Roscommon County
Local Economic & Community Plan
2023-2029 DRAFT

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Foreword

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DRAFTING NOTE: To be provided by chairperson of LCDC and SPC

Executive Summary

County Roscommon is currently undergoing substantial transformations, marked by a population growth surpassing that of the State. With three-quarters of this growth stemming from in-migration, contributing to a diversifying demographic landscape. Roscommon is also experiencing a changing employment landscape with a growth in enterprise and employment, particularly in key sectors such as ICT, Life Sciences, Tourism, Agri-food, Creative Industries, and Culture and Heritage, reflecting the county's adaptability and economic vitality.

The county is actively engaged in environmental development initiatives, including afforestation, the expansion of renewable energy capacity, and the establishment of a growing number of Natura 2000 sites. These efforts underline Roscommon's commitment to climate action and ecological conservation.

However, amidst these positive developments, the county faces challenges. Roscommon is experiencing an ageing population and high disability rates, high commercial vacancy rates, high demand for housing, comparatively low disposable income and challenges around rural transport and inter county connectivity. The transition away from traditional extractive industries also poses a multifaceted challenge, demanding innovative solutions to ensure economic resilience to ensure a just transition. Furthermore, Roscommon is experiencing the impact of national and global issues such as the increased cost of living, the war in Ukraine, the aftermath of the

COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of climate change present challenges that require careful consideration and strategic planning.

In navigating these dynamics, the County Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (LECP) aims to capitalise on the county's strengths, address challenges, and leverage opportunities with a vision that Roscommon is a location of choice to live, visit, learn, work and play. The LECP is a statutory plan prepared under the Local Government Reform Act of 2014 and sets out the framework needed to promote and support the economic development and local and community development over the six-year period. The plan was informed by a detailed socio-economic profile of the county along with extensive public and key stakeholder consultation. The LECP also translates national and regional goals to the local level.

The plan is underpinned by six high-level goals (see below), objectives and actions that have been developed in accordance with the unique needs of County Roscommon. The implementation of the plan will be a collaborative effort that will continue to bring together a wide variety of stakeholders across the county. To assess progress, the County Roscommon LECP have established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including key performance indicators and benchmarks specific to the county's goals. The LECP is structured into seven key sections, each contributing to the development of an evidence-based

Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place

Goal 2: A county that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth

Goal 3: A vibrant County that values its culture, arts and heritage

Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims

Goal 5: A county where people's health and wellbeing are supported

Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability

strategy and implementation plan:

- Introduction to the LECP (Chapter 1): Defines the purpose and functionality of the Local Economic and Community Plan.
- Development and Preparation of the LECP (Chapter 2): Offers insights into the process and methods employed in crafting the plan.
- Roscommon at a Glance (Chapter 3): Presents a socio-economic and demographic analysis of County Roscommon, drawing from data collected from various national and regional sources.
- Community Participation (Chapter 4): Outlines the consultation process undertaken and illustrates how insights from the community have influenced the LECP's development.
- High-Level Goals SCO Analysis (Chapter 5): Provides an analysis

of County Longford's strengths, challenges, and opportunities, organized around the six High-Level Goals of the LECP.
- Roscommon LECP Strategy and Implementation Plan (Chapter 6): Delivers a rationale for each High-Level Goal, coupled with a comprehensive implementation plan. This includes objectives, actions, responsibilities, time frames, and key performance indicators.
- Monitoring and Evaluation (Chapter 7): Outlines the methods for evaluating the Roscommon LECP over its lifetime, emphasizing the mandatory updating of the Implementation Plan every two years.

The LECP provides a strategic framework that aims to make County Roscommon a location of choice to live, visit, learn, work, and play.

1. A Local Economic and Community Plan for County Roscommon

Roscommon Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), sets out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of County Roscommon. LECPs are the main tool for delivering actions from national and regional strategies at the local level. The LECP is designed to centralise actions and initiatives related to economic and community development in Roscommon into one strategy.

Over the lifetime of the County's first LECP (2016-2021), substantial progress was made towards these High-Level Goals, through a coordinated effort between Roscommon County Council (RCC) and several other local agencies and organisations. The High-Level Goals for the Roscommon LECP 2023-2029 build on the foundation that was set by the first LECP (2016-2021) and include new components to ensure Roscommon keeps progressing and growing toward the vision set out in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region – to make this: **"a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live."**

The Roscommon LECP is:
- informed by the knowledge and input of community members and stakeholders across the County
- Outcomes led: the High-Level Goals provide direction for the objectives and actions in the LECP
- Ambitious, achievable and realistic.

1.1 Purpose of the Framework LECP document

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

This document will:
- Explain what an LECP is and who will deliver the actions in it
- Describe how the LECP was developed and prepared
- Provide a snapshot of economic and community statistics in Roscommon
- Provide an overview of key findings from public consultation
- Provide a SWOT analysis informed by findings from research and public consultation

- Present the six High-Level Goals that will guide the LECP over the next six years
- Provide a detailed outline of the objectives and actions under each High-Level Goal
- Explain how the LECP will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis

1.2 Structures for development and implementation

The Roscommon LECP is a multi-agency plan, which means that actions will be delivered by a wide range of service providers. Service providers include Roscommon County Council, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.

Figure 1: Policy structure of Project Ireland 2040
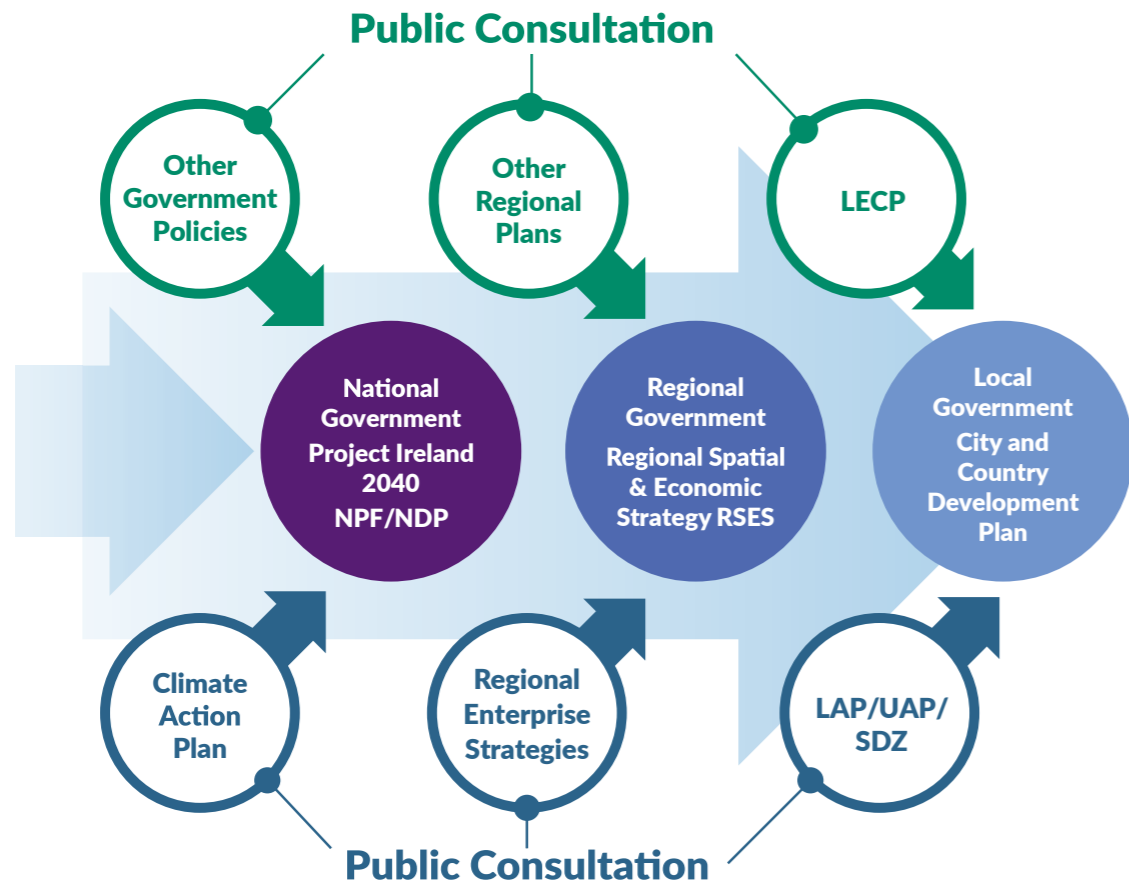
1.3 Policy alignment

The LECP 2023-2029 is the primary mechanism for delivering national and regional goals at the local level. The figure 1 below shows how the LECP fits into the policy context of Roscommon.

The figure 2 below illustrates how national plans and strategies are acknowledged and articulated at the regional and local levels. The LECP is informed by the goals, objectives and best practices outlined in these and other plans and strategies (see Appendix A for a complete list of related policy documents).

Figure 2: Selected national, regional and local plans and strategies informing the Roscommon LECP

An important element of the 2023-2029 LECP is an increased focus on climate action and sustainability. Look for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) icon in the introduction to each of the sections in Chapter 7.0 to see how Roscommon's LECP aligns with the 17 SDGs.

Figure 3: UN Sustainable Development Goals

1.4 Structure of the LECP

In line with the Local Economic and Community Plan Guidelines issued in 2021, the Roscommon LECP is comprised of two separate but related components:

- The Framework LECP: includes an evidence-base that is translated into High-Level Goals and objectives that will guide the LECP for the duration of the plan (2023-2029)
- The Implementation Plans: details the actions to be implemented over the course of two years (for a total of three implementation plans) that will contribute to the achievement of the objectives and High-Level Goals outlined in the Framework LECP.

This structure aims to ensure that the LECP Framework will provide a strong, sustainable strategic direction. This in turn will allow the Implementation Plans to be flexible and adapted to suit emerging needs throughout the lifetime of the plan, guided by the vision, goals and remit provided by the LECP Framework.

The LECP plans for both the economic and the community development of Roscommon. These two components are interrelated or dependent on each other, so there will be some overlap between them in the High-Level Goals, objectives, and actions.

High Level Goals

▼

Sustainable Community Objectives & Sustainable Economic Development Objectives

▼

Actions

High-Level Goals

The overall direction of the LECP is guided by High-Level Goals. These main goals provide the core aims of the LECP and represent how Roscommon should grow over the lifetime of the plan. The High-Level Goals were developed to reflect the socio-economic analysis undertaken (see Chapter 5.0), and to align with existing policies and plans. The High-Level Goals were refined through consultation with the public, as well as internal and external stakeholders.

Objectives

Each High-Level Goal has several related Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs). These SCOs and SEDOs are key priority areas within each High-Level Goal, and they start to narrow the plan down from aspirational to practical. Objectives provide an indication of how actions might be grouped in order to work toward achieving the High-Level Goals. Like the High-Level Goals, the development of the objectives was informed by consultation with the community and stakeholders, as well as by the socio-economic analysis.

Actions

Actions are the specific projects or initiatives identified to fulfil the objectives and contribute to accomplishing the High-Level Goals. Actions are designed within the SMART framework, which means they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Actions make the LECP operational and are designed to respond to community input and need. Actions were identified by the agencies responsible for implementing the LECP, and care was taken to ensure that the actions in the LECP would complement and support existing plans and strategies.

The LECP has also considered how it might impact several **cross-cutting priorities.** Cross-cutting priorities are topics that are identified as important and that affect, or cut across, most or all aspects of development. These topics were considered throughout all stages of the LECP, and helped to inform the development of High-Level Goals, objectives, and actions:

Poverty

Disability

Sustainability including Climate Change

Rurality

Equality

Age

1.5 Public sector duty

In line with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, Roscommon County Council is committed to promoting equality, preventing discrimination, and protecting the human rights of employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans.
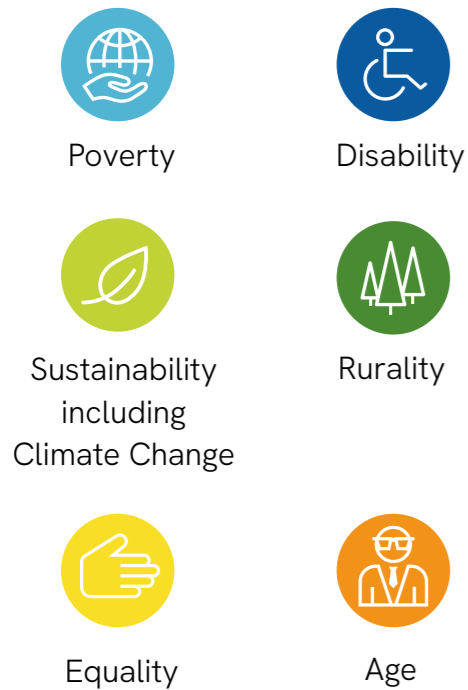
1.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Per the LECP Guidelines, the monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the LECP will be facilitated by the inclusion in this document of a set of outcomes and representative indicators that are suitable to measure progress towards the achievement of the High-Level Goals and sustainable objectives. These can be found in Chapter 6: Implementation Plan for County Roscommon.

It is required that progress on the LECP is reviewed every two years. See Chapter 7 for further detail on the Monitoring and Evaluation process for Roscommon's LECP 2023-2029.

2. Development and Preparation of the LECP

The development of the LECP was a highly collaborative and iterative process. In line with the LECP Guidelines 2021, Roscommon's LECP was developed over six stages.

Stage 1: Preparation

The first step in developing the LECP included a preliminary policy context review, a rigorous audit of the previous LECP implementation plans, and a thorough socio-economic analysis of

Figure 4: LECP Process

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

County Roscommon. This stage informed the development of the Socio-economic Statement, which included key findings from the socio-economic analysis, a summary of what was accomplished over the course of the previous LECP, identification of key themes, and draft High-Level Goals.

Stage 2: Public Consultation

During the consultation stage, the Socio-economic Statement was issued for public review and comment. Feedback was sought from communities and stakeholders using a variety of online and in-person methods (see Chapter 4 for a detailed methodology). Throughout the consultation stage, 7.000+ participants engaged from the public, community groups, local service providers, specific sector representatives, statutory agencies, and local government.

Stage 3: Develop Objectives and Outcomes

Following the Consultation stage, the draft Socio-Economic Statement was revised and expanded to include a full policy alignment review, a socio-economic profile, an analysis of the consultation, and an updated SWOT analysis. These components informed the revision of the High-Level Goals, and the development of Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) associated with each High-Level Goal. The revised Socio-Economic Statement was provided to the SPC, LCDC and Municipal Districts for comment.

Stage 4: Finalise Plan

Based on feedback received from the SPC, LCDC and Municipal Districts, a draft Framework LECP was developed. During this stage, further consultation took place with key stakeholders to identify detailed actions aligned with the agreed High-Level Goals, SCOs and SEDOs. This consultation formed the basis of the Implementation Plan, and like the development of the Framework LECP was a collaborative and iterative process. A completed draft of the Framework LECP and Implementation Plan was submitted to the SPC, LCDC and MDs for comment, and the draft was amended to reflect the feedback received. The final Framework LECP and Implementation Plan were adopted by the SPC and LCDC on INSERT DATE, and formally adopted by Roscommon County Council on INSERT DATE.

Stages 5 and 6: Implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation

The LECP was launched in 2023. Implementation will continue from 2023-2029, and will include regular monitoring and review (see Chapter 8.0 for further detail of the review process). Of note, in accordance with the LECP Guidelines 2021, Implementation Plans are to be developed for a two-year period (for a total of three Implementation Plans over the lifetime of the LECP). At the two-year mark, these Implementation Plans should be reviewed and revised to respond to emerging needs.

3. Roscommon at a Glance

Roscommon is an inland county containing the geographic centre of Ireland, and with an area of 2,548 square kilometres, it accounts for 3.9% of the State's total landmass. County Roscommon is bordered by counties Galway, Leitrim, Longford, Mayo, Offaly, Sligo and Westmeath. In a regional context, County Roscommon is part of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area. However, there are also close alliances with the Eastern and Midlands Region, particularly given the fact that Athlone, which is designated as a Regional Growth Centre in the NPF includes the Athlone West area of County Roscommon.

Roscommon is a rural County dotted with towns and villages that support vibrant communities with residential, retail, commercial opportunities and education and leisure facilities. Roscommon Town is the principal town and administrative centre with a population. Roscommon is notable in terms of its rivers and lakes,

with the eastern boundary demarcated by the River Shannon and Lough Ree, while Lough Key in the north is one of the county's most notable natural assets.

In terms of infrastructure and connectivity, the county is served by the M6 Dublin to Galway motorway in the south, with the N4 and N5 national primary routes to the north. The county is also served by the N60, N61 and N63 national secondary roads. The N61 is of particular note in a regional context, running through the county on a north-south axis and being an important connection between the two designated Regional Growth Centres of Sligo and Athlone.

Rail lines through the county provide east-west connectivity via the Dublin to Westport line and the Dublin to Sligo line, with Roscommon, Boyle and Castlerea, all having operational train stations and benefitting from daily rail services.

Figure 5: Map of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Area. Source: NWRA RSES.
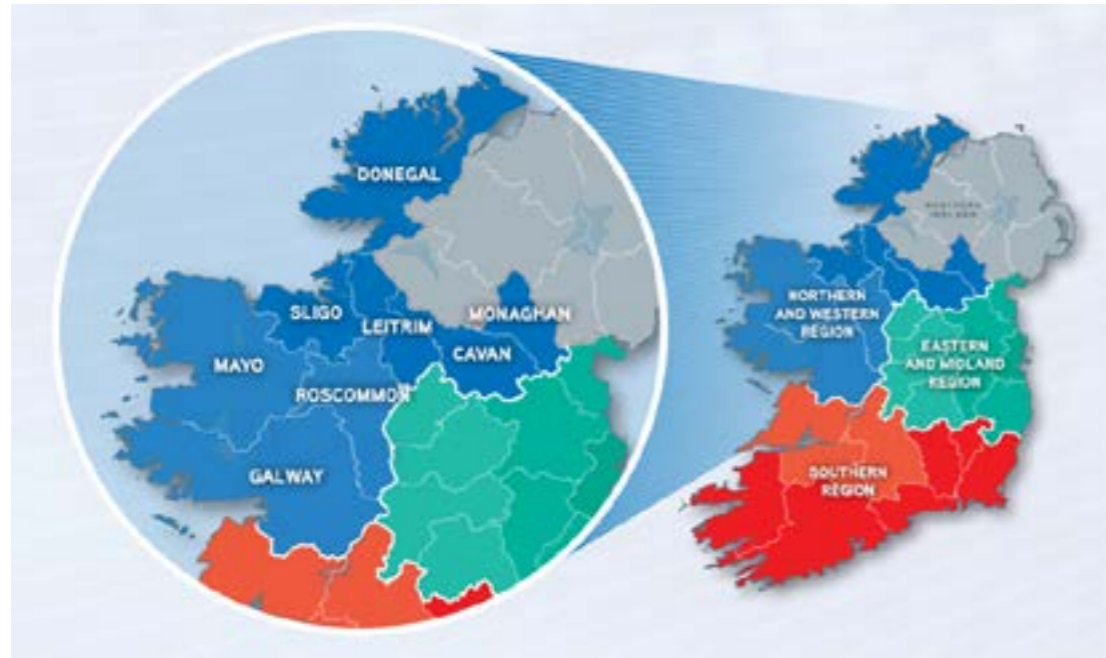
3.1 Socio-economic profile: How we are changing

The statistics below provide key facts and figures about the economy and communities of County Roscommon. These are the most current figures available at the time of analysis (July 2023). Over the course of the LECP 2023-2029, RCC will monitor these statistics and update the LECP actions to respond to new trends and changes.

3.1.1 Roscommon's communities

Census 2022 shows that the population of County Roscommon as 70,259. Between the last two Censuses. County Roscommon has seen the one of the highest growth rates (8.9%) in the Northern and western Region, second only to Leitrim, and higher than the State. A breakdown of this population growth showed that three quarters was due to

net migration rather than natural increase. In parallel with this population growth the residential vacancy rate within the county has dropped from 20.9% to 13.3%. However, across the same period the total housing stock only rose 2.7%, indicative of growing housing demand.

People aged over 65 account for 17% of the population, and aging population with the average age (40.8 years) rising to the third highest in the State (38.8 years) between 2016 and 2022. As would be expected with an aging population there is also an accompanying growth in health needs within the county. Roscommon has a rural population, high numbers of married people and family households and low and decreasing crime rate.

In Roscommon, the number of dual Irish citizens increased from 1,152 to 2,043 while non-Irish citizens accounted for 11% of the county's population, lower than the State (12%). County Roscommon has a relatively diverse population, particularly in comparison to the Northern and

Western Region. Both in terms of ethnicity and nationality, Roscommon has seen increases in diversity. Roscommon is also home to a significant traveller community, particularly in areas such as Taghboy, Castlereagh and Scregg. In addition, close to 1,000 refugees from Ukraine have recently moved to Roscommon particularly in the Boyle and Roscommon Municipal Districts.

Underpinning this population is a rich cultural heritage within County Roscommon and an active and proud community. Roscommon's rural location provides access to superior quality of life, a clean green environment, extensive forests, amenity parks, walks, cycle routes and water-based activities and a vast number of heritage and cultural sites.

The county has a large number of community centres, sports facilities, arts facilities and youth groups. There is local investment in the County from residents, with Roscommon's Public Participation Network (PPN) currently at 270 member organisations, and a relatively high proportion of the population engaged in volunteer activities. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

Roscommon's population is growing at a faster rate than the State

- In 2022, County Roscommon's population was 70,529, up 8.9% from 2016. This was a faster growth rate than the State (8.1%) across the same period (CSO, Census 2022)
- Of this increase, 73% was due to migration and 27% due to natural increase. This suggests new communities are moving into the area (CSO, Census 2022)

- In 2016, the population was predominantly rural, with over 73% of residents living areas classified as rural or remote (CSO, Census 2016)

An ageing population

- Between 2016 and 2022, Roscommon's average age increased from 39.7 to 40.8 years. This was the third-highest average age in the State (40.8 years), and two years higher than the State's average age (38.8 years) (CSO, Census 2022)
- In 2022, the old-age dependency ratio (the proportion of the population over age 64 divided by the working-age population) in Roscommon was significantly higher than the State (30.2% and 23.1%, respectively) (CSO, Census 2022)
- In 2016, empty nesters and retirees cohort (age 60 to 69) experienced the most significant increase in Roscommon and in the Northern and Western Region (increasing 1.4% and 1.3% respectively) (CSO, Census 2016)
- Between 2011 and 2016, Athlone and Boyle's fastest-growing age cohort was 65-69 years. In Roscommon, the fastest-growing cohort was 70-74 years (CSO, Census 2016)
- In Athlone, Boyle and Roscommon the 85+ age cohort grew 23.2%, 17.0% and 15.5%, respectively, between 2011 and 2016. These were all greater than the average for Northern and Western regions (9.5%) over the same period (CSO, Census 2016).

Varying health and disability rates

- In 2022, the majority (87.8%) of Roscommon's population reported being in good or very good health. This

Figure 6 : Roadmap of Roscommon

Source: Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028

was slightly lower than the State rate (88.9%). The rate of those reporting good or very good health decreased in both Roscommon and the State. this was a decrease from 2016 (88.4%), it was higher than the State rate (82.9%). (CSO, Census 2022, 2016)

- In 2022, 22.4% of Roscommon's population had a disability, which was higher than the Northern and Western Region (21.4%) and the State (21.5%) (CSO, Census 2022)
- There were 2,923 carers in Roscommon, of which approximately 60% (1,735) are women, and 40% were men (1,188) (CSO, Census 2016)
- Between 1990 and 2020 annual infant mortalities have not exceeded 6 in County Roscommon.
- Roscommon's infant mortality rate fluctuated between 2015-2020, regularly changing from higher than the State rate to lower. While the County's infant mortality rate was 0 in 2017, in 2020 it was 6.9 compared to the State's 3.1.
- In 2020, Roscommon had a higher death rate (7.7), and a lower birth rate (10.6) than the State (6.0 and 11.4, respectively).

Family structure

- In 2016, Roscommon had higher proportions of both married (40.5%) and widowed (5.3%) people than either the Northern and Western Region (39.1% and 4.6%) or the State (37.6% and 4.1%) (CSO, Census 2016)
- Roscommon had a higher proportion of single-person households (26.7%) than the State (23.5%) (CSO, Census 2016)
- There was a similar proportion of couple families with children in Roscommon as the State (35.7% and

35.2%, respectively), but a lower proportion of single parents in Roscommon (9.7% compared to 10.5%) (CSO, Census 2016).

A predominantly rural population

- The majority of Roscommon's population (73%) lived in rural areas in 2016, and 27% of the population lived in areas classified as highly rural/remote (CSO, Census 2016)
- According to the Census population figures, the average population density in Roscommon is approximately 27.6/km^2, compared to the State average of approximately 73/km^2 (CSO, Census 2022).

Rich in culture and heritage

Roscommon is home to…
- Rathcroghan, a UNESCO World Heritage Shortlist site
- 300+ archaeological sites of interest
- Irish National Registry Office for Births, Deaths and Marriages

An active and involved community

Roscommon is home to:
- 51 youth groups
- 41 Community Centres
- 98 Sports Facilities
- 4 Art Facilities
- 270 members of Roscommon Public Participation Network
- Award-winning Tidy County
- 285 community and sports groups in Roscommon town

Safest place to live in Ireland

- There are 14 Garda stations in County Roscommon. In 2021, these stations

recorded 1,091 criminal offences (accounting for 39.1%% of the total crimes reported by the Roscommon/ Longford Garda Division)
- The number of recorded criminal offences has fallen by 18.5% between 2017 (1,339) and 2022 (1,091)
- In 2022, Roscommon station (344) reported the most crimes, followed by Ballaghaderreen (191) and Castlerea (178)

New and diverse communities

- In 2016, 13% of the County's population was an ethnicity other than White Irish, making Roscommon the third-most ethnically diverse county in the Northern and Western Region
- The rate of ethnic diversity in Roscommon grew between 2011 and 2016 (increasing from 9.2% to 10.2%).
- In 2016, Roscommon had a higher proportion of foreign nationals than the Northern and Western regions (10.4% and 10.3%, respectively, though a lower proportion than the State (11.6%)
- Roscommon had the second-highest proportion of UK nationals in the Country (4.1%)
- In 2022, Roscommon had a higher rate of Irish Travellers (8.1 per 1,000 of the total population) than the State (6.5 per 1,000 of the total population). In 2016, Taghboy had the highest proportion of White Irish Travellers in Roscommon (101.8 people per 1,000), followed by Castlereagh (45.3 people per 1,000) and Scregg (33.5 people per 1,000)
- The Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre (EROC) in Ballagaderren has the capacity to house 220 refugees.
- As of 7th June 2023, 995 Ukrainian refugees had registered a postal

address in the County, with 59% (583) of registrations in Boyle, 38% (377) in Roscommon, 4% (35) in Athlone.

High home ownership and growing housing demand

- Between 2016 and 2022, the total housing stock grew 2.7% in Roscommon, a lower growth rate than the State (5.4%). (CSO, Census 2022)
- In 2022, 74% of households owned their own home, with a further 20% renting. This compared with 66% of households owning their home nationally and 28% renting.
- The housing vacancy rate in Roscommon reduced from 20.9% in 2016 to 13.3% in 2022. (CSO, Census 2022)
- Demand for homeless services in Mayo and Roscommon has progressively risen over the past number of years, increasing from 5 in 2016 to a recent high of 44 in 2022.
- Vacancy rates stood at 14% as of September 2020, which was higher than the State average of 4.9% Residential vacancy and dereliction rate in Roscommon stood at 14% as of September 2020, which was higher than the State average of 4.9 %. (GeoDirectory)
- As of 2022, there were 270 households in Roscommon that qualified for social housing support (The Housing Agency 2022, Households Qualified for Social Housing Support)

Robust networks and partnerships

- 18 elected members of Roscommon County Council, three of whom sit on the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) for Roscommon

- Three Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), Housing, ICT and Rural Water SPC, Planning, Environment, Climate Change and Corporate Governance SPC and Roads Transportation and Emergency Services SPC
- 270 members of Roscommon's Public Participation Network, from the Community and Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environment sectors across the County.
- Roscommon County Council has four Strategic Policy Committees (SPC): Economic Development and Enterprise Support SPC, Housing, ICT and Rural Water (SPC), Roads, Transportation and Emergency Services (SPC) and Planning, Environment, Corporate and Governance (SPC) (**Roscommon County Council website, unless otherwise noted**)

3.1.2 Roscommon's economy

County Roscommon's central location in Ireland provides significant economic advantages through its accessibility from the major cities of Dublin, Galway and well placed to take advantage of the development of Athlone as a Regional Growth Centre. In addition, the County has easy access to third level institutions and is served by road, rail and international airports.

In 2022, there were 29,611 people (aged 15 and over) at work in Roscommon, an increase of 3,792 people (+15%) between 2016 and 2022. Unemployment in Roscommon fell significantly from 13.0% in 2016 to 8.4% in 2022, and sits just slightly above the State average (8.3%). The local economy is underpinned by Professional Services (24%), Commerce/Trade (20%), Manufacturing (13%), Agriculture (9%),

Public Administration (8%), Construction (6%) and Transport/Communications (5%). While average income levels are lower than the State average, the cost of living is also lower.

Roscommon has the highest proportion of microenterprises (94%) in the State and is home to clusters in the medical device, pharma and engineering sectors. Entrepreneurship and innovation is growing within the County with increased employment by Enterprise Ireland supported companies and over 3,000 active enterprises.

Foreign direct investment is also growing in the county with employment by IDA Ireland client and supported companies increasing every year from 2013 to 2022. There are 10 Industrial Development Agency (IDA) supported companies in County Roscommon (considered the West Region by the IDA) employing 1,473 in total. There has also been significant investment in regeneration projects in Roscommon from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and the Rural Regeneration and Redevelopment Fund particularly within Roscommon Town and Boyle Town. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

Centrally located and well connected

- Rindoon in Roscommon is the geographic centre of Ireland
- Roscommon Town is located 60 minutes from Dublin and 45 minutes from Galway by motorway
- Three national airports are accessible within 90 minutes
- Two rail lines serve various areas of the County
- 4,000km of public roads, with over

233km of National Primary and Secondary roads (Roscommon County Development Plan)
- Served by Bus Éireann, Local Link and community bus routes operated under the Rural Transport Initiative. (Roscommon County Development Plan)

Rural Economic Base

- In 2021, a total of 1,684 jobs were supported by Enterprise Ireland client companies that were located in Roscommon and 888 people were employed in client companies supported by the Roscommon Local Enterprise Office in 2020.
- The top three employment industries in Roscommon in 2016 were; 1. Wholesale and retail trade (3,585 employees) 2. Health and social work (3,343 employees) 3. Manufacturing industries (2,803 employees). (CSO, Census 2016)
- The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector employed double the proportion of workers in Roscommon (10%) compared to the State (5%). (CSO, Census 2016)
- There was a higher proportion of households in Roscommon reporting

the following employment types than at the State level: manual skilled; own account workers; farmers: and agricultural workers. (CSO, Census 2022)

Growing industries

- 300Ha of land in Roscommon is prioritised for industry and enterprise development
- Key sectors of the Northern and Western Region include:
  - Tourism
  - Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Economy
  - Marine and Blue Economy
  - ICT and Life Sciences
  - Agri-Tech and Agri-Food
  - Retail
  - Advance Manufacturing and Engineering
- Key sectors associated with settlement centres in Roscommon include:
  - Innovation & ICT (Roscommon Town)
  - Life Sciences (Monksland)
  - Tourism & Arts (Boyle)
  - Agri-food (Castlerea)
  - Creative Industries (Ballaghaderreen)
  - Culture & Heritage (Strokestown)

- As of 2020, there were 3,167 active enterprises in Roscommon. Of these the vast majority (3,013) were micro-enterprises (employing under 10 people)
- As of 2016, Roscommon had strong industry sectors which are employing people at a higher rate than the regional norm. The top 3 performing sectors include; Agriculture, forestry and fishing; Mining and quarrying and Manufacturing.

Growing Foreign Investment

- IDA Ireland client companies based in Roscommon employed 3,184 people in 2022, with net job growth in every year since 2013. (enterprise.gov.ie, Annual Employment Survey 2022)
- Monkstown/ Athlone is in the IDA Midlands Region, where there are 49 IDA client companies, employing 6,868 people.
- IDA Ireland owns approximately 6Ha of marketable land in Roscommon, upon which they are actively encouraging investors to locate, whether through marketing potential investment sites outside of the main cities or working to develop recognised industry clusters.

High Tourism Potential

- Roscommon is home to (among others):
  - The Irish National Famine Museum (Strokestown)
  - Roscommon County Museum
  - Lough Key Forest & Activity Park (200k visitors annually)
  - The only Boda Borg Quest facility in the country
  - Ireland's largest inflatable Waterpark (Boyle)
  - Glendeer Pet Farm
  - Trinity Arts Centre
  - Tullyboy Farm
  - Roscommon Arts Centre
  - Knockvicar Alpacas
  - Boyle Abbey (which had 8,325 visitors in 2021)
  - Roscommon Race Course.

Falling unemployment

- The unemployment rate was 8.4% (down from 13.0% in 2016) in Roscommon compared 8.8% in the Northern and Western Region and 8.3% in the State. (CSO, Census 2022)
- As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of people in Roscommon receiving PUP, TWSS, or EWSS peaked

at 12,137 on May 3, 2020, gradually decreasing till April 2022. Latest data indicates 2,199 in Roscommon were benefiting as of April 24, 2022.

Relatively high deprivation rates at the County level

- In 2020, the average disposable income per person in Roscommon was €20,113, which is below the national average of €23,615. Despite recovering from the previous financial crisis, the income gap between Roscommon and the national average has widened over the years, growing from €1,199 per person in 2010 to €3,502 in 2020.
- The commercial vacancy rate in Roscommon stood at 13.2% as of December 2021, which was 2.5 percentage points higher than the State average of 11.7% (GeoDirectory)

- In descending order of commercial vacancy rates as of December 2021:
  - Ballaghaderreen - 26.4%
  - Roscommon Town - 19.4%
  - Carrick-on-Shannon - 18.8%
  - Athlone (Roscommon) - 17.2%
  - Elphin - 17.2%
  - Boyle - 14.9%
  - Castlerea - 12.5%
  - Strokestown - 10.7%

High education rates

- In 2016, there were lower overall educational attainment rates in Roscommon than in the Northern and Western Region and the State, but a slightly higher proportion of people completing technical or vocational qualifications (9.6%) than regionally or nationally (9.5% and 9.4% respectively). (CSO, Census 2016)

- Across the County, the proportion of people with tertiary education qualifications (33.3%) was lower than the State (39.3%). However, this proportion was higher in Athlone MD (36.3%) than in Boyle MD (30.9%) and Roscommon MD (30.4%). (CSO, Census 2016)
- Double the proportion of people (10.5%) reported agriculture or veterinary qualifications than in the State (5.1%). (CSO, Census 2016)
- The highest proportion of women (30.0%) reported a social sciences, business and law qualification. (CSO, Census 2016)
- The highest proportion of men (36.6%) reported an engineering, manufacturing and construction qualification. (CSO, Census 2016)

Investment in town regeneration

- As of July 2022, County Roscommon has been granted €14.3 million from the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF). This includes three successful applications for projects based in Roscommon town centre alone.

- In addition to this, the county also received €13.1 million from the Rural Regeneration and Redevelopment Fund (RRDF). This included a €2,174,400 grant for a project to revitalise Boyle Town centre approved in 2021.
- Boyle and Roscommon Town are classified as "non-predefined 'c' areas on the EU Regional Aid Map 2022-2027, and therefore qualify for EU Regional Aid (European Commission,

improve the energy efficiency of housing within the county as well, with only 12% of residences achieving A and B Building Energy Ratings compared to the State average of 21%. Key findings from this part of the analysis include:

Preservation and conservation areas and efforts

- Roscommon is home to...
  - 38 Natura 2000 sites, including Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and...
  - 11 designated Natural Heritage Areas, with several more proposed
  - Ten bog sites entirely located within are designated as Raised Bed Special Areas of Conservation, with a further five bog sites partially located within the County
  - The total amount of forest area in Roscommon amounted to 31,547 ha in 2022, with forest cover amounting to 12.4% of the County
  - Roscommon received €3.9 million in Forestry Scheme payments in 2021
  - In 2020, Roscommon's unpolluted areas reached 26%, surpassing the national median of 22%. Slight pollution covered 73% in Roscommon, exceeding the national median of 62%. Roscommon's moderately polluted areas were only 1%, well below the national median of 17%

Varied energy sources

- In 2022, Roscommon used 101 GWh of Residential Metered Electricity and 137 GWh of Non-

Residential Metered Electricity. These were, respectively the third and second lowest consumptions by any County in 2022.
- County Roscommon had an installed capacity of 152 MW of wind energy across eight wind farms as of October 2021. This represented 3.5% of the total wind energy capacity of the State.
- 15 Sustainable Energy Communities recognised by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) across the County.
- Roscommon is included in the region identified by Ireland's first Territorial Just Transition Plan (Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, 2022-2027), which provides for the allocation of approximately €169 million of investments to address the development needs resulting from the ending of peat extraction for energy production.

Regional aid map for Ireland 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2027).

Relatively more affordable accommodation

- The average monthly rent expressed as a percentage of the average monthly income in Roscommon is 27%. The standard for affordability nationally is 30% meaning renting in Roscommon is more affordable than the national average.
- In 2020 the average mortgage repayment to net income ratio for first time buyers was 18% in Roscommon compared to 29% in the State.

3.1.3 Roscommon's environment

Roscommon is a rural county with extensive natural environments, providing a wide range of conservation and preservation opportunities. There are over 30 Natura 2000 sites within Roscommon, designated for the protection of local wildlife. In addition there are a number

of unique raised bog sites and Natural heritage areas of significant ecological importance. Afforestation within the County totals over 30,000 hectares and the county received €3.9 million in Forestry Scheme payments in 2021. Litter pollution is low in Roscommon with more than a quarter of the County being unpolluted. However, Roscommon's water bodies had, on average, worse ecological statuses compared to the rest of Ireland.

Roscommon has a growing renewable energy capacity with over 150 MW of capacity installed across a number of projects. Sustainable energy uptake within the population is also rising with 15 Sustainable Energy Communities recognised by SEAI. There are also opportunities to improve energy efficiency across the county. There is currently high reliance on personal vehicles for transport within the county with the sixth highest proportion of households with at least one motor car in the State, however, the uptake of electric cars in the county is increasing. There are opportunities to

- Roscommon was home to 15,287 Registered Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems in 2021. This represented 3.2% of the total registration in the State
- In 2021 Roscommon averaged a consumption of 416 litres per meter per day. This was the fourth-highest rate of consumption in the State for 2021
- Currently 3 of Roscommon's CSO defined settlements are not compliant with Waste Water Discharge Licence emission limit values but are capable of achieving at least Urban Waste Water standards. (Irish Water)
- A proportion of 41% of Roscommon's river water bodies had a satisfactory ecological status compared to a State average of 53%. (EPA Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018)

High reliance on personal vehicles

- A higher proportion of households in Roscommon (89.4%) reported owning at least one car than the Northern and Western Region (86.9%) or the State (84.4%). (CSO, Census 2016)
- Roscommon had the second-lowest proportion of households with no motor car in the Northern and Western region, and the sixth-lowest in the State. (CSO, Census 2016)
- A higher proportion of people in Roscommon (85%) commuted via personal vehicle than at the regional or national level (82.6% and 73.1%, respectively). (CSO, Census 2016)

Low uptake of Electric Cars

- In 2022, Roscommon registered 123 EVs (up from 50 in 2021), making up

4.4% of new and used private car licenses, below the national 11.1% average.
- The sales of Electrical Vehicles in Roscommon accounted for 3.7% of all new and second-hand private cars licensed for the first time between January and June 2022, which was below the State average of 9.9%
- Across Roscommon there are only 13 public EV charging locations.

Low Building Energy Ratings (BER)

- The Building Energy Rating (BER) is audited across Ireland. Between 2009 and 2022, 12% of residences in County Roscommon recorded a BER between A and B. This was significantly lower than the State average of 21% across the same period. The same trend was seen in the non-residential dwelling, with County Roscommon achieving 11% graded between A and B compared to the State proportion of 15%. This suggests that buildings in County Roscommon are less energy efficient than the State's. (CSO, Energy)

Figure 7 : Designated Sites of Roscommon
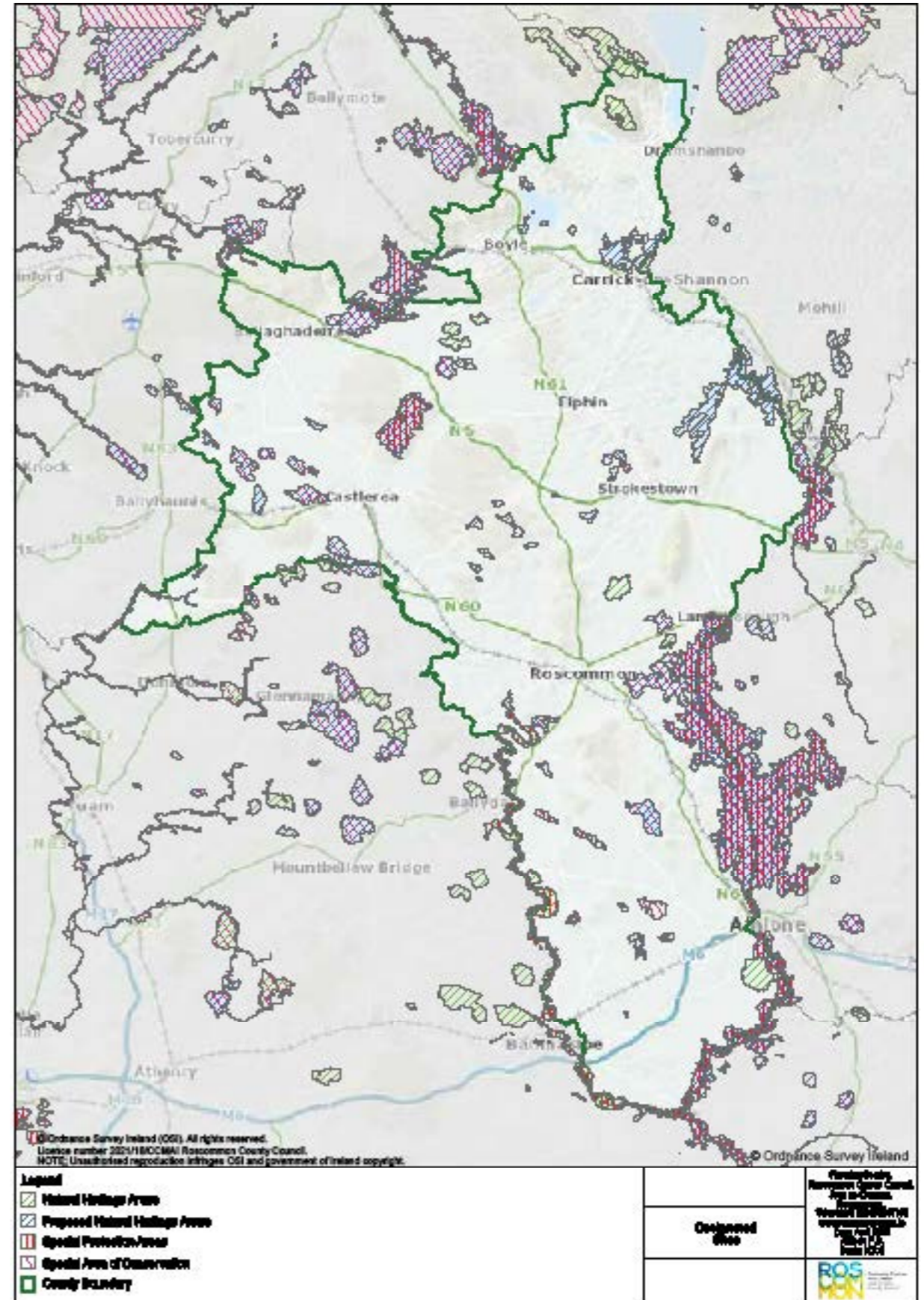
Key Insights Socio-Economic Profile

The infograph below provide key facts and figures about the economy and communities of County Roscommon. These are the most current figures available at the time of analysis (January 2023).

Total population 2022

70,259
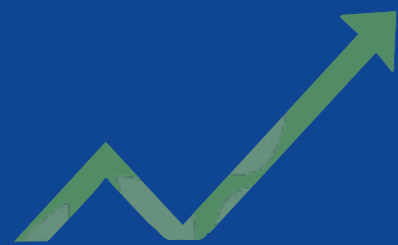
Between 2016 and 2022, Roscommon's population grew by **8.9%**, which was **above the national growth rate** (8.1%)

Population by age

0-16	16-64	65+
20.1%	**61.4%**	**18.5%**
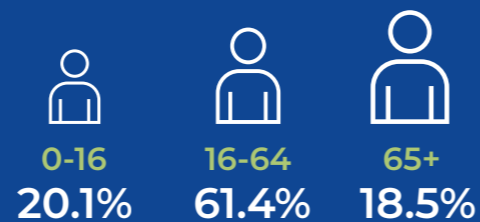
Components of population change

73%
Due to migration

27%
Due to natural increase
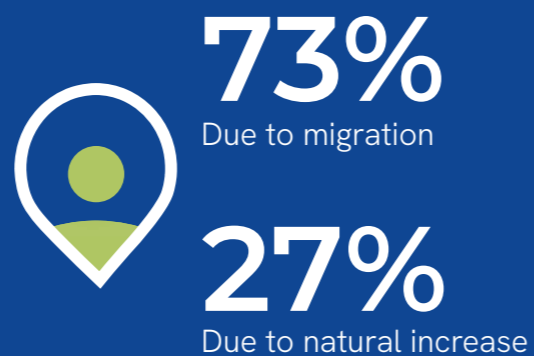
Population distribution

27%

Urban Living

73%

Rural Living

New and diverse communities

10.4% of population are foreign nationals

707 Ukranian refugees registered in Roscommon

220 Capacity to house refugees in the Emergency Reception Orientation Centre

1% Increase in the proportion of foreign nationals between 2011-2016

15
Raised Bog Special Areas of Conservation

300+
Archaeological sites of interest

11+
Natural heritage areas, including Rathcroghan, a UNESCO world heritage shortlist site

Housing

32,129
Total dwellings

4,326 vacant housing stock

Farming

6,080
Total number of farms

72% of farms specialise in beef production

58 is the average age of farm holders.

4. Roscommon's Community Participation

Public consultation was focused on refining the draft High-Level Goals, as well as identifying potential objectives and actions to fit within each goal.

4.1 The consultation process

Participation in public consultation was invited from March through May 2023. A variety of engagement methods were provided to ensure access to the public consultation process to as many people across the county as possible. Those wishing to make submissions were invited to refer to a Socio-Economic Statement prepared by Roscommon County Council to support the public consultation phase. Both in-person and online consultation methods were utilised. Invitation was extended to this process via press release, media activity, a social media campaign, and a dedicated webpage on the Roscommon County Council website to engage in the following consultation processes.

4.2 Who participated

In total, over 7,000 people engaged with at least one component of the consultation process. The engagement numbers and demographics of those that responded to the surveys are illustrated on the next page.

4.3 How public consultation shaped the High-Level Goals

A crucial component of public consultation is ensuring the LECP reflects the feedback shared during the consultation process. The table on page 34 presents a summary of the feedback received around the draft High-Level Goals, and shows how the final goals were adapted to reflect the input from the public. Of note, the language of all High-Level Goals was updated to reflect outcomes-driven language, in order to provide a strong strategic direction for the LECP.

The Engagement Process

The public consultation phase of the LECP was carried out during March, April and May in 2023.

4,000+ people engaged online via social media platforms

60+ participants across community focus groups

300+ participants at public feedback and information sessions

275+ public survey responses

2,000+ FOLLOWERS across various social media platforms

100+ PPN survey responses

The LECP public survey respondents

Nationality

90% Irish Participants

10% Other nationalities: UK, Polish, and other parts of the EU

Age

- 12-17: 3%
- 18-34: 12%
- 35-44: 26%
- 45-64: 44%
- 65+: 10%

Gender

63.5% Female

35% Male

1.5% Gender non conforming

Self reported identity

Protestant · Atheist · Queer · Bi-sexual · Lithuanian · Straight · Irish · Heterosexual · Polish · Catholic · No children · Roman Catholic · English · Autistic · Hard-working · Irish-American · Sierra-Leonan
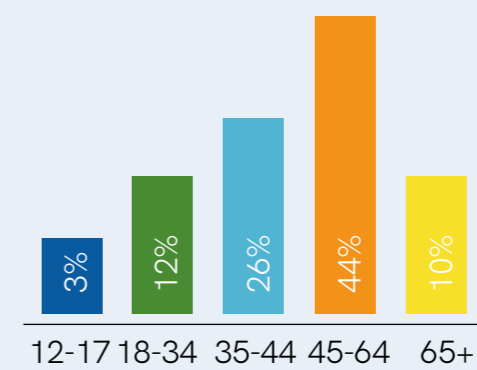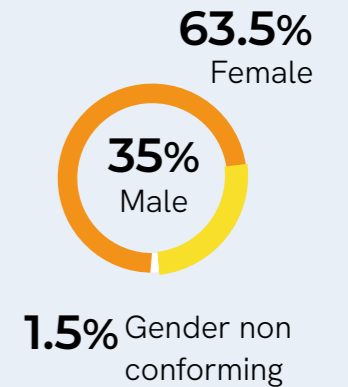
Original High-Level Goal	Participants said	What we did
High-Level Goal 1: Roscommon is a County that welcomes, supports and celebrates its communities and unique sense of place	▪ Easy to understand ▪ High priority	The goal was changed to: High-Level Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place
High-Level Goal 2: Roscommon is a County that attracts, retains and grows employment, investment and local economic activity	▪ Clarity required on the meaning of 'local economic activity' ▪ Very similar to Goal 6, potential to merge	The goal was changed to: High-Level Goal 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth
High-Level Goal 3: Roscommon is a County that is a location of choice to live, learn, visit, work and play	▪ High priority ▪ Relatively easy to understand ▪ Better suited to a vision statement or cross-cutting priority for the LECP rather than a High-Level Goal	The goal was removed, and instead was considered as a cross-cutting priority
High-Level Goal 4: Roscommon is a County that values, enhances and protects cultural, natural and environmental resources	▪ The sentiment is important ▪ Language is clear ▪ Similar to Goal 8, potential to combine	The goal was merged with goal 8 and changed to: High-Level Goal 3: A vibrant county that values its culture, arts and heritage
High-Level Goal 5: Roscommon is a County that has strategic infrastructure that promotes economic and community development	▪ Low priority ▪ Language is unclear ▪ Potential for a stronger focus on collaboration	The goal was changed to: High-Level Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims.
High-Level Goal 6: Roscommon is a County that has key industries that compete on a local, regional, national and international level	▪ Low priority ▪ Language unclear, esp. clarity needed around 'Key industries' ▪ Very similar to Goal 2, potential to combine or remove	The goal was removed
High-Level Goal 7: Roscommon is a County that ensures people feel supported to improve their health and wellbeing	▪ Clarify language slightly, wording makes it harder to understand ▪ Include language that encapsulates training and education (formal and informal)	The goal was changed to: High-Level Goal 5: A County where people's health and wellbeing are supported
High-Level Goal 8: Roscommon is a County where its communities are knowledgeable and empowered to make changes towards a climate-just future	▪ Clarity needed around 'climate-just future' ▪ Would like to see statutory bodies/ agencies reflected in the goal, not just communities ▪ Similar to goal 4 'natural and environmental resources', opportunity to combine	The goal was changed to: High-Level Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability

4.4 Key themes that emerged from consultation

In addition to shaping the High-Level Goals, feedback from the consultation process informed the Sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs), the Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) and their associated actions. An overview of the SCOs and SEDOs can be found in Chapter 5, and further detail, including specific actions, can be found in Chapter 6. The table below is organized under the revised High-Level Goals (see section 4.3 above), and presents the key themes that emerged during consultation.

Revised High-Level Goal	Themes
High-Level Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place	▪ Continued and increased community integration and inclusion ▪ Tailored supports, services and opportunities ▪ Increase access to universal supports and services, including public transportation ▪ Improving public transportation ▪ Encouraging tourism ▪ Enhancing public safety ▪ Equal access to high-quality public realm and green spaces ▪ Increase access to support around affordable housing ▪ Support for town and village renewal and regeneration
High-Level Goal 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth	▪ Promote local job creation ▪ Support agricultural diversification ▪ Ensure Just-Transition support for those working in traditional sectors (farming, agriculture, extractive industries) ▪ Support for farming industry ▪ Continue to pursue opportunities in the renewable energy sector ▪ Explore potential for circular and green economies ▪ Attract larger businesses and FDI ▪ Explore potential for increased transportation to capitalise on the economic/business benefits Roscommon's central location ▪ Continue and expand on current tourism efforts and offerings ▪ Support for remote working opportunities ▪ Ensuring adequate industry-specific education is available ▪ Improved broadband and internet connectivity
High-Level Goal 3: A vibrant County that values its culture, arts and heritage	▪ Ensure access to libraries for all areas of the County through the branch library network and the Mobile Library and Schools Service. ▪ Protect and promote existing cultural and heritage sites ▪ Build on the existing strength of Roscommon's natural
High-Level Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims	▪ Increased networking between statutory bodies and not-for-profit organisations and agencies ▪ Encouraging civic engagement ▪ Support for existing volunteers, and encouragement for new volunteers to get involved ▪ Coordinated approach to service development and delivery
High-Level Goal 5: A County where people's health and wellbeing are supported	▪ Increased education and promotion around physical and mental health ▪ Increasing demand for physical and mental health services ▪ Build on the strength of existing sense of community and personal safety
High-Level Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability	▪ County-level coordination and leadership around sustainability and climate change actions ▪ Encouraging the generation and use of renewable energy ▪ Provision of awareness and training around climate change and climate action ▪ Increased focus on biodiversity, preservation and conservation

5. A Vision for County Roscommon

5.1 Vision

"Roscommon is a location of choice to live, visit, learn, work and play."

5.2 High Level Goals

Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place

Goal 2: A county that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth

Goal 3: A vibrant County that values its culture, arts and heritage

Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims

Goal 5: A county where people's health and wellbeing are supported

Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability

5.3 Sustainable Community Objectives & Sustainable Economic Development Objectives

An evidence-based approach was taken order to develop the LECP High-Level Goals, and the sustainable Community Objectives (SCOs) and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives (SEDOs) associated with each goal. Development was informed by the key findings from the policy context, the socio-economic profile, and the public consultation. The table below provides a summary of the High-Level Goals and the related SCOs/SEDOs. Further detail can be found in the following Chapter, 6 An Implementation Plan for County Roscommon.

High-Level Goal	Sustainable Community Objectives & Sustainable Economic Development Objectives
Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place	SCO 1.1 Ensure County Roscommon is a county that supports and celebrates active inclusion for all
	SCO 1.2 Continue to work in partnership with communities and community leaders to create universal and targeted community-need-led responses
	SEDO 1.3 Support increased access and connectivity across the County
	SEDO 1.4 Support the sustainable development of County Roscommon towns and villages.
Goal 2: A county that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth	SCO 2.1 Promote increased access to and engagement with education, training and upskilling opportunities
	SEDO 2.2 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs while developing, encouraging and creating an environment for innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship
	SEDO 2.3 Support increased digital access, skills and infrastructure
	SEDO 2.4 Work collaboratively to encourage Foreign Direct Investment into County Roscommon
	SEDO 2.5 Continue to develop identified growth sectors and support this development through appropriate strategic infrastructure in key growth areas

Goal	Objectives
Goal 3: A vibrant county that values its culture, arts and heritage	SCO 3.1 Continue to create and promote increased awareness and appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage
	SCO 3.2 Ensure the arts, creative sector and libraries continue to play a major role in supporting the heritage, cultural and community development of the County
	SEDO 3.3 Continue to promote collaborative opportunities and linkages across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors
	SEDO 3.4 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries
Goal 4: A collaborative county where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims	SCO 4.1 Encourage and support the development of stronger communication networks between statutory bodies, agencies, community groups and service providers
	SEDO 4.3 Support the development and strengthening of local business networks
Goal 5: A county where people's health and wellbeing are supported	SCO 5.1 Support a positive approach to health and well-being for everyone living, working and visiting County Roscommon
	SCO 5.2 Continue to support and promote community safety
Goal 6: An environmentally conscious and resilient county that prioritises sustainability	SCO 6.1 Promote and ensure environmental protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment
	SCO 6.2 Encourage and facilitate community and business participation in the reduction of County Roscommon's carbon footprint
	SEDO 6.3 Support sustainable practices across all sectors and industries in County Roscommon
	SEDO 6.4 Support the transition to sustainable agricultural practices

5.4 Alignment with NWRA Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

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

As noted in the 2021 guidelines of the LECPs – and in line with the Local Government Reform Act 2014 – the Roscommon LECP must be consistent with the NWRA RSES. Considering this policy requirement, the NWRA prepared an "LECP Briefing Note for Roscommon" to highlight priority areas for inclusion in the County's LECP objectives and actions. Per the NWRA Briefing Note:
"In preparing the LECP, consideration should be given to the RSES of the Northern and Western Region which

includes a suite of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) for the region… . "

This briefing note highlights the RPOs that this LECP could potentially support, with these objectives categorised by the appropriate chapter headings in the RSES, namely:
- Chapter 3 – People and Places
- Chapter 4 – Vibrant Region
- Chapter 5 – Natural Region
- Chapter 6 – Connected Region
- Chapter 7 – Inclusive Region

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

6. An Implementation Plan for County Roscommon

6.1 Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 4, 5, 10 & 16

This High-Level Goal seeks to build on County Roscommon's unique identity, and to ensure that the County is welcoming and supportive for all residents and visitors. This Goal includes the following themes: community participation, social inclusion, access to community facilities, celebrating diversity, community supports and services, awareness of available supports, coordinated community development, transport, active travel, green infrastructure, town and village regeneration and revitalisation, public spaces.

This High-Level Goal 1 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 3.4, 3.5, 3.7.12 S, 3.9, 5.11, 5.19, 6.26, 6.27 (a), 6.29, 6.30, 6.32, 6.51, 7.9 and 7.15

SCO 1.1 Ensure County Roscommon is a county that supports and celebrates active inclusion for all

Ethnic and national diversity is increasing across the County. In 2022, non-Irish citizens accounted for 11% of the county's population. Roscommon also had a higher rate of Irish Travellers (8.1 per 1,000 of the total population) than the State (6.5 per 1,000 of the total population). As of 7th June 2023, 995 Ukrainian refugees had registered a postal address in the County, with 59% (583) of registrations in Boyle, 38% (377) in Roscommon, 4% (35) in Athlone. The Abbeyfield Hotel in Ballaghaderreen functions as an Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre (EROC) for refugees and asylum seekers. Additional Emergency Accommodation Centres are located in Boyle (Doyles Apartments) and Ballaghaderreen (Riveroaks).

While there are several programmes working in County Roscommon to realise national and regional social inclusion objectives (including SICAP, the County Roscommon Refugee Resettlement Programme, the Family Play Bus and Traveller programme, among others), public consultation indicated an appetite for continued and increased social inclusion initiatives, with the aim of creating cohesive communities.

This objective aims to ensure that County Roscommon is a welcoming and inclusive place for all individuals and communities, where they can participate in society and celebrate their culture and diversity. This objective will increase the awareness, availability, and engagement of community events, facilities, and development efforts, and encourage people from all backgrounds to be involved in their community.

See pages 48-49 below for detailed actions.

SCO 1.2 Continue to work in partnership with communities and community leaders to create universal and targeted community-need-led responses

County Roscommon has an older overall age profile compared to the State. Between 2016 and 2022 the number of people aged 65 and over increased by 21% to 13,041 in County Roscommon, reflecting the national trend (which saw an increase of 22% in the same age cohort). It is also important to acknowledge that nearly half of all households in the County (48.4%) had children, and nearly 10% of households comprised lone-parent families. County Roscommon has several programs and strategies supporting these diverse age brackets and family structures, including a Children and Young People's Plan, and the County Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy.

Public consultation indicated support for increased initiatives and programming to address needs of particular groups, including new communities, children and young people, those living with a disability, lone parents, and older adults to ensure adequate provision of services and reduction of barriers for inclusion.

This objective seeks to ensure that County Roscommon's diverse and vibrant communities have access to the supports and services they need. This objective will promote access by conducting research and needs assessments, reducing social inclusion barriers, increasing information and awareness of local events, supports and services, and increasing citizen engagement and knowledge sharing.

See pages 48-49 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 1.3 Support increased access and connectivity across the County

As a predominantly rural county, the majority of County Roscommon's residents are dependent on private vehicles for transportation, with 89.4% of households owning at least one car (higher than the State rate of 84.4%).

Accordingly, County Roscommon has a high proportion of those commuting via private vehicle (85.0% compared to a State rate of 73.1%), and a comparatively low proportion commuting via an alternative transport method.

This objective aims to support national and regional transport plans and objectives at the local level in County Roscommon, and to increase access to alternative transport options, such as active travel and public transport. This objective will address the limitations and barriers.

This objective seeks to ensure that County Roscommon's diverse and vibrant communities have access to the supports and services they need. This objective will promote access by conducting research and needs assessments, reducing social inclusion barriers, increasing information and awareness of local events, supports and services, and increasing citizen engagement and knowledge sharing.

See pages 50-51 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 1.4 Support the sustainable development of County Roscommon towns and villages

In 2016, the vast majority of County Roscommon's population (73%) lived in

rural areas, with over a quarter of the total population living in areas classified as highly rural/remote. The County is characterised by a very large number of rural towns and villages, which are recognised as the backbone of the rural community.

Each of the main settlement centres in County Roscommon (County Roscommon Town; Boyle; Castlerea; Ballaghaderreen; Strokestown and Monksland) has a Town Team, which brings together people from community, business and statutory sectors to promote the various opportunities to live in, do business or and enjoy their towns. In smaller towns and villages, a number of community organisations such as Tidy Towns work to enhance public spaces.

This objective aims to ensure high-quality, vibrant, and dynamic towns and villages in County Roscommon that support a good quality of life for residents and visitors, foster economic development, create jobs, facilitate start-up businesses, and re-instil the pride in the towns and villages as focal points of economic, culture and social activity. This objective will prioritise the regeneration and revitalisation of existing infrastructure over the development of new infrastructure, and provide increased green infrastructure, regeneration pro- grammes, towns and villages enhancement schemes, and public realm improvement projects.

See pages 50-51 below for detailed actions.

STRENGTHS

- Abundance of **outdoor recreation spaces** and **activities** promoting a **high quality of life**
- Vibrant **community engagement** and a **sense of local ownership** in the development process
- Significant **investment in the County** from a variety of funds - €18.2 million across various initiatives from last LECP
- **Strong community fabric** fostered by active participation

CHALLENGES

- Growing diversity and demand for **inclusion efforts**
- Relatively high numbers of **derelict properties** - 13.5% vacancy rate in 2022 compared to 7.8% in the State
- Population growth leading to **high demand for community infrastructure** - 8.9% growth between 2016 and 2022 compared to 8.1% in State
- **High demand for increased disability supports** and **services** - 22.4% disability rate in 2022 compared to 21.4% in State

KEY THEMES

Social inclusion	Accessibility
Community participation	Transport and Connectivity
Community supports and services	Active Travel
Diversity	Town and village regeneration
Coordinated community development	Public spaces

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased awareness and availability of community events, facilities, and community development efforts
- Increased number of people participating in their local community and engaging with community events and facilities
- Develop new open data, citizen engagement and knowledge sharing
- Reduce journey times and increased connectivity

- Record higher numbers of people utilising active travel infrastructure
- Increased number of green infrastructure projects and initiatives
- Completed regeneration programmes, including town and village enhancement schemes
- Public realm improvement projects

Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place

OBJECTIVE	SCO 1.1 Ensure County Roscommon is a county that supports and celebrates active inclusion for all					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
1.1.1	Strengthen universal community development, active citizenship, social capital, and inclusion of new and marginalised communities in Roscommon through targeted initiatives and strategies.	Community participation	LCDC	HSE, RLP, PPN, RCC, GRETB,Tusla, Social Inclusion Ireland, RSP, RDN, FRCs, CYPSC, Roscommon Volunteer Centre	ST-MT-LT	Number of community development, capacity building and social inclusion initiatives implemented Migrant Integration Strategy developed, adopted and implemented
1.1.2	Support the maintenance, activation, and creation of community facilities in Roscommon based on evidence and the County Development Plan.	Access to community facilities	RCC - Community/ Regeneration	LTACC, HSE, RLP, HSE, ,PPN, RCC, GRETB,Tusla, Social Inclusion Ireland, Roscommon Sports Partnership, Roscommon Disability Network, FRCs	ST-MT-LT	Increased engagement with existing and new community facilities
1.1.3	Organise and sponsor community events that showcase the diversity of County Roscommon and recognise the contributions and talents of individuals from all backgrounds. These events could include festivals, art exhibitions, and workshops that promote interaction and understanding among different groups within the County.	Celebrating diversity	RCC - Community/ Arts	RCC, PPN, FRCs, RLP, LEO, Town Teams, JPC, Foroige, CYPSC, Fáilte Ireland	ST-MT-LT	Number of community events held
OBJECTIVE	**SCO 1.2 Continue to work in partnership with communities and community leaders to create universal and targeted community-need-led respon**					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
1.2.1	Identify and address the specific needs of communities, to ensure adequate provision of services and reduction of barriers for inclusion.	Community supports and services	LCDC	RCC, Foroige, CYPSC, GRETB, Tusla, RLP, ALONE, Sláintecare, PPN, Youth Services, HSE, An Garda Síochána, FRCs, DSP, Brothers of Charity	MT-LT	Number of new targeted supports and services provided
1.2.2	Support public access to and knowledge of available supports and services through consistent communication across a variety of mediums.	Awareness of available supports	LCDC	RLP, CIS, PPN, RNN, FRCs, SICAP, RCC, GRETB	ST-MT-LT	Number of awareness campaigns and initiatives delivered

| 1.2.3 | Promote coordinated community development through a collaborative effort to plan, monitor, and support community and local development across the County by leveraging open data, citizen engagement, knowledge sharing, and data collection | Coordinated community development | LCDC | RCC, PPN, FRCs, RLP, LEO, LEADER, Town Teams, JPC, An Garda Síochána | MT-LT | Number of projects and/or programmes |

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 1.3 Support increased access and connectivity across the County.					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
1.3.1	Support an integrated transport network that maximises services within the county and to other key locations in the region, including rural transport, in accordance with national, regional, and local transport plans.	Transport	RCC	TFI, TII, Irish Rail, Local Links, Transport Providers	LT	Number of transport initiatives/projects implemented
1.3.2	Support the enhancement and delivery of active transport infrastructure and encourage residents to transition to active modes of transport.	Active Travel	RCC - Transport	NTA, JPC, JPC	MT-LT	Number of active transport initiatives developed/ implemented

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 1.4 Support the sustainable development of County Roscommon towns and villages.					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
1.4.1	Promote sustainability in County Roscommon through the delivery of green infrastructure and greening of existing infrastructure.	Green infrastructure	RCC - CAP	LCDC, Local Link, SEAI	LT	Number of green infrastructure initiatives implemented
1.4.2	Enhance pride of place through town teams, local events and sustainable town and village enhancement and regeneration projects that manage dereliction and vacancy.	Town and village regeneration and revitalisation	RCC	NWRA, relevant stakeholders, PPN, RCP, RCC	MT-LT	Number of initiatives developed and implemented
1.4.3	Undertake public realm improvements and initiatives in towns and villages across Roscommon.	Public spaces	LCDC	RCC, local community groups (Tidy Towns, etc.)	ST-MT-LT	Number of public realm enhancement initiatives/projects delivered

Goal 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 4, 5, 10 & 16

Ongoing employment and economic growth is an important component of ensuring County Roscommon is a competitive, attractive County in which to live and do business. As such, this High-Level Goal aligns with national, regional, and local strategies and policies and aims to build a strong and resilient economy. This Goal includes the following themes: enterprise growth, social enterprises, business support, digital access and literacy for individuals and communities, digitalisation for businesses, attracting investment in County Roscommon, upskilling to match employer needs, and increasing employment and revenue. This High Level Goal will support the RSES ambition to achieve a population growth to employment growth ratio of 3:2 (population/ jobs).

This High-Level Goal 2 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 4.38, 4.39, 4.41, 4.42, 6.36, 6.39, 6.44, 6.46, 7.1, 7.2 , 7.3, 7.5

SCO 2.1 Promote increased access to and engagement with education, training and upskilling opportunities

Third level education rates are generally low across the county (33.3%) compared to the State (39.3%), particularly in Boyle MD (30.9%) and County Roscommon MD (30.4%). However, technical and vocational qualifications were relatively high in the county. Community members recognised the need for education and training supports in the County and opportunities for increased higher education provision was expressed with the hope of attracting and retaining talent within the area. The NWRA RSES outlines an objective to encourage multiagency approaches to education services needed by growing, diverse or isolated communities.

This objective aims to make education, training and upskilling more available and engaging for everyone in the county, following the regional policy.

See pages 56-57 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 2.2 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs while developing, encouraging and creating an environment for innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship

As of 2020, the vast majority of active enterprises (approximately 95%) in County Roscommon were classified as micro-enterprises. The County also has a strong social enterprise foundation, and is in the top 5 counties for social enterprises per 10k population in the State. Analysis suggests that there is an opportunity to build on the strength of existing enterprises to ensure that County Roscommon is contributing to a competitive within the Northern and Western Region. Public consultation indicated that there is an appetite for increased enterprise support, including assistance in scaling up enterprises with growth potential, and ongoing training and mentoring.

Actions within this objective will support the growth of new and existing enterprises, increase development support for social, community and cooperative enterprises, and support employment in the County.

See pages 56-57 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 2.3 Support increased digital access, skills and infrastructure

Historically, broadband internet connection has been a challenge across the County. According to the latest Census figures (2022), County Roscommon had the third-highest proportion of private dwellings without internet access (13.3%). The rapid increase of internet access and the rise of employment in the communications and tech industry indicate the potential need for digital upskilling and training opportunities. Notably, Covid-19 resulted in a substantial shift from on-site to remote work. This has in-turn resulted in a new urban-to-rural migration pattern, with many people relocating to more rural areas to enjoy the quality of life outside of city centres. It also has the potential for decreasing out-migration, as it becomes less necessary to live in an urban setting for employment. Public consultation identified that reliable internet access was vital, particularly for the health of local businesses and enterprises. Participants

also noted that internet access provides a mechanism for socialisation and information sharing, and identified the opportunity for increasing access to broadband even further through the provision of community hubs.

This objective will take measures to ensure communities and individuals can access the internet and have the digital literacy skills to do so safely, it will increase the number of enterprises who trade online, and are able to use digital tools to support their business.

See pages 56-57 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 2.4 Work collaboratively to encourage Foreign Direct Investment into County Roscommon

County Roscommon has a significant proportion of micro-enterprises, with 94% of all enterprises falling into this category, however, the County has also been relatively successful in attracting FDI to date.

This objective intends to create a sustainable approach to co- ordinate economic growth with population and employment growth. The LECP will support a strategic economic development approach, through a targeted economic development roadmap/ strategy. This roadmap will pinpoint current clusters, highlight investment prospects, and foster enhanced cooperation with existing businesses and the IDA. The development of the roadmap will be supported by the establishment of the Roscommon Economic Development Forum. This forum will ensure Roscommon has a strong evidence base and is in a position

to leverage new FDI and other new development opportunities.

See pages 58-59 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 2.5 Continue to develop identified growth sectors and support this development through appropriate strategic infrastructure in key growth areas

County Roscommon has a distinctive economic landscape and is characterised by a mix of long-standing main employment sectors (including retail, health and social work, and manufacturing industries), and emerging sectors in key growth areas. This objective aims to support the growth of key sectors in appropriate locations across the County. Key sectors associated with settlement centres in County Roscommon include: Innovation & ICT (Roscommon Town), Life Sciences (Monksland), Tourism & Arts (Boyle), Agri-food (Castlerea), Creative Industries (Ballaghaderreen), Culture & Heritage (Strokestown). There is strong local employment in farming and agriculture, with the proportion of farmers in County Roscommon double that at the State level (12.3% and 5.8% respectively). As the requirements and approaches to agriculture and farming shift to new models to align with international and national climate action policy, there is a growing need for the diversification of agricultural enterprises in order to remain economically viable.

See pages 58-59 below for detailed actions.

STRENGTHS

- **Central location** - Roscommon Town is located less than 2 hours from Dublin and Galway
- **High third-level participation** among Roscommon students
- Abundant availability of **skilled professionals** in agri/ veterinary, engineering, and manufacturing fields
- **Proximity to Ireland West (Knock) Airport** ensuring convenient international connectivity

CHALLENGES

- **Impact of high out-migration** among working-age groups on growth potential - 59.9% population 16-64 years compared to 63.9% in State in 2022
- High proportions of people **commute out of the County for work**
- Traditionally **lower levels of entrepreneurship** coupled with a **high reliance on the retail** and **public sectors** for employment
- Relatively **high vacancy rate** among **commercial properties**

KEY THEMES

Education, training, and lifelong learning
Enterprise growth
Social enterprises
Enterprise supports
Digital access

Enterprise development
Digitalisation
Foreign Direct Investment
Skilled Workforce
Employment

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Stronger alignment of workforce skills and existing/emerging employment opportunities
- Growth of new and existing enterprises
- Increased enterprise development supports
- Increased access to digital technology and skills for communities and individuals

- Increased number of enterprises who trade online and are able use digital tools to support their business
- Increased investment into Roscommon from external sources
- Improve Roscommon's Pobal HP Deprivation Index
- Increased education, training and upskilling opportunities
- Increased employment and economic output

Goal 2: A county that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth

OBJECTIVE	SCO 2.1 Promote increased access to and engagement with education, training and upskilling opportunities					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.1.1	Expand education, training and lifelong learning programmes and work collaboratively to ensure Roscommon's workforce skills respond to new and existing employment opportunities.	Education, training, and lifelong learning	GRETB	RCC, GRETB, LEO, DSP, RLP, West Regional Skills Forum	MT-LT	Skills needs audit undertaken, number of vocational/occupational programmes implemented

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 2.2 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs while developing, encouraging and creating an environment for innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.2.1	Support the development and growth of new and existing enterprises through capacity-building programmes, networking, innovation, sustainability and competitiveness	Enterprise growth	LEO	InterTrade Ireland, RLP, DETE, RLP, WestBIC, HEIs, GRETB, EI,Western Development Commission	MT-LT	Number of businesses and engagement in networks and programmes
2.2.2	Provide development support, training, networking, mentoring and capacity building for social, community and cooperative enterprises.	Social enterprises	RLP	LEO, RCC, PPN		Number of social, community and cooperative enterprise development events and initiatives delivered
2.2.3	Support and actively promote local businesses by identifying and responding to local business needs through skills, supports and promotion.	Business support	LEO	RLP, RCC, PPN,	MT	Number of people engaged in social/community enterprises

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 2.3 Support increased digital access, skills and infrastructure						
Action Number	Action Description	Output/ Plain English	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.3.1	Maximise the benefits of digitalisation, through access to digital skills training, digitalisation support, internet connectivity, digital literacy and efforts to reduce digital poverty.		Digital access and literacy	LCDC	RCC, GRETB, LEADER, FRCs, PPN, LEO, Broadband Providers,EI, RLP. PPN,	ST-MT-LT	Number of households with internet connection Number of digital skills training courses offered

| 2.3.2 | Provide digital infrastructure and skills support for enterprises to the development and growth of a thriving and competitive digital economy in Roscommon. | Digitalisation for businesses | LEO | RCC, GRETB, RLP, FRCs, LEO, Broadband Providers, EI, NWRA, WDC | ST-MT-LT | Growth in digital infrastructure availability and skills programmes |

OBJECTIVE — SEDO 2.4 Work collaboratively to encourage Foreign Direct Investment into County Roscommon

Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.4.1	Develop a Roscommon Economic Development Forum, increase engagement with key agencies (IDA and Enterprise Ireland) to encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), through clustering and intra-company collaboration in Roscommon.	Investment in Roscommon	SPC	IDA, GRETB, RCC, LEO, EI, WDC, LEO	MT-LT	Roscommon Economic Development Forum established

OBJECTIVE — SEDO 2.5 Continue to develop identified growth sectors and support this development through appropriate strategic infrastructure in key growth areas

Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
2.5.1	Ensure that local skills training opportunities reflect an evidence and needs-led response to the requirements of emerging sectors	Skills and training	GRETB	IDA, LCDC, RCC, LEO, WDC	MT-LT	Number of vocational/ occupational programmes implemented in line with findings from the skills needs audit
2.5.2	Identify and review the key growth sectors through engagement, training, business supports, clustering of services and promotion.	Employment and revenue	SPC	LEO, EI, IDA, WDC, WestBic, LCDC, RCC	MT-LT	Number of sectors support initiatives delivered
2.5.3	Develop an economic development strategy/ roadmap for Roscommon	Economic Development	SPC	RCC	ST	A strategy/roadmap

Goal 3: A vibrant County that values its culture, arts and heritage

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS 2, 3 & 10

County Roscommon has a wealth of arts, culture and heritage. This High-Level Goal seeks to celebrate these strengths, safeguard them for the future, and promote them to encourage both residents and visitors to enjoy all that County Roscommon has to offer. This Goal includes the following themes: heritage and culture, arts and libraries, creative and cultural sector links, strong communications, increased participation in the sectors, domestic and international appeal, coordinated tourism branding, tourism strategy development, tourism-related industries and events, growth of tourism offerings in line with regional and national plans.

This High-Level Goal 3 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 3.7.8, 3.7.10, 5.1, 5.8, 5.9, 5.18, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7

SCO 3.1 Continue to create and promote increased awareness and appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage

County Roscommon is rich in natural and built heritage, and offers a range of cultural amenities. National policy has increasingly recognised the positive economic contributions heritage offers, including as a driver for tourism and rural development. This value is a cornerstone of government initiatives such as Creative Ireland, Culture 2025, Heritage Ireland 2030, the National Landscape Strategy 2021-2025, 'People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025' and 'Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025', all of which highlight heritage as an integral element of landscape and society, and as a tool for realising both social and economic potential.

County Roscommon supports a wide range of natural heritage and biodiversity of local and national importance. There are currently eleven Natural Heritage Areas in County Roscommon. County Roscommon is also home to a varied landscape including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, and wetlands are a distinctive feature of County Roscommon landscape. There are eight inland waterways in County Roscommon, all of which are connected to the Shannon Navigation. These waterways have a rich built, natural and cultural heritage. The bridges, locks, lock keeper's cottages, harbours and navigation markers found along the inland waterways represent skills and workmanship dating from the 1700's to the present day.

Public consultation revealed a need to protect and develop the towns and villages of County Roscommon, particularly in relation to dereliction. Community members also stressed the need to conserve and protect the natural environments of County Roscommon, including the raised bogs and peatlands within the county.

This objective will promote the preservation and accessibility of natural, built, and cultural heritage in County Roscommon for communities within and beyond the county to enjoy. The LECP will undertake actions to increase awareness and appreciation of the county's natural, built, and cultural heritage

See pages 66-67 below for detailed actions.

SCO 3.2 Ensure the arts, creative sector and libraries continue to play a major role in supporting the heritage, cultural and community development of the County

According to the National Library Strategy 2023-2027, Libraries are committed to acting as centres of cultural activity by producing and supporting local cultural events, festivals, exhibitions, and residency programs. They also collect, explore, preserve, and celebrate cultural memories and work with the creative community at local and national levels

There are five public branch libraries across county Roscommon, located in Ballaghaderreen, Boyle, Castlerea, Roscommon and Strokestown and a Mobile Library Service servicing seven

locations and schools throughout the county. The library archive and local history collection are located in the Library headquarters in Roscommon.

Public consultation revealed that many in the community thought libraries and cultural facilities were successful elements in County Roscommon and indicated an appetite for increased opportunities to engage in arts and culture. This objective will be supported by investment in Library Buildings including Open Libraries with 365- days access; expanding the Library's digital presence to become a centre for research for local history for the people of the county and to include Roscommon diaspora; and identifying additional opportunities to partner with other libraries and cultural institutions. The County Roscommon Culture and Creativity

Strategy 2023-2027 sets out a roadmap for supporting and advancing the heritage and cultural development of the County.

The County Roscommon County Development Plan outline the objective to support, develop and improve library facilities to deliver modern, innovative and accessible library services. The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) aims to ensure that the arts, creative sector, and library services work collaboratively towards a shared goal of developing and promoting heritage and culture within County Roscommon's community.

See pages 66-69 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 3.3 Continue to promote collaborative opportunities and linkages across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors

Collaboration between complementary sectors can have a range of economic benefits, including increasing innovation, knowledge, and resource sharing, and increased social and economic benefits. In County Roscommon, Artisan food and beverage production is also playing an increasingly important role in the economy.

The resultant high-quality, locally produced goods make a significant contribution to both the food and hospitality industry in the County. The establishment of An Chistin, a fresh culinary centre in Castlerea, encompassing

instructional amenities and leasable units for food business incubation, holds significant importance for the prospective advancement of this industry within the County.

The NWRA RSES outlines an objective to support the provision of low-cost shared workspaces for Cultural and Craft industries and to upgrade cultural facilities where can enjoy and participate in cultural activities. Under this objective, the LECP will facilitate these regional policies within County Roscommon by promoting collaboration across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors.

SEDO 3.4 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries

County Roscommon benefits from a range of popular historical and heritage attractions such as the Rathcroghan Archaeological Complex, Lough Key Forest and Activity Park, Roscommon Castle, Clonalis House, and Arigna Mining Experience, attracting both national and international visitors. However, according to the latest Fáilte Ireland figures (2019), County Roscommon had the second-lowest number of hotel beds available in the State (700).

It is noted that there is a strong regional support for tourism in the County. In 2018 Fáilte Ireland launched Ireland's Hidden Heartlands regional tourism brand, which guides County Roscommon in building on the tourism assets of the county to create key visitor experiences and unique tourism offerings for the visitor. The implementation of the Shannon Tourism

Master Plan and the Tourism Masterplan for the Beara Breifne Way will enable the development of these two key resources within the wider region, both of which traverse County Roscommon.

The Shannon Tourism Masterplan also identifies an emerging development proposal for the Mid Shannon zone to create a dedicated Lough Ree Biosphere Reserve. The proposed Biosphere Reserve project is a collaboration between the relevant Local Authorities, Bord na Móna and the National Parks and Wildlife Services, Waterways Ireland and Fáilte Ireland.

This objective seeks to develop the tourist industry within County Roscommon through the promotion of its many tourism assets and developing its secondary supporting industries.

STRENGTHS

- **Strong tourism potential** from 300+ ancient archaeological sites including one of the Royal Sites of Ireland
- **Significant Regeneration investment** with €27.4 million granted from the Urban and Rural Regeneration and development funds
- Adoption of the **Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027**
- Roscommon forms part of the **Ireland's Hidden Heartlands** Region and Suck Valley Way alone attracted 23,778 visitors in 2022

CHALLENGES

- Tourism is an emerging industry but was **heavily impacted by Covid 19**
- **Limited lectures** and **public talks** on big **societal issues**
- **Limited access to cultural facilities particularly for children and youth**
- **Limited visitor accommodation** in the County

KEY THEMES

Heritage and culture
Growth of tourism offerings in line with national and regional strategies to appeal to domestic and international visitors
Culture, arts, and libraries

Activity based tourism
Coordinated tourism branding
Strong communications
Tourism-related industries and events
Increased participation in creative sectors

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased conservation and management efforts
- Increased tourism-related job creation and economic development opportunities
- Designation of Rathcroghan as a Royal Site of Ireland and a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Increased visitor revenue and volume through enhanced offerings
- Development of a New Heritage Strategy, County Tourism Strategy,

County Library Development Plan and County Arts Plan
- Increased number of public and private organisations in the creative and cultural sector
- Increased collaboration across heritage and creative sectors, with everyone working toward common goals
- Increased involvement across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors

Goal 3: A vibrant county that values its culture, arts, heritage and tourism

OBJECTIVE	SCO 3.1 Continue to create and promote increased awareness and appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.1.1	Improve the care, conservation, and management of heritage and cultural sites across Roscommon by implementing best practice standards.	Heritage and culture	RCC - Heritage	RCC Tourism, PPN, RCC - Environment, RSS, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Number of conservation projects and initiatives delivered
3.1.2	Increase awareness, access and interpretation to heritage and culture sites through the development and implementation of a Roscommon Heritage Plan inline with the direction set by Heritage Ireland 2030.	Heritage Plan	RCC - Heritage	LEO, PPN, Teagasc, Arts/Crafts organisations, Fáilte Ireland, tourism providers in the county, RLP,	ST-MT-LT	Roscommon Heritage Plan developed and adopted Roscommon Heritage Plan developed and adopted.
3.1.3	Promote Rathcroghan as one of the Royal Sites of Ireland by working in partnership and engaging with DHGLH's UNESCO World Heritage Unit (WHU) to advance Rathcroghan as a UNESCO World Heritage site.	Rathcroghan as a UNESCO site	RCC Heritage	RCC Heritage, RCC Tourism, RCC, DECLG, Heritage Council, Teagasc, Tulsk Action Group, Landowners	MT-LT	Rathcroghan designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

OBJECTIVE	SCO 3.2 Ensure the arts, creative sector and libraries continue to play a major role in supporting the heritage, cultural and community development of the County					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.2.1	Collaborate with the community sector to maximise the utilisation of the county's heritage, cultural, and natural resources through the development and implementation of the new Roscommon Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027, the Roscommon County Library Development Plan. and the Roscommon County Arts Plan	Culture, arts, and libraries	RCC	Relevant stakeholders, Tourism Ireland,	ST-MT-LT	Number of projects and strategies
3.2.2	Develop clustering of the Creative and Cultural Sector, by creating new linkages and new collaborative opportunities and expand creative asset.	Creative and cultural sector links	RCC	LEO, PPN, Fáilte Ireland, tourism providers in the county,	ST-MT-LT	Number of collaborative creative and cultural initiatives and projects delivered
3.2.3	Establish a centre for Roscommon Local History, serving the people of the county and the Roscommon diaspora through our genealogy, local history, archival, and digital holdings.	History	RCC		ST-MT-LT	

3.2.4	Upgrade works on Library HQ to improve public access to collections. Upgrade libraries to include 365-day access through MOL (My Open Library).	Library infrastructure	RCC		ST-MT-LT	
3.2.5	Increase access to Library resources throughout the county.	Library services	RCC		ST-MT-LT	
3.2.6	Improve access to resources for socially marginalised members of society by collaborating with other libraries in Ireland and partners such as government bodies, GRETB, Family Resource Centres, Age Action, NALA, and Youth Organisations to develop new projects.	Library access	RCC	GRETB, Family Resource Centres, Age Action, NALA, and Youth Organisations to develop new projects.	ST-MT-LT	

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 3.3 Continue to promote collaborative opportunities and linkages across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.3.1	Support enhanced collaboration with a specific focus on the development of the rural creative economy.	Strong communications	RCC	RPL, LEO,	ST-MT	Number of conservation projects and initiatives delivered
3.3.2	Facilitate public awareness of and participation in these sectors through a variety of ways including farmers markets, pop-up shops, and other events; grant schemes in the creative and food industries to get young people involved; and supporting start-up businesses that are linking in with these sectors as part of agricultural diversification.	Increased participation in the sectors	RCC	LEO, PPN, Bord Bia, IFA, Teagasc, Arts/Crafts organisations, Fáilte Ireland, tourism providers in the county,RLP, GRETB	MT-LT	Number of conservation projects and initiatives delivered

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 3.4 Develop and support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
3.4.1	Promote and attract domestic and international visitors to Roscommon's major tourist attractions, including Rathcroghan, Strokestown Park House, Suck Valley Way, Lough Ree, Arigna Mining Experience, Lough Key Forest Park, King House Boyle, Athlone Castle, Boyle Abbey among others.	Domestic and international appeal	LCDC	RCC Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, Volunteer Organisations, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Growth in visitor revenue
3.4.2	Promote Roscommon as a destination for slow and activity based tourism by promoting its many assets such as the river Shannon, Lough Ree, nature walkways and parks exhibiting vast opportunities for tourism development.	Slow and activity based tourism	RCC	NWRA, RCC, Chambers of Commerce, LEO, Community Tourism Providers, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Increase of visitor numbers
3.4.3	Further develop Roscommon's branding in association with the Visit Roscommon's Land of Memories and Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and ensure a continued coordinated brand identity is promoted across all sectors, to maximise the brand impact for the county	Coordinated tourism branding	LCDC	RCC Tourism, Visit Roscommon, Fáilte Ireland, LEO	ST-MT	Increase of visitor numbers and job growth

3.4.4	Facilitate the development and implementation of Roscommon's Tourism Strategy.	A Tourism Strategy	Tourism strategy development	RCC - Tourism		ST	Tourism Strategy developed and adopted Implementation of Tourism Strategy actions
3.4.5	Support secondary or ancillary tourism related infrastructure, enterprises, initiatives and events through development support and funding	An increase of secondary tourism related industries and events.	Tourism-related industries and events	RLP	RCC - Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, LEO	MT-LT	Number of secondary tourism-related initiatives implemented Number of secondary tourism-related projects in receipt of funding
3.4.6	Support the development of tourism initiatives under Fáilte Ireland's regenerative tourism scheme (EU Just Transition Fund) and the preparation and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEDPs).	Growth in tourism offerings	Growth of tourism offerings in line with regional and national plans	RCC	Fáilte Ireland, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Number of projects in receipt of EU Just Transition Funding Visitor Experience Development Plans developed and adopted Implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plan actions

Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 11, 16 & 17

Collaborative, joined-up work is the cornerstone of successful and community and economic development. The aims is to capitalise on existing collaborative initiatives within County Roscommon and foster new linkages to ensure cohesive development throughout the county. This Goal includes the following themes: clear and consistent communications, and building strong networks.

This High-Level Goal 4 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 7.3, 6.58

SCO 4.1 Encourage and support the development of stronger communication networks between statutory bodies, agencies, community groups and service providers.

The goal of this objective is to ensure that representative bodies, communities and service providers function collaboratively with one another to rapidly address the needs of the community effectively and efficiently.

County Roscommon has a robust network of service providers, with over 260 organisations and groups registered as members of the Public Participation Network. Examples of collaborative approaches to economic and community development, include the Local Community Development Committee (with 51% non-statutory and 49% statutory membership), the County Roscommon Joint Policing Committee (a partnership between County Roscommon County Council and An Garda Síochána), and the County Roscommon LEADER Partnership, overseen by a board representing more than 10 organisations/sectors.

Under this objective, the LECP with ensure, in the implementation of the other high-level goals, that the statutory bodies, agencies and service providers communicate effectively to deliver on the actions and objectives outlines in the LECP.

SEDO 4.2 Support the development and strengthening of local business networks.

This objective seeks to strengthen existing business networks and support the development of new networks in order to promote foster integrated thinking across industries. Public consultation indicated an appetite for an increased number of business networks, such as County Roscommon Economic Forum, Women in Business, Youth Entrepreneurs, and more. These networks will encourage symbiotic relationships aiding in focused and synthesised economic development across the County. Several business networks are established in the county, including (but not limited to): Network Ireland County Roscommon, the County Roscommon Business Group, and the Connacht Business Network. Building on the strengths of these and other existing networks, this objective aims to support strong and active business networks to guide cohesive and coordinated economic development across the County.

STRENGTHS

Strong integration among local **economic stakeholders** fostering collaborative initiatives

Established **LCDC** and **SPC**, and an **engaged PPN** with 270 member groups

Strong network of **social and community enterprises** with enterprise Ireland companies in Roscommon employing 1,684 people in 2021

Increasing emergence of **cross-sectoral developmental partnerships** in various areas, with a willingness to collaborate on an inter-agency and cross-sectoral basis

CHALLENGES

A significant number of households in the county **lack PCs** and **internet access** compared to other counties

Maintaining **consistent communication across** and **among** hundreds of **community service providers** poses **logistical challenges**

Encouraging civic participation among all **community groups** can be a **challenge due to a variety of barriers**, e.g. language, time, confidence, etc

Ongoing challenges in ensuring **equality and diverse representation in networks and decision-making roles**

KEY THEMES

Strong communications between statutory bodies, non-statutory bodies, service providers, and community groups

Business and enterprise networks to support coordinated economic development

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased communication and collaboration
- Increase the sharing of resources
- Establishment of a local economic forum

- Be recognised at a national level for participation and collaboration (e.g. Excellence in Local Government Awards).
- Record increase in those on local boards and networking groups collaborative

Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims

OBJECTIVE	SCO 4.1 Encourage and support the development of stronger communication networks between statutory bodies, agencies, community groups and service providers						
Action Number	Action Description	Output/ Plain English	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.1.1	Facilitate and support inclusive working groups, networks and forums.	Increased communication between government, agencies, community groups and service providers.	Strong communications	LCDC	RCC, PPN, Service Providers, CYPSC, Foroige,	ST-MT-LT	

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 4.2 Support the development and strengthening of local business networks						
Action Number	Action Description	Output/ Plain English	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
4.2.1	Enhance local business networks through collaborative initiatives including local business networks, women in business networks, youth entrepreneurs networks and sector specific networks across the county	Improve business networks.	Business networks	RCC	LEO, Chambers of Commerce, PPN, Local enterprises, GRETB, Roscommon Women's Network,	ST-MT	

Goal 5: A County where people's health and wellbeing are supported

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 4, 5, 10 & 16

This High-Level Goal seeks to ensure everyone in County Roscommon is supported to attain and maintain optimal physical and mental health, and overall wellbeing. This Goal includes the following themes: sport and physical activity facilities, participation in sport and physical activity, targeted health and wellbeing supports, universal health and wellbeing supports, and community safety.

This High-Level Goal 5 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 7.8 , 7.10 ,7.11, 7.13, 5.19, 7.15, 3.7.12

SCO 5.1 Support a positive approach to health and well-being for everyone living, working and visiting County Roscommon

This objective seeks to improve health outcomes across County Roscommon by addressing the diverse health needs of the County with a positive approach. County Roscommon has an older age-profile compared to the national average and analysis of the 2022 Census figures revealed the County reported slightly lower health indicators, and a slightly higher disability rate than at the State level. County Roscommon also had a

higher proportion of carers than the State, with 6.5% of County Roscommon's total population providing regular unpaid personal help or support to a family member, neighbour or friend with a long-term illness, health issue or an issue related to old age or disability (compared to 5.8% at the national level).

A comprehensive analysis has unveiled some unique challenges faced by County Roscommon residents, including greater travel distances to access healthcare services, particularly hospitals compared to the national average. The County also registers as having the second-highest proportion of individuals residing more than 20km from an HSE Adult Emergency Department. Public feedback has provided valuable insights into areas for improvement including high demand for GP services and extended waiting times for both physical and mental health services. County Roscommon has a number of initiatives and strategies aimed at improving and supporting health and wellbeing across the County, including Healthy County Roscommon Strategy 2023-2025. The County Roscommon Sports Partnership facilitates programmes and events with the aim of promoting "increased participation, improved success and a healthier lifestyle.".

The LECP remains steadfast in its dedication to taking action that harmonises with these strategies and objectives ultimately advancing the cause of health and well-being

See pages 82-85 below for detailed actions.

SCO 5.2 Continue to support and promote community safety

County Roscommon is known for its relatively safe environment and our objective is to maintain and enhance this sense of safety. Recorded criminal offences have decreased by 18.5% from 2017 (1,339) to 2022 (1,091) In pursuit of this goal we have established the County Roscommon Joint Policing Committee (JPC) a collaborative effort between County Roscommon County Council (RCC) and An Garda Síochána (AGS). The JPC's purpose is to foster greater consultation, cooperation and coordination on policing and crime-related matters involving AGS, RCC, community representatives

and elected local representatives. The Feedback from consultations indicates that residents perceive County Roscommon as a safe place to live and work.

In alignment with these safety efforts, the RSES prioritises safety as a key quality-of-life indicator. It places specific emphasis on safety within transport networks and one of the primary objectives outlined by the Healthy County Roscommon Strategy is to reduce isolation across County Roscommon.

See pages 82-85 below for detailed actions.

STRENGTHS

Close proximity to high quality **third level education** such as AIT, IT Sligo, NUIG, and GMIT

Wealth of options for physical and leisure activities with 95 sports facilities across the county.

87% of people in Roscommon enjoy **easy access to outdoor sports facilities,** living within 5k

49.8% of the county **live within 5km** of a General Practioner (GP) and **increasing accessibility** for online health supports and services

CHALLENGES

Negative health effects due to **rural isolation** and **loneliness**

Ongoing health impacts from Covid 19

High demand for **local health services/ GPs**, particularly noted in Boyle - reporting good and very good health dropped to 87.8% in 2022 from 88.5% in 2016

22.4% of the population had a disability, which was higher than the Northern and Western Region (21.4%) and the State (21.5%)

KEY THEMES

Health and Wellness Facilities
Health and Wellness Supports and Services
Sport and physical activity

Trauma Informed Practices
Community safety
Health promotion and prevention

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased level of participation in sports and recreation
- Improved health and wellbeing outcomes
- Record a percentage increase in the number of people stating they are in good or very good health

- Improved feeling and experience of safety, and reduced crime rates
- Development of community networks and support systems
- Increase the number of people participating in community safety initiatives

Goal 5: A county where people's health and wellbeing are supported

OBJECTIVE	SCO 5.1 Support a positive approach to health and well-being for everyone living, working and visiting County Roscommon					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.1.1	Increase opportunities for participation in physical activity through increased public access to outdoor recreation infrastructure and green spaces while supporting the objectives of public health policy including, Outdoor Recreation Strategy and Healthy Roscommon.	Sport and physical activity facilities	RCC	RSP ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Numbers of peopel engaging in sports and active recreation
5.1.2	Enhance participation in sports and physical recreation in the County through by executing key strategies including the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, tje Local Sports Plan, the Roscommon Sports Partnership Strategy, and the CYPSC Plan 2022-2024. This will be achieved through active collaboration with community groups and the development of suitable infrastructure to support a wide range of community, social, sports and recreational activities.	Participation in sport and physical activity	RSP	RCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, CYPSC	ST-MT-LT	Number of sport and physical recreation initiatives and events delivered
5.1.3	Promote key targeted health and wellbeing supports and services aimed at key target groups including implementing Healthy Roscommon, Sláintecare, Age Friendly Strategy, CYPSC Plan 2022-2024, National Traveller Health Action Plan 2022-2027 among others.	Targeted health and wellbeing supports	HSE	RCC, FRCs, Roscommon Traveller Health Programme, CYPSC, RLP	ST-MT-LT	Number of targeted health and wellbeing supports delivered in line with national, regional and local health strategies Record a percentage increase in the proportion of people in target groups stating they are in good or very good health in the Census.
5.1.4	Continued development of primary care centres across County Roscommon.	Access to primary care centres	HSE	RCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, RSP, CAMHS, WRDAT, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla	ST-MT-LT	Number of primary care centers in Co. Roscommon

5.1.5	Increase public access to health and wellbeing infrastructure, supports and programmes in line with 'Healthy Roscommon', Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing (2013-2025) and HSE Connecting, CYPSC Plan among others.	Universal health and wellbeing supports	RCC - Healthy Ireland Co-ordinator	RCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, PPN, RSP, CAMHS, WRDATF, Safe Link, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla	ST-MT-LT	Infrastructure available
5.1.6	Review feasibility of providing more residential care beds in Roscommon	Residential care beds	HSE	RCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, RSP, CAMHS, WRDAT, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla	ST-MT-LT	Increase in the number of residential care beds

OBJECTIVE SCO 5.2 Continue to support and promote community safety

Action Number	Action Description	Output/ Plain English	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
5.2.1	Increase the perception and experience of community safety in Roscommon by developing and implementing community safety initiatives, including the JPC or its equivalent, safety talks and training, SICAP, Sláintecare, Planet Youth surveys, 'Seeking Safety' Pilot Project, wellbeing checks and other community-centred approaches to building a sense of safety.	Community safety	AGS (An Garda Síochána)	An Garda Síochána, Roscommon Joint Policing Committee, RCC ,PPN, HSE, Healthy Ireland, FRCs, Alone, RLP, Mental Health Ireland, PPN, RSP, CAMHS, WRDATF, Safe Link, MCRI, Jigsaw, Tusla	ST-MT-LT	Reduction in crime rates across the county

Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability

Overview and Rationale

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 4, 5, 10 & 16

This High-Level Goal focuses on preserving and enhance improving the environments of in both rural and urban County Roscommon. Our aim is to nurture resilience, sustainability, and biodiversity conservation. We are committed to countering and reversing the effects of climate change and for its future impacts on the County. This Goal includes several key themes: biodiversity, EV uptake, Local Authority Climate Action Plan, improving energy efficiency, increasing the use and production of renewable energy, promoting, circular economies, and advocating for sustainable agricultural practices.

High-Level Goal 6 aligns with the following NWRA RSES RPO(s): 4.17, 4.20, 4.21, 5.1, 5.5 , 5.6, 5.22, 6.19, 6.33, 6.34, 8.11

SCO 6.1 Promote and ensure environmental protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment

This objective is centred on the safeguarding and enhancement of County Roscommon's natural and built environments with particular emphasis

on the preservation and expansion of biodiversity. Local natural resources in County Roscommon include Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas and Raised Bed Special Conservation Areas. These resources provide County Roscommon with exceptional opportunity to take a leading role in the protection of important species, habitats and landscapes. Through public consultations, there is a clear interest indicated for modernising and retrofitting to enhance sustainability.

Community members also saw the opportunity to utilise smart transport infrastructure to reduce private, fossil-fuelled vehicle reliance.

The County Roscommon County Development Plan (CDP) 2022-2028 outlines particular strategies for conserving the biodiversity, woodlands, wetlands and peatlands that County Roscommon supports. Through the sustainable management of these and other strategies, the CDP seeks a wide range of socioeconomic benefits for protecting environmental quality and biodiversity. The CDP also has a consistent sustainability focus across the strategies for Towns and Villages, Rural Development and Infrastructure.
Under this objective, the LECP will undertake actions that complement those of the CDP and guided by the NWRA RSES to protect and enhance County Roscommon's environments.

See pages 90-91 below for detailed actions.

SCO 6.2 Encourage and facilitate community and business participation in the reduction of County Roscommon's carbon footprint

This objective seeks to increase active participation in reducing carbon emissions across County Roscommon's communities, residencies, and workplaces. Public consultation indicated a strong appetite for being involved in climate action through knowledge sharing, and a need for strong, cohesive leadership in this area. Participants expressed keen interest in both individual and larger-scale climate initiatives and solutions. Our research indicated notable uptake of environmental knowledge and capacity-building initiatives in County Roscommon, with 15 Sustainable Energy Communities recognised in the County. Additionally the county

already boasts a higher proportion of its population benefiting from technical and vocational training, with GRETB offering continuous educational avenues across the county. Furthermore, Roscommon is home to numerous environmental community groups affiliated with the PPN, and initiatives like Tidy Towns have been mobilised to undertake activities focused on climate and environmental concerns. Notably, County Roscommon hosts a dedicated volunteer centre, contributing to a comparatively elevated rate of volunteer engagement within the population.

Under this objective, the LECP will implement actions designed to increase participation among communities and businesses that actively reduce the carbon footprint and environmental impact of County Roscommon.

See pages 90-91 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 6.3 Support sustainable practices across all sectors and industries in County Roscommon

This objective seeks to embed sustainable practices within County Roscommon's diverse sectors and industries to ensure that the economic activity of County Roscommon in contributing to climate change mitigation and resilient to the impacts of climate change going forward. As part of the County Roscommon County Development Plan, a Renewable Energy Strategy was devised to support the transition to sustainable energy utilisation across residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial, and transportation domains. The strategy further aims to foster Sustainable Energy Communities countywide, thereby encouraging active community engagement in optimising energy efficiency. While County Roscommon's renewable energy infrastructure is expanding, particular emphasis has been placed on wind power. Solar energy solutions are also on the rise, with installations on private residences reaching 5.7%. The funding allocation of the Territorial Just Transition Plan presents a significant opportunity for County Roscommon to enhance energy efficiency and cultivate cleaner energy sources. Community consultation underscored the desire for heightened emphasis on sustainable practices across various sectors and the greater integration of renewable energy throughout the region.

The NWRA RSES promotes the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficient practices and places across economic and community sectors. Guided by the NWRA RSES and County Roscommon's renewable energy strategy, the LECP will implement actions to embed sustainable practices across all sectors and industries in County Roscommon.

See pages 92-93 below for detailed actions.

SEDO 6.4 Support the transition to sustainable agricultural practices

County Roscommon boasts a prominent agricultural sector and this objective aims to facilitate its transformation to a more sustainable industrial sector. Agri-tech and agri-food are industries that have been prioritised for industrial and enterprise development in County Roscommon.

The industry also holds a high share of employment with 7.7% of people working as farmers or agricultural workers in County Roscommon compared to state average 4.2%. Public consultation demonstrated that the community perceived the large scale of the agricultural industry in County Roscommon and the importance for sustainable practices to be undertaken within it. The community also suggested that agricultural resources and particularly peat-cutting resources could be repurposed into renewable energy.

Regional policy from the RSES stated specific objectives to support the further development of Ag-innovation within the region and promote circular and resource efficient agricultural sectors. Guided by these regional policies, the LECP will support the development and implementation of sustainable agricultural practices within County Roscommon.

See pages 92-93 below for detailed actions.

STRENGTHS

- Roscommon has the l**ongest shoreline** with River Shannon - excellent **development and conservation potential**
- Consultation indicates **high public interest in environmental sustainability**
- **Many natural/ environmental resources** located in the County - including 49 NPWS protected sites
- **Growing renewable energy infrastructure** - with 15 Sustainable Energy Communities established in Roscommon with a target of 50 by 2030

CHALLENGES

- **Transitions to new sustainable practices** can be challenging and costly
- **Limited but growing biodiversity conservation efforts** to date
- **Low energy efficiency in many premises** - only 4.8% of rated houses had an A rating in Roscommon compared to 11.2% in the State
- **Agriculture** drives much of the **greenhouse emissions** of the County with 42.6% of Roscommon's greenhouse emissions in 2018 coming from agriculture

KEY THEMES

Biodiversity preservation and conservation
Renewable energy use and production
Circular economies
The Green Economy

Climate Action
Sustainable agricultural practices
Energy efficiency
Just Transition

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Increased biodiversity preservation and conservation initiatives
- Increased production and usage of renewable energy
- Decreased amount of emissions from private car use
- Establishment of circular economies
- Development of community networks and support systems

- Implementation of the County Roscommon Local Authority Climate Action Plan
- Reduction in the amount of GHG emissions from the agricultural industry
- Proactive participation in the Just Transition Plan and Fund
- Increased energy efficiency in residential and commercial buildings

Goal 6: An environmentally conscious and resilient county that prioritises sustainability

OBJECTIVE	SCO 6.1 Promote and ensure environmental protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.1.1	Position Roscommon as a leader in the preservation and conservation of biodiversity and the natural environment through implementing nature-based solutions, and delivering the County Roscommon Biodiversity Action Plan.	Biodiversity	RCC	RLP, Heritage Council, Waterways Ireland, EPA, Irish Water, PPN, LAWPRO	MT	Development of Biodiversity Action Plan

Number of biodiversity projects and initiatives, including Local Biodiversity Action Plans" |
| 6.1.2 | Actively participate in lowering emissions from vehicles by encouraging the use of electric vehicles through the increased provision of Electoral Vehicle Charge point spaces, per the Roscommon county Development Plan. | EV uptake | RCC | RCC, ESB, ZEVI | MT-LT | Number of EV charging points developed |

OBJECTIVE	SCO 6.2 Encourage and facilitate community and business participation in the reduction of County Roscommon›s carbon footprint					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.2.1	Develop and implement the Roscommon County Council Climate Action Plan and increase sustainable practices across the County to contribute to the achievement of regional and national targets.	Local Authority Climate Action Plan	RCC, RLP	Teagasc, REPAK, IRBEA	MT	Number of residential buildings retrofitted

Number of commercial properties retrofitted

Number of energy efficiency initiatives and projects delivered" |
| 6.2.2 | Strengthen local energy efficiency by providing support for energy improvements, which encompass retrofitting of residential homes, commercial establishments, and public buildings. | Energy efficiency | RCC - Environment | RCC, SEAI, PPN | MT-LT | Implementation of the Roscommon Renewable Energy Strategy actions |
| 6.2.3 | Increase the use and production of renewable/ alternative energy sources across Roscommon by implementing the Roscommon Renewable Energy Strategy, in alignment with National and Regional policy and targets | Renewable energy use and production | RCC | LEADER, SEAI, Bord na Mona, PPN | MT-LT | Number of renewable Energy Strategy projects and initiatives |

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 6.3 Support sustainable practices across all sectors and industries in County Roscommon					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.3.2	Efficiently use, reuse, and conserve Roscommon's natural resources by managing waste, optimising technologies and promotion of the circular economy.	Circular economies	RLP	An Taisce, IFA, SEAI, PPN	LT	Number of circular economy initiatives implemented

OBJECTIVE	SEDO 6.4 Support the transition to sustainable agricultural practices					
Action Number	Action Description	Theme	Action Lead	Action Partners	Timeframe	KPI
6.4.1	Support the transition to sustainable agricultural practices through encouraging the adoption of measures that reduce GHG emissions without compromising capacity for food-production. This may include the provision of semi-natural and managed ecosystems on farm holdings to provide for active carbon sequestration, rainwater harvesting, etc.	Sustainable agricultural practices	RLP	RCC, An Taisce, IFA, local farmers, LAWPRO, Teagasc	MT-LT	Number of sustainable agriculture training and support events held
6.4.2	Utilise the Just Transition Plan, to support the retraining and upskilling of workers and assist local communities and businesses in Roscommon as they adjust to the low-carbon transition.	Just Transition	RCC - Climate	RCC, An Taisce, IFA, SEAI, PPN, Bord na Mona	ST-MT-LT	Amount of Just Transition Funding awarded to Roscommon projects

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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

8.2 How often will the LECP be reviewed?

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

Three interim reviews will be undertaken to further monitor progress and align relevant objectives and actions to evolving needs. These interim reviews will take place in 2025 and 2027.

8.3 How is the LECP evaluated?

The LECP includes High-Level Goals, each with several related objectives and actions. Each objective includes one or more success indicators to measure progress toward the achievement of the High-Level Goal (see the action tables above).

These will undergo ongoing monitoring based on the prioritisation of actions and the determination of outputs and indicators for each Implementation Plan. In order to support comprehensive evaluation of LECP interventions the development of case studies will also form part of the monitoring process for the LECPs. To support a consistent approach to these case studies the case study template used for the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) programme will be used as a template to use for LECP case studies.

A final review and support for the development of the subsequent round of LECPs will be informed by both the quantitative and qualitative data collected as part of the Implementation Plan and ongoing monitoring process.

8.4 Can the public access the monitoring and evaluation process?

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

Appendices

A. Policy Context

Economic National Policies & Plans Employment
- Pathways to Work Strategy 2021 –2025
- National Further Education and Training Strategy 2020 – 2024
- Building Future Skills: The Demand for Skills in Ireland's Built Environment
- Sector to 2030

Development
- Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland
- Project Ireland 2040
- Town Centre First Policy
- National Development Plan 2018 -2027
- National Planning Framework
- Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 – Our Rural Future

Connectivity
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland
- Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan: Enhancing Public Transport Across
- Rural Ireland
- National Broadband Plan
- Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government
- Roscommon Digital Strategy 2022-2026

Economy and Enterprise
- National Economic Plan (NEP)
- National Recovery and Resilience Plan
- People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025
- Enterprise 2025 Renewed - Building resilience in the face of global challenges

- National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022
- Report of the SME Taskforce: National SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan

Sustainability
- Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2022-2024
- Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy Regional and County Policies and Strategies

Economic Regional and County Policies and Strategies
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for NWRA
- West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2024
- A Region in Transition: The Way Forward (Northern and Western Regional
- Assembly, 2020)
- Roscommon Local Development Strategy
- Roscommon County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Roscommon Renewable Energy Strategy 2022-2028

Community National Policies and Plans
- Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A Five-Year Strategy to Support the Community and Voluntary Sector in Ireland 2019-2024
- National Policy Statement the Bioeconomy CAP Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027
- Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 - Our Rural Future

- Housing for all: A New Housing Plan for Ireland
- Housing Options for Our Aging Population Policy Statement 2020
- Town Centre First Policy
- Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan
- Youth Justice Strategy 2021 - 2027
- National Action Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2021
- Programme for Government: Our Shared Future
- Civil Defence - Towards 2030
- Making Remote Work: National Remote Work Strategy
- IDA Ireland: Driving Recovery and Sustainable Growth 2021 – 2024
- Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2022-2024
- International Financial Services Strategy
- Ireland's Diaspora Strategy 2020-2025
- Sláintecare Implementation Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2023
- Healthy Ireland Framework 2019-2025
- Roadmap for Social Inclusion 2020 - 2025
- National Positive Aging Strategy (NPAS)
- National Dementia Strategy
- National Carers Strategy
- Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government
- 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010–2030
- National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021
- National Migrant Integration Strategy
- National Disability Inclusion Strategy (2017-2021)
- LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy 2019-2021
- National Plan Against Racism
- Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Regional and County Policies and Strategies

- CHO Area 2 (Galway, Mayo & Roscommon) Health Ireland Plan
- Galway and Roscommon ETB Strategy Statement for 2022-2026
- Roscommon Children and Young People's Plan 2022-2024
- Healthy Roscommon 2018-2021
- Roscommon Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023–2027
- Roscommon Irish Language Plan 2022 – 2025
- County Roscommon Heritage Plan 2017-2021
- Roscommon Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024
- Roscommon PPN County Vision for Community Wellbeing

B. LCDC Membership

- Shane Tiernan - Roscommon County Council (Local Authority Official)
- Cllr Nigel Dineen Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
- Cllr Pascal Fitzmaurice - Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
- Cllr Laurence Fallon - Roscommon County Council (Local Government)
- Patricia Gilbride - Dept. Social Protection (State Agency)
- Louise Ward - Roscommon Local Enterprise Office (Local Authority Official)
- Lynne Keery - Galway & Roscommon Education & Training Board (State Agency)
- Eamon Hannan - HSE (State Agency)
- Tom Kellegher - Teagasc (State Agency)
- Carina Lennon - Roscommon LEADER Partnership (Local & Community Development)
- Faye Hayden - Roscommon Public Participation Network (Social Inclusion)
- Kevin Conry - Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community)
- Vincent Moran - Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community & Voluntary)
- Ger Fallon - Roscommon Public Participation Network (Community & Voluntary)
- Michael Ewing - Roscommon Public Participation Network (Environment)
- Jim O'Connor - Irish Farmers Association (Farming)
- Gareth Scahill - Chambers Ireland (Business)
- Pat Compton - Irish Congress of Trade Unions (Trade Union)
- Helen Hunt - Disability Sector (Brothers of Charity)

C. SPC Membership

- Councillor John Naughten (Chairperson)
- Councillor Tom Crosby
- Councillor Laurence Fallon
- Councillor Paschal Fitzmaurice
- Councillor Donal Kilduff
- Councillor Orla Leyden
- Councillor Michael Patrick Mulligan
- Councillor Kathleen Shanagher
- Councillor Tony Ward

D. Roscommon LECP County Development Plan Alignment (DRAFT)

Roscommon LECP High Level Goals	Roscommon LECP Sustainable Objectives	Related Roscommon CDP Objectives
Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place	SCO 1.1 Ensure County Roscommon is a county that supports and celebrates active inclusion for all	SCCD 11.1 Facilitate and support, through the Public Participation Network, the involvement of the community in consultative structures and public participation in Local Government policy and decision making.
	SCO 1.2 Continue to work in partnership with communities and community leaders to create universal and targeted community-need-led responses	PPH 3.2 Support the delivery of social housing in County Roscommon in accordance with the Council's Social Housing Delivery Programme and Government Policy as set out in Rebuilding Ireland: Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness.
	SEDO 1.3 Support increased access and connectivity across the County	ITC 7.1 Support and facilitate the integration of land use with transportation infrastructure, through the development of sustainable compact settlements within the hierarchy of settlements as identified within the Core Strategy and which are well served by public transport.
	SEDO 1.4 Support the sustainable development of County Roscommon towns and villages.	CS 2.10 Support the continued growth and sustainable development of Roscommon, to act as a growth driver in the region and to fulfil its role as a Key Town and to function as the County Town.
High-Level Goal 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employ-ment and economic growth	SCO 2.1 Promote increased access to and engagement with education, training and upskilling opportunities	SCCD 11.5 Work in collaboration with the Department of Education and Skills, to ensure that adequate serviceable land is available in appropriate locations to meet current and envisaged future educational requirements beyond the Plan period. The expansion of existing school sites in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area will also be supported.
	SEDO 2.2 Provide development support for micro-enterprises and SMEs while developing, encouraging and creating an environment for innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship	ED 6.1 Ensure that sufficient and suitable land is reserved for new industry/enterprise development and other employment uses in a range of sizes at key locations throughout the county.
	SEDO 2.3 Support increased digital access, skills and infrastructure	ITC 7.64 Support the delivery of high capacity Information Communications Technology Infrastructure, broadband connectivity and digital broadcasting, throughout the county, in order to ensure economic competitiveness for the enterprise and commercial sectors and in enabling more flexible work practices.
	SEDO 2.4 Work collaboratively to encourage Foreign Direct Investment into County Roscommon	ED 6.11 Facilitate new commercial uses for vacant or derelict buildings, including buildings in rural areas, subject to compliance with appropriate planning and servicing requirements.
	SEDO 2.5 Continue to develop identified growth sectors and support this development through appropriate strategic infrastructure in key growth areas	ED 6.2 Promote the co-ordinated alignment of population and employment in designated growth towns, providing for natural increases and to enable towns to become more economically self-sustaining, in line with the quality and capacity of public transport, services and infrastructure available.

Goal 3: A vibrant county that values its culture, arts and heritage	SCO 3.1 Continue to create and promote increased awareness and appreciation of the natural, built and cultural heritage	CS 2.18 Ensure that the countryside continues to play its role as a place to live, work and visit, and that appropriate development is facilitated having careful regard to the carrying capacity and environmental sensitivity of the rural area.
	SCO 3.2 Ensure the arts, creative sector and libraries continue to play a major role in supporting the heritage, cultural and community development of the County	SCCD 11.21 Promote the development of cultural infrastructure (both fixed and mobile).
	SEDO 3.3 Continue to promote collaborative opportunities and linkages across the culture, arts, tourism, craft and food sectors	CS 2.16 Ensure that the serviced settlements throughout the county maintain existing population levels and services, and to ensure that future growth is balanced and sustainable and is relative and appropriate to their scale, size and character.
	SEDO 3.4 Develop ans support tourism initiatives, assets and secondary supporting industries	ED 6.23 Continue to support the implementation of the Roscommon Tourism Strategy 2017-2020 (and subsequent revisions) in line with national and regional policy, tourism trends and identified challenges, in collaboration with Fáilte Ireland, Waterways Ireland, tourism businesses and communities and other supporting agencies.
Goal 4: A collaborative county where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims	SCO 4.1 Encourage and support the development of stronger communication networks between statutory bodies, agencies, community groups and service providers	CS 2.1 Ensure that the future development of Roscommon is in accordance with the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020- 2032 for the Northern and Western Region.
	SEDO 4.3 Support the development and strengthening of local business networks	ED 6.10 Facilitate proposals for new small-scale rural enterprises or extensions to existing small scale, rural-based, indigenous activity, subject to compliance with appropriate planning and servicing requirements.
Goal 5: A county where people's health and wellbeing are supported	SCO 5.1 Support a positive approach to health and well-being for everyone living, working and visiting County Roscommon	SCCD 11.8 Co-operate with the HSE and other statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of healthcare and other facilities and services for everyone in the county, and in particular to provide for those with specific needs such as older or young people, as well as those with learning disabilities and special needs.
	SCO 5.2 Continue to support and promote community safety	ITC 7.67 Liaise with the Health and Safety Authority, notified site operators and other statutory bodies with regard to safety regulations and safety zones when assessing proposals for a new Seveso establishment or modifications to an establishment, and when assessing proposals for development in the vicinity of existing Seveso establishments and implement the provision of land use planning advice and/ or detailed advice as outlined by the H.S.A.
Goal 6: An environmentally conscious and resilient county that prioritises sustainability	SCO 6.1 Promote and ensure environmental protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment	TV 4.5 Encourage building design and layout that maximises daylight and natural ventilation and incorporates energy efficiency and conservation measures that will improve the environmental performance of buildings, in line with best practice.
	SCO 6.2 Encourage and facilitate community and business participation in the reduction of County Roscommon's carbon footprint	CS 2.2 Implement all land use planning policy and objectives consistent with the Core Strategy, in order to accelerate a transition to a greener, low carbon and climate resilient county, with a focus on reduced travel demand through the promotion of sustainable settlement patterns.
	SEDO 6.3 Support sustainable practices across all sectors and industries in County Roscommon	ED 6.21 Engage with all relevant government stakeholders, sectoral representatives, ESB and Bord na Móna in developing and supporting sustainable alternative economic development, guided by the principles of 'Just Transition', for those employees and communities affected by the closure of the ESB Lough Ree Power Station and associated Bord na Móna peat harvesting practices.
	SEDO 6.4 Support the transition to sustainable agricultural practices	CAEE 8.21 Engage with all stakeholders within the farming community who seek to transition from traditional farming enterprises, into more sustainable agricultural initiatives, identified as being more environmentally sustainable.

E. Alignment of the Roscommon LECP to the RSES for the NWRA

LECP High Level Goals	NWRA RSES Regional Policy Objectives (RPO)
Goal 1: A welcoming, supportive County that celebrates its communities and unique sense of place	• RPO 3.4 To support the regeneration and renewal of small towns and villages in rural areas. • RPO 3.5 Identify and develop quality green infrastructure, within and adjacent to City, Regional Growth Centers, and Key Towns. • RPO 3.7.12 Support the development of an Open Space Strategy with provision for a public park in Monksland with sustainable transport links along the Cross River and connections to the remainder of the Regional Center. • RPO 3.9 Identify suitable regeneration development opportunities that are supported by a quality site selection process that also addresses environmental constraints • RPO 5.11 Support the provision and/or upgrade of cultural facilities (e.g., multi-purpose arts centers, theaters, galleries, libraries, museums, etc.) • RPO 5.19 The Assembly supports the further development of Greenways as part of an overall improvement of facilities to enhance health and well-being across society. • RPO 6.26 The walking and cycling offerings within the region shall be improved to encourage more people to walk and cycle… • RPO 6.27 (a) The Assembly supports the collaborative preparation of Local Transport Plans led by local authorities in conjunction with the NTA and other stakeholders for various areas. • RPO 6.29 The management of space in town and village centers should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling, and public transport modes to create accessible, attractive, vibrant, and safe places to work, live, shop, and engage in community life. • RPO 6.30 Planning at the local level should promote walking, cycling, and public transport by maximizing the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighborhood or district centers, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools. • RPO 6.32 Invest in transport networks and services in the region that provide a quality of service, connectivity, and facilities to meet all societal needs, disabilities (including mobility, sensory, and cognitive impairments) and meet the needs and opportunities of an aging population. • RPO 6.51 Promote values and policies that make it easy to commute between home, work, and school across the region in a way that contributes to a healthy, attractive, and climate-friendly region. • RPO 7.9 Promote the provision of high-quality, accessible, and suitably proportioned areas of public open spaces and promote linkage with social, cultural, and heritage sites and buildings. • RPO 7.15 Encourage multi-agency approaches for delivering the health, social care, education, and community services needed by growing, diverse, or isolated communities.
Goal 2: A County that attracts, retains and promotes ongoing employment and economic growth	• RPO 4.38 To support the work of the IDA, Enterprise Ireland and LEOs in providing platforms for the ICT and MedTech industry thought leaders to share knowledge to identify and advocate the delivery of critical skills needed to align with emerging business models. • RPO 4.39 Target academic research, training and development of a talent pool to support industry. • RPO 4.41 Support the development of mentoring programs for entrepreneurs. • RPO 4.42 Enable peer learning and exchange platforms to develop business links, address business concerns, exchange views and promote best practice. • RPO 6.36 Support the roll-out of the National Broadband Plan within the lifetime of this strategy and grow the regional digital economy. • RPO 6.39 Provide information to businesses on the opportunities available through broadband connections. • RPO 6.44 Encourage the adoption of digital technologies and service platforms across the region to improve asset management and service delivery. • RPO 6.46 Actively develop the regional innovation ecosystem's capacity to nurture businesses, artists, creatives and innovators and generate economic growth in key industry sectors aligned with Enterprise 2025 Objectives and NDP investments. • RPO 7.1 Support the co-ordination of employment skills and support in the region through the alignment of needs as identified by the Regional Skills Fora to include facilities and opportunities for disadvantaged areas and groups in the community. • RPO 7.2 Support disadvantaged communities facing particular barriers to employment, including actively marketing vacancies that are relevant to them. • RPO 7.3 Promote vocational and occupational programs and pathways for progression to a career. • RPO 7.5 Ensure that the requirements of emerging sectors are reflected in the regional skills needs and resourcing.

Goal 3: A vibrant county that values its culture, arts and heritage	- RPO 3.7.8 – Promotion of Athlone as a Hidden Heartlands destination centre RPO 3.7.10 – Provision of integrated signage to promote Athlone as a clearly identified entity. - RPOs 5.1, 5.8, 5.9, 5.18 deliver on the following: i. Implementation of measures within the Local Authority Climate Action Strategy.ii. Support provision of Low Cost Work Spaces for the Craft / Cultural Sector. iii. Deliver Greenways - RPOs 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7: i. Preparation and Implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans (VEPDs) via Fáilte Ireland ii. Expand service provision in Tourism Destination Towns, including public realm
Goal 4: A collaborative County where people are encouraged to work together towards common aims	- RPO 7.3: promote vocational and occupational programmes and pathways for progression to a career - RPO 6.58 Use digital platforms to enable improved communication and engagement between citizens and local authorities including fostering the capacity for the community to influenced decision-making.
Goal 5: A County where people's health and wellbeing are supported	- RPO 7.8 To support the implementation of the objectives of Sláinte Care, including the development of a Single Tier Health Service, and the advancement of Primary Care Centres in our Urban Places. - RPO 7.10 Support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of healthcare facilities to all sections of the community, at appropriate locations, with good public transport links, parking and accessible facilities. - RPO 7.11 Support the objectives of public health policy including Healthy Ireland and the National Physical Activity Plan and the National Obesity Plan through integration with planning policy. - RPO 7.13 Aim to make this region an Age-Friendly one by working with constituent Planning Authorities and recognising the demographic challenges that face the region and ensure the provision of suitable facilities and services at appropriate locations. - RPO 5.19: The Assembly supports the further development of Greenways as part of the Outdoor Recreational Plan for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland 2017-2021', as part of an overall improvement of facilities to enhance health and wellbeing across society. - RPO 7.15: Encourage multi-agency approaches for delivering the health, social care, education, and community services needed by growing, diverse or isolated communities. - RPO 3.7.12 – Development of an Open Space Strategy with provision for a public park in Monksland with sustainable transport links along the Cross River and connections to the remainder of the Regional Centre. The strategy to include the provision of sustainable transport, recreation and amenity spaces to support existing and future populations.
Goal 6: An environmentally-conscious and resilient County that prioritises sustainability	4.17 To position the region to avail of the emerging global market in renewable energy 4.20 Support and encourage the development of the bio-economy sector, and facilitate its development for energy production, heat, and storage distribution, in particular advocating Combined Heat and Power Units integrated into District Heating networks, in combination with Pyrogenic Carbon Capture and Storage (PyCCS) or Bio-Energy Carbon capture and storage (BECCS) all to be done in collaboration with EPA and other regulators. 4.21 Promote innovative new building design and retrofitting of existing buildings, both private properties, and publicly owned, to improve building energy efficiency, energy conservation and the use of renewable energy sources following National Regulations, and Policy. - RPO 5.1 The Assembly will support through CARO and Local Authorities the preparation and implementation of Local Climate Strategies which will, inter alia, address vulnerability to climate risks and provide prioritised actions in accordance with the guiding principles of the National Adaptation Framework. 5.5 Ensure efficient and sustainable use of all our natural resources, including inland waterways, peatlands, and forests in a manner which ensures a healthy society a clean environment and there is no net contribution to biodiversity loss arising from development supported in this strategy. Conserve and protect designated areas and natural heritage area. Conserve and protect European sites and their integrity. 5.6 Develop awareness and create a greater appreciation of the benefits of our natural heritage, including on the health, wealth and well-being of the region's ecosystem services. 5.22 To protect and conserve our designated peatlands and bogs for reasons of biodiversity, ecosystem services, carbon sinks, areas of habitat importance, amenity and landscape value. 6.19 Reduce dependency on fossil-fuel powered vehicles. 6.33 Reduce dependency on the fossil-fuel powered vehicles and have regard to the National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport. 6.34 Promote deployment of targeted, convenient and safe recharging infrastructure across the region to meet the changing needs of the electric vehicle with particular emphasis in public parking areas and employment locations.

F. Glossary

AGS	An Garda Síochána
AIT	Athlone Institute of Technology
BECCS	BioEnergy with Carbon Capture and Storage
BER	Building Energy Rating
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CAP	Climate Action Policy
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office
CDP	County Development Plan
CHO	Community Health Organisations
CIS	Citizens Information Service
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DECLG	Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ED	Electoral Division
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EROC	Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre
ESB	Electricity Supply Board
EU	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
EWSS	Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FRC	Family Resource Centre
GHG	Green House Gas
GMIT	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
GRETB	Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board
HEI	Higher education institution
HLG	High Level Goal

HSE	Health Service Executive
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDA	Industrial Development Agency
IFA	Irish Farmers Association
IRBEA	Irish BioEnergy Association
JPC	Joint Policing Committee
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Local Authority
LAP	Local Area Plan
LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LTACC	Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee
MCRI	Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
MD	Municipal District
MOL	My Open Library
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NEP	National Economic Plan
NPAS	National Positive Ageing Strategy
NPF	National Planning Framework
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NTA	National Transport Authority
NUIG	National University of Ireland, Galway
NWRA	Northern and Western Regional Assembly
PC	Personal Computer
PPN	Public Participation Network
PUP	Pandemic Unemployment Payment

PyCCS	Pyrogenic Carbon Capture and Storage
RA	Regional Authority
RCC	Roscommon County Council
RLP	Roscommon LEADER Partnership
RWN	Roscommon Women's Network
RPO	Regional Policy Objective
RRDF	Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
RSP	Roscommon Sports Partnership
RSS	Rural Social Scheme
SCO	Sustainable Community Objective
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDZ	Strategic Development Zone
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority Of Ireland
SEC	Sustainable Energy Community
SEDO	Sustainable Economic Development Objective
SICAP	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound
SME	Small-to-Medium Enterprise
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TFI	Transport for Ireland
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
TWSS	Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

URDF	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
VEDP	Visitor Experience Development Plan"
WDC	Western Development Commission
WRDATF	Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force
ZEVI	Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland