork should strive to be the European Green Capital, we report overwhelming support. The EGC Award is a European Commission initiative recognising cities that make their urban environments better and healthier places to live. Cities are assessed on the basis of 12 environmental indicators Air Quality, Noise, Waste, Water, Nature and Biodiversity, Sustainable Land Use and Soil, Green Growth and Eco-innovation, Climate Change: Mitigation, Climate Change: Adaptation, Sustainable Urban Mobility, Energy Performance and Governance. Lisbon is the 2020 European Green Capital.

## The biggest changes to our daily lives over the next 30 years as we approach 2050, will be:



### ACTIONS NOW WILL DICTATE OUR DAILY LIVES IN RESPECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Unless we have strong leadership and climate action now, dealing with uncertainty & Climate Change will be a part of our daily lives. Biodiversity loss, rising temperatures, pressures on food production and food systems, geopolitical uncertainty, climate migration, drought events, and sea level rise bringing more extreme flood events will feature strongly in 2050.



### CONNECTED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY USE WILL BE FULLY RENEWABLE

Energy will be green and fully renewable. We will have connectivity via public transport corridors to facilitate the population increase.



### WORKPLACE TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

Automation of jobs/artificial intelligence will be more prominent in our daily lives. We will be even more connected to technology. Autonomous vehicles will be commonplace.

## Your one wish to shape Cork’s development by 2050. This is what you told us. (the below keywords and comments capture the main sentiment of responses)



CITY



PEOPLE



TRANSPORT



GREEN



COMMUNITY



SUSTAINABLE

“ Affordable housing for everyone and eliminate homelessness. ”

“ For Cork to be carbon negative. ”

“ A vibrant and living city, access to and from the city/county via enhanced public transport. ”

“ Take a lead on positive impacts to reverse/harness the negative impact of climate change. ”

“ Improved public transport, with light rail to industrial areas especially. Better use of the River Lee and harbour. ”

“ Lots of good jobs in the area of renewable sustainable energy with a strength in security of energy supply. ”

“ Redeveloping derelict buildings and empty space over shops into homes that are in keeping with the architectural heritage of the city. ”

# Think Tank Participating Organisations





3SIXTY	Eur Digital Village	ProStrategy
AB Sales	Everywhere Medical	PwC
AIB Bank	FKelly Consulting	Quantum Business Solutions
AM O'Sullivan PR Ltd	Finance OTC Consulting Ltd	RJ O'Brien Building Contractors Limited
anois	Firkin Crane CLG	RKD Architects
ARUP	Flourish with Social Media	RedFM
Adare Human Resource Management	Focus Ireland Limited	Republic of Work Ltd
Alex's Adventure Ltd	Fota Adventure	Rethink Ireland
All About Us Video	Fota Wildlife Park	SECAD Partnership CLG
Ballymaloe Foods	Fuller Marketing	STEAM Education Ltd
Beechbrook Capital Ireland DAC	Glavloc Building Technology	Six Seconds Network Europe
Benchmark International	Griffith College	SmartOffice Technology
BioMarin International Limited	H-Training	SocialBee
Blizzard Entertainment Ireland Ltd	HEINEKEN Ireland	Specsavers
Burgolarm Security	Health Innovation Hub Ireland	Team Challenge Process Company Ltd
Campion Insurance	Hotel Isaacs	The Crann Centre Ltd
CareerWise Recruitment	Horner APG	The Everyman
Career Training Internships	ISO Competitive Edge	The River Lee Hotel
Change By Degrees	Iarnrod Éireann	The Rubicon Centre
Clearstream Global Securities Services Ltd	Insight Multimedia	To Have & To Hold
Conexion.ie	Irish Distillers Pernod Ricard	Touchcom Ltd
Cork English College	Jacobs	Triskel Arts Centre
Cork Institute of Technology	Johnson and Perrott Motor Group	Trocaire
Cork Opera House	KPMG	Tungsten Consulting Limited
Cork Pops Orchestra Ltd	LW Management	Tyndall National Institute
Cork Taxi Co-Op Society	Leigh Gillen Events	UCC Academy
Cork Volunteer Centre	Melius	University College Cork
Cortado	Mercy University Hospital	VHI Healthcare DAC
Cully and Sully	Musgrave Limited Group	Velo Coffee Roasters
Culture Co-Working	Nano Nagle Place	Visit Cork
Cult-CreaTE	National Learning Network (NLN)	Wain Morehead Architects Ltd
Cumulus Consulting Ltd	National Maritime College of Ireland	Well Said Communications
Deloitte	OCon Chemicals Ltd	William Fry Solicitors
De Puy (Ireland) Ltd	OrthoXel	Willis Towers Watson
Dress For Success	O'Flynn Group	
EBO Home Rescue	O'Flynn Medical Ltd	
ESB	PE Global	
EY	Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals	
	Poppulo	

# Glossary of Acronyms & Terms

**AI (Artificial Intelligence)** - Computer or computer-controlled robot performing tasks simulating human intelligence, learning, cognition and problem solving.

**Biomethane** – Also known as renewable natural gas - purified form of raw biogas from anaerobic digestion that can be used as a natural gas substitute.

**Circular Economy** – Economic model that looks at the full lifecycle, it focuses on the materials and design with an emphasis on production that supports renewal, reuse, repair, upgrade or refurbishment. The move away from single use products and materials.

**CMATS** – Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. Published in 2020, it sets out an investment strategy worth €3.5bn to 2040 across walking, cycling, bus, suburban rail and light rail.

**Cork Learning City** – Awarded in 2015. A learning City is defined by UNESCO as 'a city which effectively mobilises its resources across all sectors to maximise the opportunities for lifelong learning for all its citizens'.

**CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)** – Businesses and other organisations integrate their social and environmental responsibilities into their mainstream business operations. Business decisions are made with contextual awareness and inclusion of wider sustainability issues.

**D&I** – Diversity and Inclusion

**Doughnut Economics** – A framework for sustainable development. It combines the concept of planetary boundaries with the complementary concept of social boundaries, essentially living within social and planetary boundaries

**EI** – Enterprise Ireland

**FDA** – Food Drinks and Agriculture

**HEI** – Higher Education Institute

**IDA** – Industrial Development Agency

**Ireland's Ancient East** – a historic, heritage themed touring route covering the area outside of Dublin and east of the River Shannon, extending from Carlingford to Cavan and south to Cork City, including East County Cork and East County Limerick.

**IEE** - A key performance indicator (KPI) tracking methodology.

**IFS** – International Financial Services

**IWish** – is an initiative to inspire, encourage and motivate young female students to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

**Just Transition** – Encompasses a range of economic and social interventions needed to secure livelihoods when economies are shifting to sustainable production, primarily combating climate change and protecting biodiversity.

**LEAN** - A method for creating a more effective business by improving efficiency.

**MTU** – Munster Technological University

**NBP** – National Broadband Plan

**PET** – short for polyethylene terephthalate, the chemical name for polyester. This is a clear, strong, and lightweight plastic used commonly for food packaging, drinking bottles etc.

**Project Ireland 2040** – is the Government's long-term strategy to make Ireland a better country for all. Alongside the development of physical infrastructure, Project Ireland 2040 aims to support business and communities across all of Ireland in realising their potential. It comprises a 10-year €116 billion capital investment plan (National Development Plan) and a National Planning Framework, the strategy document which sets out how Government will accommodate expected population increases.

**Prosumer** – a person who consumes and produces a product

**PUP** – Pandemic Unemployment Payment

**Pure Cork** – the destination Brand for Cork

**RRDF (Rural Regeneration and Development Fund)** – a commitment of €1 billion in rural Ireland over the period 2019 to 2027, supporting job creation in rural areas to address de-population of rural communities and to support improvements in towns and villages (pop. <10,000).

**STEAM** – Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics

**STEM** – Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics

**Taste Cork** – represents the food and drink producers that the Cork region has to offer

**TWSS** – Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme

**UCC** – University College Cork

**URDF (Urban Regeneration and Development Fund)** – to support more compact and sustainable development, as set out in Project Ireland 2040, through the regeneration and rejuvenation of Ireland's five cities and large towns.

**USP** – Unique Selling Point

**Visit Cork** – Promotes Cork as a destination for business and leisure tourism. The Business tourism brand is the 'Cork Convention Bureau' and the Leisure brand is 'Pure Cork'.

**WFH** – Work from home

**Wild Atlantic Way** – a 2,500km tourism trail driving route following the Atlantic coast from County Cork to Donegal





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