

# Clare

## Supporting Local Enterprises

Shannon Development has been a partner in very many EU funded cross border regional development projects.

Over the last number of years Clare County Enterprise Board (CEB), which has been funded under the NDP with assistance from the EU, has provided valuable support to local businesses and micro-enterprises, through direct grant aid and indirect, non-financial support.

Local businesses which have benefited from funding include: Sportsworld Netting Ltd, Scarriff; Burren Perfumery; Sylvia's Ceramics; Deerpark Woodcrafts; Aerowinds Ltd; Solution Equipment Ltd, Killaloe; Mid-West Recycling Ltd, Ennis; Kilkishen Coatings Ltd; KC Industrial Finishes Ltd, Ennis; Burren Beo; De Barra Publishing, Ennis and Alec Good Ceramics, Shannon.

In addition, the CEB continues to support enterprise through the provision of training initiatives and mentoring services.

Companies in the county should also seek to avail of support from the banks in Clare which are approved as financial intermediaries under a €300 million lending package from the European Investment Bank to help Irish SMEs.

## Encouraging Research and Development

The EU's R&D Programmes offer valuable opportunities for Ireland's small and medium enterprises (SMEs), multinational corporations, healthcare professionals and academic researchers to participate in high-quality research collaborations with their European counterparts, with the support of EU funding. Ireland has already benefitted greatly from previous EU Framework programmes, with Ireland's third level and company-based researchers drawing down some €200 million under the Sixth EU Framework Programme.

The Seventh EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) was launched at the end of 2006 with a budget of approximately €50 billion covering the period 2007 to 2013. Under the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI) 2006-2013, Ireland has set a goal to become a leader in research and development and innovation. The total share of EU funding to be targeted by Ireland over the lifetime of FP7 should be in the region of €600 million.

For more details check out [www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7](http://www.cordis.europa.eu/fp7)

## Clare's Share of Current EU Funds

The Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly is responsible for allocating a significant proportion of the €293 million in EU structural funding that will be invested in the region over the period to 2013. Clare, as with other counties in the SE region, can lay claim to its share of EU funding in areas such as:

- > Innovation, including micro enterprise supports, broadband delivery and demand stimulation
- > Investments in the Knowledge Economy
- > Environmental projects, including rural water source protection and pilot village sewerage schemes
- > Transport networks
- > Urban developments



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**what is the European Union doing for...**

# Clare

## The EU - Supporting Your Local Community

The EU has made a major contribution to Ireland's economic and social development since we joined the Common Market in 1973. Indeed, over this period, Ireland has received some €58 billion in funding from Europe, including some €17.5 billion since 1989 from the structural and cohesion funds. In addition, the European Investment Bank (EIB) has lent almost €10 billion to the Irish economy since 1973.

In most cases this EU funding was matched by Irish Exchequer contributions. Successive National Development Plans since 1989 have identified priority projects in the county and in the Southern and Eastern Region where Clare is located.

At a local level too, the EU has made a real difference to people's lives. Over the last 35 years, the EU has provided significant funding to a wide range of projects and initiatives in the county. This leaflet provides a flavor of the range and nature of the projects which have benefited from EU support in recent years. While large infrastructure projects such as roads or waste water treatment facilities tend to grab the headlines, it is also important to remember the EU has funded many local initiatives which are aimed at improving the day-to-day lives of people in small but important ways.



## Improving Local Infrastructure

A significant proportion of the funding that the EU has provided since the 1970s has been targeted at improving local and national infrastructure. Even in more recent years, the EU has continued to make a significant contribution.

In Clare, for example, almost €400 million was invested in the national road network between 1997 and 2007 – a significant share of which was provided by the EU. Major improvements include:

- > Ennis By-Pass
- > N18 Hurlers Cross/N19 Shannon Access
- > Newmarket-on-Fergus By-Pass
- > N67 improvements
- > N68 Darragh to Kilrush
- > N87 Ennistymon Bridge
- > N85 improvements

In addition, through the EU co-financed Specific Improvement Grant Scheme, investment in non-national roads throughout Clare has also increased significantly in recent years; some 32 projects were completed between 1994 and 1999 alone.

Continued >>

**Local Infrastructure**



**Childcare Services**





# Clare

In the area of public transport too, the EU has supported investment in improvements to the rail track and upgrades to rail services including increased capacity and frequency on many routes.

Clare has also benefited from EU co-financed investment in waste management facilities such as the Shannon Civic Amenity Site, Inagh Composting and Ennis Civic Amenity Site as well as bring bank sites around the county.

In addition, under the co-financed Rural Water Scheme, significant investment has been put in place to upgrade and expand waste water treatment capacity and improve drinking water quality for group water schemes and small public schemes throughout the county. This includes for example, Killaloe sewerage scheme, Lisdoonvarna water scheme, Ennis Town Water Supply, Ballyvaughan and Newmarket-on-Fergus water supply schemes as well as sewerage schemes in Feakle/Scariff/Quilty, Kilkishen, Lisdoonvarna, Ballyvaughan, Doolin and Ennis/Clarecastle.

The EU has also provided part-funding for the roll-out of high speed broadband infrastructure in Clare, with Kilrush being selected to participate in the second phase of the Regional Broadband Programme which involves the construction of Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN) throughout the country.

EU funds have contributed to coastal protection projects at Quilty and Rinivella.

Shannon airport has been a major beneficiary of EU co-financing, with five projects completed in the period 1994-1999. Aer Lingus has received significant support from the EIB towards the expansion of its fleet of planes.

Finally, like the rest of the country, Clare has benefitted from substantial EU co-financed expenditure on motorways, and energy and telecommunications infrastructure at national level.



## Tourism

Since 1994, some €700 million in EU grants has been allocated to a wide variety of measures to support Ireland's tourism industry. In addition, to general marketing promotions which benefit the country as a whole, projects from Clare which received EU assistance included:

- > Lisdoonvarna Spa Wells
- > Doonbeg Golf Resort (€2.4 million EU grant)
- > Lahinch Seaworld/Leisure Centre (€1.5 million EU grant)
- > Kilkee Waterworld (€1.5 million EU grant)
- > Ennis Tourism Information Office
- > Ennis Folk Music Centre
- > Burren Craft Learning Centre, Ballyvaughan
- > Shannon Region Walk Ways
- > Doolin Cultural Centre
- > Clare County Museum, Ennis
- > Scattery Island Pier
- > Mooghaun Hillfort archaeological trail
- > The Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience. The EU provided €10 million towards this project.

## Supporting Urban and Village Renewal

At a local and village level, the EU has continued to make a significant contribution to the lives of Clare residents. Under the EU co-financed Urban and Village Renewal Measures, for example, support was provided for various renewal, conservation and regeneration projects throughout Clare. As a result, practically every major town and village in Clare has benefitted from EU and national funding to improve streetscapes, new footpaths and kerbing, the installation of new street lighting, landscaping and street furniture. In addition, funding has also been provided for the conservation of important public buildings, for example, Killaloe Courthouse and Dromoland Turret.

# Clare

## Promoting Rural Development

In addition to the direct support provided to the county's farmers through CAP and REPs and other farm support schemes, the EU has also sought to promote sustainable rural development in a number of other ways. The LEADER Initiative was established by the European Commission in 1991. It was designed to improve the quality of life in rural areas and encourage diversification of the rural economy. There have been a number of LEADER programmes over the last number of years; LEADER I from 1992-1994; LEADER II from 1994-1999; LEADER+ Community Initiative and the Area Based Rural Development Initiative from 2000-2006.

Under the Leader Area Based National Development Programme, Rural Resource Development Ltd, based in Shannon, was allocated funding of €4.6 million to support a host of local projects and initiatives. This included initiatives in the area of rural/agri-tourism, local enterprise development and community facilities.

Funding towards LEADER-type activities in the 2007-2013 round of EU funding is part of the broader Rural Development Programme for Ireland. The funding available for the delivery of LEADER-type activities has been set at €425 million, with 55% being provided by the EU.

Under the current Rural Development Programme Clare Local Development Co. Ltd has been allocated funding of over €14 million to be used to support:

- > Diversification into non-agricultural activities
- > Support for business creation and development
- > Encouragement of tourism activities
- > Basic services for the economy and rural population
- > Village renewal and development
- > Conservation and upgrading rural heritage
- > Training

## Expanding Childcare Services

The demand for childcare has grown dramatically in recent years. To help to meet this demand, the EU has provided significant funding to increase the numbers of childcare facilities and places available to local parents. This has included the provision of capital grants, staffing supports and funding for approved community-based childcare projects, particularly those in disadvantaged areas. Between 2000 and 2008 more than €25 million was allocated to childcare services in Clare. Childcare services which have benefited from support include; Clare Family Resource Centre, Ennis; Oakleigh Montessori School; Ennistymon Family Resource Centre; Ruan Community Childcare Ltd; Lough Graney Kids Corner, Flagmount; Class Ltd, Clonlara; Hunnie Bunnies, Ennis; Cuain Aire Creche, Ennis; Kilrush Education Centre Creche; West Clare Early Years Care and Education Service; the Art Farm, Killaloe; Little Starlings, Shannon and many, many more.



## Fostering Employment, Education and Training Opportunities

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the EU's primary financial instrument for the provision of employment and training opportunities. Since Ireland joined the EU, many agencies and State bodies have received over €6 billion in investment from the ESF and in the period from 2007 to 2013, a further €375 million will be invested in training courses, higher education and employment creation projects.

For example, the ESF has co-financed a significant number of employment and training initiatives administered by the Department of Education and Science, Enterprise Ireland, Teagasc, FAS and the VEC. In Clare, the EU has co-funded projects and programme dealing with:

- > Youthreach
- > Early School Leavers progression programme
- > Adult Literacy
- > In-company training
- > Skills training for the long-term unemployed and redundant workers
- > Back to Education Initiative
- > Stay-in school retention
- > Equality for Women

This year many students from Clare will be among the 25,000 young people who will have benefitted from the EU supported ERASMUS programme since it was set up over 20 years ago. ERASMUS allows third level students and teachers to spend a year or part of a year studying in another EU country. The Higher Education Authority plans to double the number of Irish students taking part in ERASMUS over the next decade and will prioritise students from socio-economic groups that are normally under-represented in higher education.

Kilrush and St. Flannan's in Ennis are among the schools in the county that have benefitted from EU funding.