



POLICIES & MEASURES TO SUPPORT LOCAL & REGIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

ACTION PLAN for Southern & Eastern Region Ireland: To be implemented and monitored from January 2018 – December 2021

Irish Partner

Project Partner: Cork Institute of Technology



Managing Authority

Southern Regional Assembly



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Department for Business, Enterprise and Innovation – DBEI

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment – DETE

European Regional Development Fund – ERDF

Industrial Development Authority – IDA

Information Communication Technology – ICT

National Economic and Social Council – NESC

National Planning Framework – NPF

Policy Instrument – PI

Regional Economic and Social Strategies – RESS

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy – RSES

Research and Innovation - R&I

Research and Technological Organisations – RTOs

Research, Development and Innovation - RD&I

Research, Technology Development and Innovation – RTDI

Small and Medium Sized Enterprise – SME

Southern and Eastern - S&E

South-West Regional Enterprise Plan - SWREP

INTRODUCTION

ecoRIS3 is an Interreg Europe funded Research & Innovation project that brings together eight partners in a consortium led by Fomento San Sebastián from 1/01/2017 to 31/12/2021. Through the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practice, the partners aim to agree regional action plans to support the transfer of innovation and knowledge produced by the Research and Technological Organisations (RTOs) and higher education to local & regional businesses. This challenge remains one of the most pertinent to Innovation & Growth across Europe and is of significant importance in Ireland. It is particularly relevant in the context of local & regional areas for Smart Specialisation (RIS3), where innovation opportunities present themselves through commercialising R&D.

Furthermore, there is a clear need to improve and connect the regional Challenges and Opportunities posed by RIS3 to local innovation policies and stakeholders, highlighting the role of the “territory” as the place where interlinkages happen and knowledge flows. Regional & local authorities should play a key role of intermediation. In accordance to ecoRIS3 objectives they should also promote better policies to generate solid interactions between key stakeholders. This will orchestrate sustainable innovation ecosystems within RIS3 strategies and enable responses to existing challenges and gaps.

Key ecoRIS3 activities included the exchange of experience and learning through interregional events (4 thematic workshops, 3 horizontal Seminars and 9 Study Visits). The partners produced a peer review document, 7 SWOT Analysis, 7 Action Plans and identified over 60 Good Practices, that have been shared across the partnership and further afield to benefit the key actors of the quadruple helix (Public Sector, Civil Society, RTO & High Education, SMEs & Industry).

ecoRIS3 Project Partners



GENERAL INFORMATION

Project: ecoRIS3
Partner Organisation: Cork Institute of Technology
Other Partner Organisations:
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NUTS2 Region: Southern & Eastern Region
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POLICY CONTEXT IN IRELAND

The Action Plan Aims to Impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme
- European Territorial Cooperation Programme
- Other regional development policy instruments

The Southern & Eastern Regional Programme 2014-20 is a funding package of approximately €500 million co-funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Irish Exchequer and public funds. The Southern Regional Assembly is the Managing Authority for Southern & Eastern Regional Programme 2014-20.

The funding is invested in the Southern & Eastern region of Ireland under five priority areas, 1. strengthening research, technology development and innovation (RTDI), 2. Information Communication Technology (ICT) Infrastructure, 3. Small and medium sized enterprise (SME) Supports, 4. Low Carbon Economy, and 5. Sustainable Urban Development.

Under Priority 1, Strengthening RTDI, of the Policy Instrument (PI), the ecoRIS3 project Action Plan's Priority Objectives are aligned with OP Investment Priorities:

- Increasing the level of commercialisation of research by the higher education institutions in the Southern and Eastern (S&E) region.
- Increasing the level of research taking place in the S&E region with company engagement by supplying applied research.

The PI is underpinned with a focus on regaining lost competitiveness, boosting productivity, increasing export intensity and diversity of markets, taking measures to improve Ireland's attractiveness as a location for foreign investment and achieving an increase in start-ups and entrepreneurial activity.

The PI recognises that creating a competitive business environment is essential to ensuring Irish regions achieve sustainable economic growth and higher levels of employment growth. It also recognises that regions that support strong and dynamic enterprises are crucial to Ireland's return to overall economic growth.

Much of the policy discussion surrounding regional development in Ireland will be driven in the future by the National Planning Framework (NPF). The NPF is designed to be a high-level guide for strategic planning and development for the Ireland to the period 2040 and beyond. The central aim of the NPF is to ensure that as the population grows, that growth is sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms.¹ The NPF predicts that by 2040 the population of Ireland will have increased by a projected 1 million people. It highlights that in order to achieve full employment there will be the need to create 660,000 additional jobs by 2040. This increase in population also creates increased need for housing with an estimated need for the completion of 550,000 more homes.

Of particular regional relevance is the dispersion of this expected population growth. A quarter of this population growth is expected to occur in the Dublin region with a further quarter expected to be across the remaining four major cities in Ireland (Cork, Galway, Limerick, and Waterford). The remaining growth is expected to occur in regional towns and more rural areas. Linked with this population growth is the need for the coordinated development of infrastructure and services.

Regarding this coordination at a regional level there has been significant change in regional governance in Ireland over the past five years. From the period 1994 to 2014 Ireland was divided into eight Regional Authorities. These Regional Authorities were responsible for the co-ordination of public service provision and also the monitoring of the implementation of European Union Structural Fund assistance. In addition to this a specific function of the Regional Authorities was to review the Development Plans of local authorities as well as the preparation of Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES).

However, as part of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 these eight Regional Authorities and two regional assemblies were replaced by 3 new regional assemblies effective 01st January 2015. This significant change in regional governance has resulted in changes in the traditional avenue through which policy instruments were created and implemented. As a result, it is essential to revisit the role of all regional stakeholders, and to ensure that their involvement in policy discourse at a regional level is improved and strengthened in order to affectively influence policy. However, it is clear that for stakeholders to make informed decisions in relation to policy an overview of the current ecosystem is required.

¹ <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/REDF/>

At the regional level in Ireland the three regional assemblies are responsible for translating and implementing the NPF at regional level. Each regional assembly is charged with the preparation of a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The primary purpose of these RSES is to support the regional implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the economic policies and objectives of the Government including those with a regional focus such as City and/or County Development Plans or Local Economic and Community Plans. One of their chief missions is to ensure that development of policies which will ensure a greater dispersal of economic growth and development throughout Irish regions.²

In the context of the ecoRIS3 project, a significant target of the project is to provide insights into policies which will provide sustainable and inclusive economic growth within Ireland and specifically the Southern & Eastern Region. The Southern Regional Assembly is comprised of three sub-regions; South East, South West and Mid West. However, as previous NUTS classification defined two Operating Programme Areas in Ireland – the Southern Regional Assembly are also the Managing Authority for the Southern & Eastern Operating Programme – which adds the Mid-East and Dublin regions.

The Southern Regional Assembly is one of the afore mentioned three Regional Assemblies established on the 1st January 2015. It is comprised of the following counties; Carlow, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, Cork, Kerry, Clare, Limerick. The region hosts three of Ireland's five largest cities; Cork, Limerick, and Waterford. However, within the regions three strategic planning areas (SPA) there is considerable asymmetries in economic performance, productivity, and income. Counties in the South-East SPA are typically lagging behind those in the South-West and Mid-West. Therefore, the issue of sustainable economic growth is particularly pertinent to this region given the disparities amongst the composite elements of the region.

Tables 1 and 2 showcase how these inequalities manifest in terms of employment and income disparities. For instance, in the context of the South-East SPA of Ireland this region currently experiences the highest level of unemployment at 6.7%. Even during the heights of Ireland's economic prosperity in 2005 unemployment in the South-East was amongst the highest in the country. Total income per person in the South-East has also been consistently below the national average, and while it is not the lowest in the country, it nevertheless significantly lags the other planning areas of the Southern Region. Contrast this with the South-West region or the Mid-West region and the extent of inequality becomes apparent. The South-West region has the second lowest level of unemployment in the state while the Mid-West region has the second highest total income per person in the state.

The Southern Regional Assembly has a number of important roles in regional development including, but not limited to; managing and monitoring EU programmes, co-ordinating, promoting and supporting strategic planning and sustainable development of the region, and promoting effective local government and public services.

Given the limited degree of governmental decentralisation in Ireland for the ecoRIS3 project to be successful it will require significant engagement not only between CIT, the Southern Regional Assembly, the local stakeholder group and national government. Cluster policy interventions and supports are currently emphasised and developed at a national level in Ireland and, therefore, it is necessary to engage at this level to ensure that it is continuously developed and funded.

²https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/local_and_regional_government

Table 1: Unemployment across Irish regions

	1998Q1	2005Q4	2012Q2	2019Q1
State	8.9	4.3	15.9	4.8
Border	9.8	4.1	15	3.9
Midland	11.1	4.3	22.1	6.2
West	7.9	4.2	17.4	5.5
Dublin	8	4.5	12.7	4.4
Mid-East	9.9	3.6	16.2	4.1
Mid-West	9.5	4.9	19.3	5.5
South-East	8.9	4.7	17.1	6.7
South-West	9	3.7	15.5	4

Table 2: Regional total incomes per person across Irish regions

	2000	2005	2012	2016
State	16,860	25,015	25,518	27,165
Border	13,954	20,753	20,567	21,636
West	15,430	22,816	22,988	23,373
Southern	14,312	23,435	24,161	25,529
Mid-West	16,323	23,392	24,867	26,019
South-East	15,751	22,612	22,524	24,571
South-West	12,018	23,961	24,671	25,773
Dublin	20,823	28,796	30,533	33,635
Mid-East	18,315	26,216	25,273	26,384
Midland	15,622	23,092	21,738	22,394

However, by necessity, the specific actions arising from the plan vary from being national in scope to being targeted at specific sectors in specific sub-regions of the Southern Regional Assembly's area. In all cases rationales for the specific geographical scope considered are provided throughout the document across the various actions. For instance, when discussing Action 1, which a focus on cluster design and development, initial work takes place in the South-West region (Cork and Kerry) when testing the design and methodology and is then extended nationally. Action 2 focuses on Cluster Policy development and extends to a national level, this is the case as policy in Ireland is typically implemented centrally at a national level in the first instance and then permeates throughout its regions. Action 3 is more focused on the South-West region in the first instance, and then extends to the South-East and Mid-West as appropriate.

DETAILS OF THE ACTIONS ENVISAGED

A central element of the ecoRIS3 project is the learning and application of good practices from other Project partners. The partner countries of the ecoRIS3 project are Spain, Ireland, Portugal, Lithuania, Finland, Latvia and Italy. Specifically, five good practices presented by partners over the duration of Phase 1 of the ecoRIS3 project have applicable learnings for implementation within the Irish partner Action Plan. These are (1) the Innovation Poles Programme in Piedmont that brings together actors from across the quadruple helix to develop strong connected innovation clusters, (2) the Gaming cluster in Kainuu answers to the challenge of industrial renewal, (3) Rural Policy Council (MANE) which brings actors together to develop rural areas and (4) the Laser and Engineering Technologies cluster LITEK cluster in Vilnius and (5) the Coworking space and creative centre "Skola6". The first good practice is drawn from the Italian partner, Metropolitan City of Turin, the second and third from Finish partners Kainuun Etu, the fourth from Sunrise Valley in Lithuania and the fifth good practice is taken from the Latvian partners, Vidzeme Planning Region.

With the primary goal of strengthening Priority 1, and more specifically RTDI focus, of the Policy Instrument (PI), the ecoRIS3 project's Action Plan's objectives seek to (1) to further develop the level of commercialisation of research by the higher education institutions in the Southern Region and (2) increase the level of research taking place in the region with company engagement in applied research. To realise both goals, at a regional level we believe that increasing the levels of trust, interaction and collaboration between industry, academia and government is paramount. It is for this reason we believe that a combination of clustering and co-working can support the bringing together of the quadruple helix and facilitate collaboration and when trust is developed escalate the commercialisation of research.

ACTION I – EDUCATE THE QUADRUPLE HELIX AND DEVELOP A TEST CASE MODEL FOR CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT FOR IRELAND

TO BETTER SUPPORT HEIs / RTOs AND COMPANIES THEY INTERACT WITH, COMMERCIALISE THEIR RESEARCH ACTIVITY THROUGH THE ROP

THE BACKGROUND

From the beginning of the ecoRIS3 project the appetite for the development of industry clusters as a means of connecting industrial ecosystems has been apparent through various policies. Michael Enright was engaged as advisor to the Industrial Policy Review Group. This group was established in 1991 under the chairmanship of Jim Culliton to make recommendations on the future direction Irish industrial policy should take. The Culliton (1992) report identified a range of areas requiring reform in order to create an environment more conducive to industrial development.

The National Economic and Social Council (1993)³ emphasised the importance of strengthening Ireland’s indigenous industrial base. It highlighted the benefits of clusters and advocated the creation of co-operative structures among small firms as a means of achieving some of the economies of scale available to large firms. In relation to clusters, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (1993, p 7) noted that “the budget for assisting indigenous industry will focus particularly on segments or clusters where there is a basis for establishing or increasing a national competitive advantage.” However, in their routine multi-annual strategy statements, industry development agencies make no reference to the cluster concept e.g. Forbairt (1994)⁴; Forfas (1996)⁵; Forfas (2000)⁶ and Enterprise Ireland (1998)⁷. Indicating that while there was an appetite for cluster formation in the 1990s it was not ubiquitous.

Move forward to the present strategies and Ireland’s Enterprise 2025⁸ - national enterprise policy, seeks to harness the distinctive characteristics of our foreign and Irish owned enterprise mix through collaboration and clustering. Future Jobs Ireland 2019⁹ has a focus on 5 pillars, Embracing Innovation and Technological Change, Improving SME Productivity, Enhancing Skills and Developing and Attracting Talent, Increasing Participation in the Labour Force and Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy. In Ireland national Government are seeking to realise these goals through additional supports for clustering. However, one of the major challenges for Ireland relates to a lack of understanding of what constitutes a cluster. Moving beyond a concentration of firms in a specific sector to an interconnected industry sector which also has strong collaborative links with academia and government.

³ http://files.nesc.ie/nesc_reports/en/NESC_96a_Strategy_Summary_1993.pdf

⁴ Nolan, A. (1996), Technology and Innovation, Twin Strategies for Mid-West Growth, Technology Ireland. Forbairt. 28,(5), pp.27-30.

⁵ http://edepositireland.ie/bitstream/handle/2262/70728/forfas960501_shaping_our_future.pdf

⁶ Forfás (2000), Enterprise 2010: A New Strategy for the Promotion of Enterprise in Ireland in the 21st Century, Dublin: Forfás

⁷ Enterprise Ireland (1998) EI Strategy, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Dublin

⁸ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Enterprise-2025-Renewed.pdf>

⁹ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Future-Jobs-Ireland-2019.pdf>

Cluster development requires significant investment from the ‘quadruple helix’ which is comprised of the interactions between industry, universities government and citizens. Etzkowitz and Zhou (2017) emphasises that it is the interactions and relationships between the actors of the quadruple helix which provides an optimum environment for entrepreneurship and innovation which enables that transition of research/knowledge into practice/use.¹⁰ They highlight that the central role of the helix is to enhance innovation, research, entrepreneurship and regional development. However, they also note that over time university, industry, and government interactions can become taken for granted, and that their effectiveness can dissipate. There is no static equilibrium at which the optimal configuration of the quadruple helix has been achieved, with the constant evolution of competition necessitating a constant reconfiguration of the role that each actor plays in the system and a re-imagining of the processes of engagement.

As emphasised by Schmiedeberg (2010) there is increasingly a focus on the design and development of cluster policies with many governments adopting the concept of clusters as a mechanism for stimulating regional economic growth and prosperity.¹¹ However, linked with this is an increasing awareness and focus on the need for policy evaluation tools and frameworks which can assess the extent to which cluster developments have been successful and have achieved their desired outcomes. However, a particular problem, emphasised by Giuliani and Pietrobelli (2011), is that there is not clearly defined or accepted approach to cluster evaluation.¹² Schmiedeberg (2010) highlights that most industrial and regional development policies are financially constrained, and that there is therefore, a need for careful consideration of where to invest government resources.¹³ In light of these dual issues, (i) whereby there is no clear and specific mechanism for cluster evaluation and (ii) the need to ensure that government funds are directed to their optimal usage this first action will develop a methodology for cluster design which is specifically focused on an Irish context.

Specifically, this action will involve the development of a methodology for cluster design in an Irish context. This design will be informed by a series of workshops on cluster development and design in Ireland. As noted previously, given the small size of Ireland, it is anticipated that these workshops will not be restricted to the Southern Region but may also incorporate other locations across Ireland.

The monitoring and evaluation of clusters in Ireland will also be addressed. Furthermore, funding streams will be identified which can be used to implement and develop clusters in Ireland.

¹⁰ Etzkowitz, H., & Zhou, C. (2017). The quadruple helix: University–industry–government innovation and entrepreneurship. Routledge.

¹¹ Schmiedeberg, C. (2010). Evaluation of cluster policy: a methodological overview. *evaluation*, 16(4), 389-412

¹² Giuliani, E., & Pietrobelli, C. (2011). Social network analysis methodologies for the evaluation of cluster development programs. Inter-American Development Bank

¹³ Schmiedeberg, C. (2010). Evaluation of cluster policy: a methodological overview. *evaluation*, 16(4), 389-412

With this in mind the CIT ecoRIS3 team have been actively engaged in the creation of a cluster development model that is intrinsically linked and informed by the Innovation Poles programme in Piedmont, LITEK cluster in Lithuania¹⁴ and Gaming Cluster in Kajani. Specifically, in terms of good practices particularly concerned with clusters and cluster development the Innovation Poles programme organised by the Piemonte Region to foster innovation, competitiveness, public-private collaboration, enhancing and supporting research and product development is also particularly relevant.

Innovation poles are coordinated structures among the different actors of the innovation process in a specific sector: innovative start-ups, SMEs, big enterprises, research institutions. The poles provide infrastructure and services with a high added value, to stimulate innovation activities through intensive interaction, common use of installations and knowledge and experience exchanges. The aim is to contribute effectively to technology transfer and to the diffusion of information among the different regional actors. There are now 7 Innovation Poles in Piemonte Region: Across the 7 Poles approximately 1,200 companies are involved predominantly made up of SMEs¹⁵. In addition to SMEs, the Innovation Poles boast the participation of some big companies of international importance that could be a driving force in the collaborative design activities. Industry is further supported by universities, science and technology parks, incubators and major public and private research centres and funding entities (including banks and VC).

Some applicable learnings of the Innovation Poles programme:

- identification of technological domains and territorial areas of reference on the basis of strengths and weaknesses within the regional production system;
- focusing the Poles on areas not characterised by the presence of a large company in control, but choosing to foster collaborative dynamics between businesses in the region;
- provision of freedom of choice on the legal form chosen for the establishment of the Pole and the governance model chosen by the managing body;
- concentration of resources to co-finance projects and services related to research and innovation;
- evaluation - divided across several areas, which involve Piemonte Region offices, Fin Piemonte (Region's financial body) and pole managers themselves, to verify the Pole's agenda and development trajectories with regional guidelines.

From these good practices adopted elsewhere it is clear that the mission of cluster organisations is to expand the membership base, provide high quality innovation services to cluster members, promote partnerships at national and international levels and develop research agendas. Clusters can also support regional policy makers with updated data on technology trends and cluster evolution. Helping cluster members to access regional public funding for collaborative research and innovation (R&I) projects.

The necessary actions, stakeholders, timeframe, costs, and funding for achieving the aims of Action 1 are specified in the following table.

¹⁴ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/2459/laser-engineering-technologies-cluster-litek/>

¹⁵ Intervention from Vincenzo Zezza, Cluster Programme Director, Regione Piemonte
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/ecoris3/news/news-article/6870/metropolitan-city-of-turin-infoday/>

ACTION 1 – Educate the quadruple helix and develop a test case model for cluster development for Ireland

<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Run a series of workshops for cluster development in Ireland ii) Develop and revise a methodology for cluster design in an Irish context iii) Source funding and implementation for animation of the chosen cluster development model iv) Develop and revise a methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of clusters in Ireland
<p>Stakeholders Involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) CIT will host and run the series of workshops for cluster development in Ireland, in collaboration with ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe partners and local stakeholders. Specific engagement with the Southern Regional Assembly, The Competitiveness Institute, National Government, the South West Regional Enterprise Plan and Irish Development Agencies. ii) CIT will develop the methodology for cluster design in an Irish context, with key inputs from ecoRIS3 partners Kainnun Etu, Metropolitan City of Turin and Sunrise Valley – further guidance will be drawn from the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform, Clusters3 project and The Competitiveness Institute. The methodology will be revised via stakeholder feedback on an on-going basis. iii) CIT to lead the sourcing of seed investment for the implementation of the cluster development model in collaboration with local ecoRIS3 stakeholders. iv) CIT to lead the development and on-going revision of a methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of clusters in Ireland, guidance will be drawn from the The Competitiveness Institute Cluster Evaluation Working Group and The European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis.

ACTION 1 – Educate the quadruple helix and develop a test case model for cluster development for Ireland (con.)

Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) January 2018 to December 2021 - CIT will host and run the series of workshops for cluster development in Ireland during phase 1 and 2 of the ecoRIS3 project and dovetail such events with meetings of the local stakeholder’s group. ii) January 2018 to December 2019. iii) January 2018 to December 2019. iv) January 2019 to December 2020.
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Cost of 5-6 workshops – catering, facilities, transport, logistics and travel costs for speakers = €20,000. ii) CIT will develop the methodology for cluster design in an Irish context – Staff Costs = €40,000. iii) CIT to write and present proposals for the sourcing of seed investment for the implementation for the chosen cluster development model – Staff Costs = €10,000, Travel = €500. Funding requested in the order of €200,000 to €250,000 to animate and develop a cluster organisation for a period of 24 Months. iv) CIT to lead the development of a methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of clusters in Ireland – Staff Costs = €10,000, Travel = €5,000.

ACTION 1 – Educate the quadruple helix and develop a test case model for cluster development for Ireland (con.)

Funding Sources

- i) ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe funding to collaborate with local stakeholders and provide interregional learning. Additional CIT Research & Development funding & ERASMUS+ International Credit Mobility funding.
- ii) ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding to develop and revise the methodology with project partners with additional CIT Research & Development staff funding.
- iii) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding to develop the sourcing of seed investment for the implementation for the chosen cluster development model. Plus, CIT School of Business and Engineering staff and travel funding to develop and present the proposal. Regional Operational Programme funding for the animation and development of the cluster organisation through one of the Irish Agencies responsible for Research and Innovation.
- iv) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding to develop the methodology for the monitoring and evaluation of clusters, including additional study visit to Turin in November 2019. This will be supplemented by CIT School of Business staff and travel funding.

During the development of the Action Plan, progress has been made regarding Action 1. A number of (i) cluster development workshops have taken place with key stakeholders and experts, (ii) a cluster development methodology has been tested and (iii) a successful example of a funding application for the cluster development methodology has been made to animate Cyber Ireland. Cyber Ireland¹⁶ is a cluster initiative supported by IDA Ireland in conjunction with CIT. The aim of this cluster is to “brings together industry, academia and government to enhance the innovation, growth and competitiveness of the companies and organisations which are part of the cluster”. Cyber Ireland is an example of where collaboration between the quadruple helix of industry, universities and government can be evaluated as the action plan progresses.

This is a particularly relevant industrial cluster for analysis given the extensive involvement of the quadruple helix. But also, the extent and scale of the potential growth of the cyber security industry also presents a significant opportunity for the southern region of Ireland. It is anticipated that the global value of cyber security spending will be approximately \$248 billion by 2023 and globally a total of 3.5 million unfilled jobs predicted by 2021.

¹⁶ <https://cyberireland.ie/>

ACTION 2 – SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL CLUSTER POLICY AND TRAINING FOR CLUSTER FACILITATION IN IRELAND

TO SUPPORT BETTER OUTCOMES OF RESEARCH IN THE HEIs & DEVELOP STRONGER CONNECTIONS TO INDUSTRY

THE BACKGROUND

In order to obtain the goal of increasing the level of commercialisation of research and engagement in applied research by industry and higher education institutions in Ireland whilst also increasing our attractiveness for foreign investment, a clear understanding of the current environment, areas for development, and supports required needs to be ascertained.

It is necessary to conduct this assessment on both a regional and national level. A promising policy mechanism for achieving this goal could be through the further development and analysis of cluster policy. At a national level, a national policy and framework for clustering could inform a plan for strategic support for RD&I, connecting industry and targeting of foreign investment which, if correctly implements, could enable the regional assembly to support collaborations that already exist. From an Irish national context the Department for Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) are responsible for the development of cluster policy. At the sub-national level, it is the responsibility of each regional assembly to translate, disseminate, support and integrate emerging national policy across their regions.

Recently, there has been a renewed focus on cluster policy, however, while DBEI have launched a number of cluster initiative recently, no national strategic plan or policy exists on clustering. van Egeraat and Doyle (2018)¹⁷ provide a summary of the development of Irish cluster policy. They highlight that there is evidence of an awareness of the potential benefits of a cluster based industrial development policy since the Culliton (1992) report. Mattimoe (2002) noted that the Culliton (1992) report was radical at the time as rather than directly aiming to create jobs via government led large-scale spending programmes, it was suggested that the focus should instead be on ensuring the creation of the necessary conditions whereby for private business development could be translated into employment opportunities.¹⁸ The emphasis was on ensuring that a favourable cost and production environment existed for firms to operate in. A particular noteworthy observation was that "most of the newer foreign firms operate as an industrial enclave" Culliton (1992, pp. 31). Mattimoe (2002) notes that the direct policy response arising from this was to target support at the establishment of clusters of foreign and indigenous firms in niches of national competitive advantage. The aim of this strategy was to target and develop sustainable national competitive advantage in industry segments as opposed to simply targeting foreign companies and enticing them to locate in Ireland. It is emphasised by Mattimoe (2002) that the application of this cluster policy initiative was nothing that was particularly new or radical, and that other European countries had been successfully implementing this policy for some time prior to the Culliton (1992) report. However, it was a significant deviation from pre-existing Irish policy related to industrial development.

¹⁷ van Egeraat, C., & Doyle, E. (2018). Rethinking Irish cluster policy. *Administration*, 66(1), 107-128.

¹⁸ <http://doras.dcu.ie/20622/1/EnterpriseChapter.pdf>

While the Culliton (1992) report started a discussion around clusters in the Irish policy landscape, it is noted by van Egeraat and Doyle (2008) that the extent to which this translated into actionable policy was “periodic mentions of ‘cluster’” however they note that there was “little, if any, evidence [of] implementation”. This assertion is supported by assessments of clusters within Ireland, such as in Clancy et al (2001) and Hobbs et al (2013)¹⁹, where it is noted that an evaluation of the industrial landscape find no evidence of well-developed clusters (of a Porterian definition).²⁰ But the Clancy et al (2001) analysis does emphasise that, where some elements of a typical cluster ecosystem are present, in the form of some wider grouping of connected or related companies and industries, companies involved in these ecosystems do derive a benefit from them.

This lack of a specific cluster policy has led to a disjointed approach to clustering within Ireland and a lack of definition or clarity on the same. In 2008, a DETE report²¹ described three Irish clusters outlined in the Bio Pharma, internationally traded services, and ICT sectors. However, without the national policy it is difficult to ascertain the strength level of these collaborations. Additionally, since this period various bodies have identified subsequent clusters, but these have been developed through bottom up clustering, as opposed to being created by a government organisation.

However, in recent years there has been increased recognition of the potential that a national cluster policy could have at a regional level in promoting economic development. In 2012 the Action Plan for Jobs 2012 launched by DJEI highlighted as a stated goal the need to “establish industry clusters” in selected sectors of the economy and to build world-class clusters in key sectors of opportunity”.²² In the context of improving regional linkages between industries and universities the plan also proposed to “establish ... higher education institutional clusters at a regional level to support enterprise development and employment needs”.

The regional action plans for job also, to a varying extent, included references to developing cluster initiatives. For example the South-West Regional Action Plan for Job 2015 highlighted that existing Community Enterprise Initiatives funds could be leveraged to promote the “establishment of hubs, accelerators, networks and clusters or other partnerships based on regional strengths, opportunities and uniqueness”.²³ The use of clusters to promote employment was also emphasised in the both the South-East and the Mid-West Regional Action Plans for Job 2015. The latest version of the Action Plan for Jobs 2017 makes explicit reference to the strengthening of existing cluster. It also highlights the potential role government actors such as Enterprise Ireland can play in “deliver an international ‘in-market’ clustering strategy promoting Irish sectoral cluster capabilities to international buyers in priority markets and sectors”.

¹⁹ Hobbs, J., Walsh M., and Moloney, R. (2013), Clustering: Evolving Branding changes or Substantial Theoretical Differences? published by European Regional Science Association, August, Palermo, Italy.

²⁰ <http://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/6124/1/CVE-Porters-Model.pdf>

²¹ Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (2008) Knowledge and Enterprise. Clusters in Ireland.

²² <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Action-Plan-for-Jobs-2012.pdf>

²³ <http://www.regionalapi.ie/en/SOUTH-WEST1.pdf>

The focus on cluster development has increased at pace. In Future Jobs Ireland (2019)²⁴ it is specifically acknowledged that “enterprises are more likely to succeed if they are part of a supportive ecosystem which provides opportunities for engagement with ... other enterprises either within or across sectors ... and a range of other actors that have a role in enterprise development”. This report specifically highlights the potential funding opportunities available to clusters. Amongst others they point to the development of Research Centres and Technology Centres which have acted as a catalyst for developing and promoting linkages between industry academia. They also highlight Enterprise Ireland and the IDA as potential financial sources for the development of clusters, through the Regional Enterprise Development Fund and the Regional Technology Clustering Fund. Further funding for training initiatives are available through Skillnet Ireland and the Regional Skills Fora.

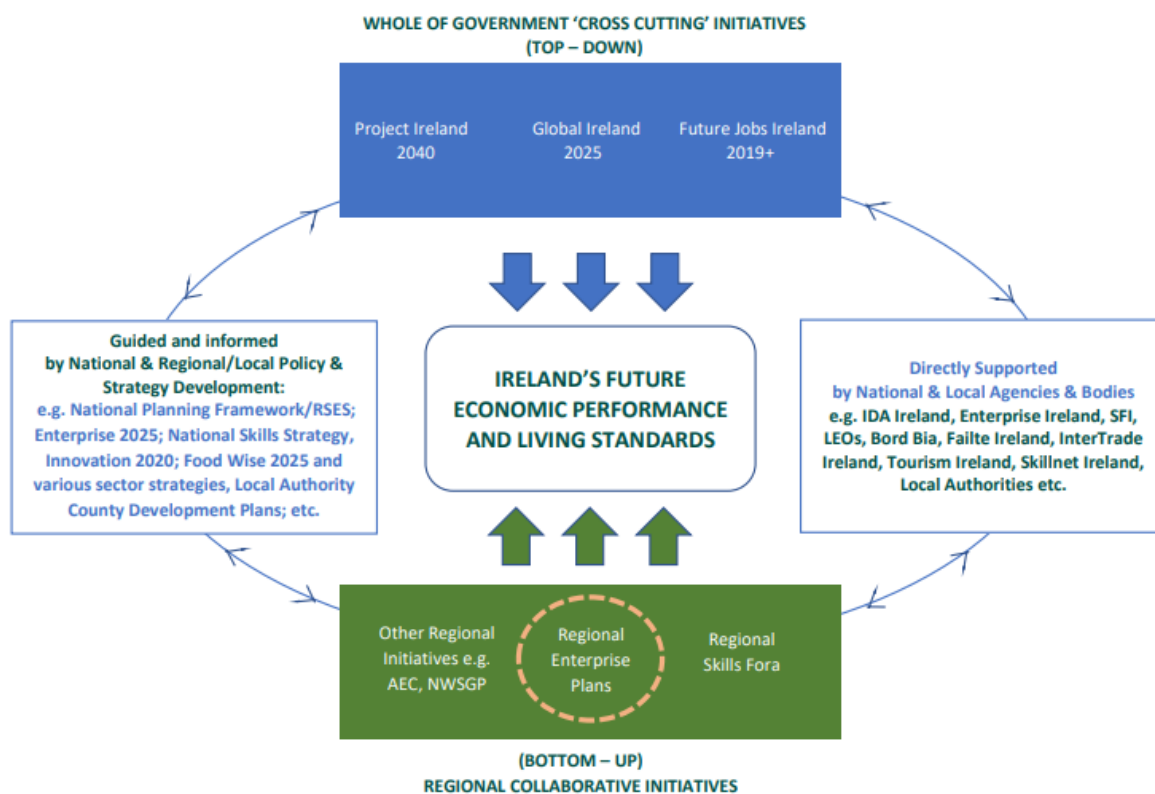


Image: Mapping the Irish Policy Framework & Supports²⁵.

These are excellent first steps towards developing a coherent clustering policy framework. However, a number of actions need to be taken in order increase clustering within Ireland and to outline the economic benefit of clustering for all stakeholders. Future Jobs Ireland (2019) highlights that there is a need to identify how Ireland might approach the development of a National Clustering Policy. This action plan will aim to address these issues and provide clarity at regional and national level.

²⁴ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Future-Jobs-Ireland-2019.pdf>

²⁵ Céline McHugh, DBEI presentation on Clustering & Enterprise Development in Ireland at the ecoRIS3 Italian Info day held by the Metropolitan City of Turin 30-10-2019.

Currently cluster policy supports in Ireland permeates through a range of enterprise policy interventions rather than through a singular cluster policy initiative. As a small country, sensible to consider clustering initiatives at the national as well as the regional scale – to achieve critical mass of participants and potential. It is also important to note the distinct character of our enterprise base, which includes a significant foreign-owned enterprise cohort. Therefore, an Irish cluster policy will need to

- Have a significant focus on ‘seed stage’ funding – challenge of growing clusters of scale and sophistication
- Foster and enable the bottom-up dynamic of clustering will help to achieve national enterprise policy objectives.

While a national perspective is critical and the development of a national cluster policy would provide an excellent high-level support for the development of industry clusters targeted, industry specific supports and initiatives would also be required. A key learning opportunity for this Action could be the implementation of the ‘Gaming cluster in Kainuu’ good practice from Finland, which answers the challenge of industrial renewal. This strategy had three objectives relating to economic renewal, the development of technological industries, and retaining and upskilling workers. These are all highly relevant objectives which are similar in nature to those prioritised for the Southern Region. Central to the success of the gaming cluster was the use of a specific cluster programme which provided dedicated support in the form of marketing, investment meetings, bootcamps and an incubator programme. The successful integration of regional universities, industry, and government contributed to the success of the cluster initiative. In this context there could be significant insights gained from an analysis of existing cluster systems in place in Ireland under the themes identified in the Kainuu case.

Another good practice of particular relevance is another shared by the Kainuu region relating to ‘Rural Policy Council (MANE)’ which brings actors together to develop rural areas²⁶. This good practice is grounded in the principle that by bringing together local actors it is possible to identify ‘problems, potential, and optimise solutions’ for the development of regional economies. Although the good practice specifically relates to rural areas, there are sufficient parallels between the Southern Region and the Kainuu region for the lessons to have practical implications. The good practice established a Rural Policy Council²⁷ whose role it is to act as “the bridge between rural and state levels.” Among the tasks which this Council undertake are supporting decision-makers in cross-administrative and strategically important rural policy issues and preparing and implementing the Finnish Government's Rural Policy Agenda 2014-2020.

²⁶ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/798/rural-policy-council-mane-brings-actors-together-to-develop-rural-areas/>

²⁷ <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/798/rural-policy-council-mane-brings-actors-together-to-develop-rural-areas/>

Action 2 of this plan involves the drawing up of a national cluster policy to be translated and implemented at regional level – which will be benchmarked against other European cluster policies – including Piedmont. Through the Future Jobs Ireland programme CIT have the opportunity to work with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), Irish Development Agencies - Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, Southern Regional Assembly and the South West Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Manager and Stakeholder Group to support the development of a national cluster policy.

Part of the national cluster policy will have to trace how Ireland as a nation can draw together its existing clusters and ‘networks’ whom are looking to transform their services and offerings to become more cluster like. The organisation of a workshop to engage with existing ‘cluster managers’ at a national level in Ireland to offer their insights and inputs into national cluster policy will form part of the action. In addition to inputting to a national policy, the workshop will allow cluster managers to connect to scan for cross-sectoral collaboration, new market exploration, regional marketing, recruitment and R&D opportunities.

The final element of this action will be to develop a training and management syllabus for cluster managers/facilitators in Ireland. This piece of work should (i) identify training needs to be met, (ii) develop a training programme for cluster managers, (iii) develop a working group for the sharing of knowledge and best practice and (iv) providing support for cluster managers by bringing experienced European/International cluster managers to Ireland to support the training of Irish managers/facilitators. To this end the CIT ecoRIS3 team have engaged with the Gaming Cluster in Kainuu and Innovation Poles Clusters in Turin – bioPmed and Torino Wireless.

In order to operationalise this the actions, stakeholders, timeframe, costs, and funding for achieving the aims of Action 2 are specified in the following table.

ACTION 2 – Support the development of a national cluster policy and training for cluster facilitation in Ireland

<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Support the composition of a national cluster development policy – which can be implemented at a regional level. ii) Organisation of a workshop to engage with existing ‘cluster managers’ at a national level in Ireland to offer their insights and inputs into national cluster policy. iii) Develop a training and management syllabus for cluster managers/facilitators in Ireland. iv) Implement a funding mechanism for the support and or development of Cluster organisations in Ireland
<p>Stakeholders Involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) CIT will liaise and work with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), Irish Development Agencies - Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, Southern Regional Assembly and the South West Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Manager and Stakeholder Group to support composition of a national cluster development policy through the Future Jobs Ireland programme. This will be benchmarked against other European cluster policies e.g. Piedmont, Catalonia and Upper Austria, and be supported by The Competitiveness Institute. ii) CIT in collaboration with the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), Irish Development Agencies - Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland, Southern Regional Assembly and the South West Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Manager will invite cluster managers and network facilitators operating across Ireland to ensure an inclusive approach. The workshop will allow managers to connect and allow them to collaboratively scan for cross sectoral collaboration, new market exploration, regional marketing, recruitment and R&D opportunities. iii) CIT will liaise and work Metropolitan City of Turin, Kainnun Etu, and link with partners on the Clusters3 project to develop a training and management syllabus for cluster managers/facilitators in Ireland. iv) Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) in partnership with the Irish development agencies - Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland to implement a funding programme for the support and or development of Cluster organisations in Ireland.

ACTION 2 – Support the development of a national policy and training for cluster facilitation in Ireland

Timeframe

- i) January 2018 to December 2021 - inputting on different steering committees and national policy initiatives.
- ii) By March 2020 for first meeting.
- iii) January 2020 to June 2021.
- iv) January 2018 to December 2021.

Costs

- i) CIT input into the development of a national cluster policy with key players across Ireland – Staff Costs = €10,000, Travel = €1,000.
- ii) Funding required in the order of €6,000 for the development of the initial workshop in the form of staff costs, facilities rental, catering and travel.
- iii) CIT will develop a training and management syllabus for cluster managers/facilitators in Ireland. Staff Costs = €30,000.
- iv) Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF)- support for significant Enterprise Clustering Initiatives with grants of €50k up to €350k per project in funding towards current costs, at a maximum grant rate of 80% of actual costs.²⁸ And Regional Technology Clustering Fund (RTCF) administered by Enterprise Ireland on behalf of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation to build sectoral clusters of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at regional level. Support for Cluster Facilitation and Operating Programme – up to €400,000 for 36 months.

²⁸ <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/REDF/>

ACTION 2 – Support the development of a national policy and training for cluster facilitation in Ireland

Funding Sources

- i) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding and Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation staff funding to develop the national strategy.
- ii) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding plus South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 funding to develop the workshop content and invite and engage with attendees.
- iii) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding in addition to CIT School of Business staff and travel funding to develop the training and management syllabus for cluster managers/facilitators in Ireland.
- iv) National Government funding for cluster supports through Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), and Irish development agencies - Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland.

ACTION 3 – CO-WORKING AS A MECHANISM TO SUPPORT COMPANIES CLUSTERING AND INNOVATING VIA STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH ACADEMIA.

UTILISING CO-WORKING SPACES AS GOOD LOCATIONS FOR SPINOUTS TO SUPPORT THE CROSS FERTILISATION BETWEEN SPINS OUTS AND OTHER INNOVATIVE COMPANIES LOCATED IN THE SPACE

THE BACKGROUND

The Southern Regional Assembly is comprised of three sub-regions; South East, South West and Mid West. However, as previous NUTS classification defined two Operating Programme Areas in Ireland – the Southern Regional Assembly are also the Managing Authority for the Southern & Eastern Operating Programme. The difference is highlighted in the below image.

These Southern region is comprised as follows:

- South-East: Carlow, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny
- South-West: Cork, Kerry
- Mid-West: Clare, Limerick, Tipperary

Each of these three composite regions (NUTS III) possesses a certain amount of autonomy when formulating local policies, with oversight from the Southern Regional Assembly. Of particular relevance for the current Action Plan is the South West region which contains the project partner Cork Institute of Technology.

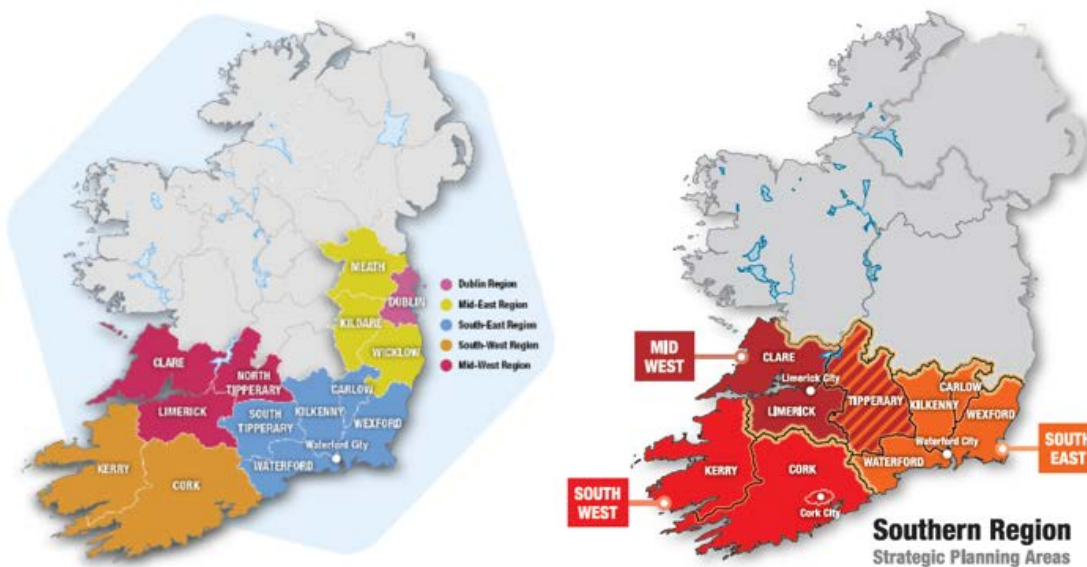


Image: The Counties and Regions within the Southern and Eastern ROP (left) and the Southern Region SPA²⁹ (right).

²⁹ <https://www.southernassembly.ie/the-assembly>

The South West region is also of particular interest as its Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020³⁰ notes that the South-West has the largest economy outside of the Dublin region and is also the largest rural economy in the country. It is further noted that there are annual increases in economic activity, research and innovation, and business development. The counties of Cork and Kerry are diverse, with Ireland's second largest city, the second largest natural harbour in the world, important large regional towns; significant national, international and global leading companies; a tourism industry of both national and international significance; and a landscape of outstanding beauty and rich in culture and heritage. However, a significant number of challenges exist for the regional economy, not least attracting and keeping talent, its peripheral location and declining populations of communities located away from major regional centres, longer commute times, and uneven broadband availability, to mention some.

There has been an increasing shift in attitudes to work with the increased use of mobile technology. This has enabled the possibility of remote working, making it possible to work anywhere at any time. Despite this, there is still significant evidence that workers still seek work environments that stimulate networking and collaboration possibilities (Perree et al 2018).³¹ Tötterman and Sten (2005) highlight the role of business incubators as a central policy tool for encouraging and supporting entrepreneurial activity. These are usually provided through publicly funded initiatives. However, co-working spaces are one type of private alternative to these publicly funded incubators. Fuzi (2015) identifies co-working offices as places where moral, emotional, professional, and financial support and physical facilities enable entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses.³² Fuzi (2015) highlights Kwiatkowski & Buczynski (2011, pp. 19) emphasis that individuals who use these co-working spaces share similar values of “collaboration, openness, community, accessibility and sustainability”³³.

As most enterprises located in a co-working space are entrepreneurial in nature and as being located in a co-working space is likely to lead to social interactions, not just professional interactions, there is significant potential for knowledge and idea exchanges which may lead to further entrepreneurial activity, with the co-working space acting as a form of incubation hub (Bouncken and Reusch 2016).³⁴ Indeed Perree et al (2018) highlight that the main motivations for individuals to engage in a co-working space are sourcing a workplace that allows them to work in an inspiring work environment where the accommodation is affordable.³⁵

In the Irish context, DBEI has identified co-working spaces as offering a real alternative to traditional office space which does not require firms or entrepreneurs to enter into long term rental contracts. The National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship Mid-term Review clearly states that co-working spaces provide an “agile and responsive form of office space” and that their use “should continue to be encouraged and promoted” by DBEI.³⁶ Recently there has been a significant expansion in this sector within Ireland with approximately 12,000 desk spaces across 81 co-working locations in 2018. A further 156 Enterprise Centres are located across Ireland, with many providing facilities for hot-desking and co-working.

³⁰ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/South-West-Regional-Enterprise-Plan-to-2020.PDF>

³¹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09613218.2018.1463750>

³² <https://rsa.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21681376.2015.1072053#.XcPtNC2cZNO>

³³ Kwiatkowski, A. , & Buczynski, B. (2011). Coworking: How freelancers escape the coffee shop office. Fort Collins, Colorado, US: Cohere Coworking.

³⁴ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11846-016-0215-y>

³⁵ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09613218.2018.1463750>

³⁶ <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/National-Policy-Statement-on-Entrepreneurship-Mid-Term-Review.pdf>

Specifically related to the Southern Region, DBEI note that the prevalence of co-working locations is particularly strong in Dublin and the South-West. DBEI notes that both Dublin and the South West are particularly well served by co-working spaces with 32 and 16 respectively. However, other areas of the country are relatively under serviced. Within the context of the South-West co-working spaces offer not just the advantage of fostering knowledge transfer and facilitating innovation, but also changing both the urban and socio-economic fabric of cities and regions which can contribute to regional renewal (Durante and Turvani 2018).

Central to meeting these challenges will be the realisation of a regional network of co-working and digital innovation hubs to promote and facilitate remote working, hub-working, co-working and indigenous job creation through innovation and entrepreneurship.

In terms of adapting the best practices from project partners of particular relevance to this action plane is the “Coworking space and creative centre “Skola6”” initiative from the Cēsis city region of Latvia. The partners highlight that this bottom up development was driven by two factors (i) the availability of an empty premises in a former Vocational school, and (ii) a significant local demand for an additional and contemporary space for creative industry representatives. After an initial pilot test of two weeks it was decided to extend the project and use the location as a host for creative studios and freelancers and to also offer services for entrepreneurs. In order to stimulate interest a series of activities were organised and in addition support for the first-month rent was offered for studios. The success of the project is evidence by the fact that after two years 90% of studios were occupied and the space could sustain itself. The two central learning outcomes from this good practice were (i) the availability of empty spaces and the co-existence of people who are ready to convert this to a functioning co-working environment and (ii) the use of a cooperation model with the local government, which provided some needed financial support for the start-up entrepreneurs.

This provides opportunities for shared learning with ongoing initiatives in the Southern Region. The specific actions, stakeholders, timeframe, costs, and funding for achieving the aims of Action 3 are specified in the following table.

ACTION 3 – Co-working as a mechanism to support companies clustering and innovating via stronger connections with academia.

<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Map existing co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs present in the Southern Region. ii) Establish a network among the Southern Regions co-working and digital innovation hubs to facilitate knowledge transfer. iii) Formulate a short policy briefing to facilitate both B2B introductions and research connections between Tech and Enterprise Hub members and academia in order to promote collaboration and innovation through solid connections regionally, nationally and internationally. iv) Measure and raise awareness of public funding mechanism for the support and or development of co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs in the Southern Region.
<p>Stakeholders Involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) CIT work with the Southern Regional Assembly and the South East, Mid-West and South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 Programme Manager and Stakeholder Group to map the co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs present in the Southern Region. This work will also draw on methodology and existing survey results from the Atlantic Economic Corridor Hubs Strategy. ii) CIT will support the establishment of the network with the Programme Manager of the South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020. iii) CIT engaging with co-working and hub representatives, other Higher Education Institutes, South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 Programme Manager and other stakeholders. iv) CIT and Regional Enterprise Plan Programme Managers to measure and raise awareness of public funding mechanism for the support and or development of co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) By March 2020 ii) <u>By June 2020</u> iii) <u>By December 2020</u> iv) January 2018 to December 2021 - During phase 1 and 2 of the ecoRIS3 project, to measure and raise awareness of public funding mechanism for the support and or development of co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs in the Southern Region.

ACTION 3 – Co-working as a mechanism to support companies clustering and innovating via stronger connections with academia.

<p>Costs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) CIT to map existing co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs present in the Southern Region, Staff Costs = €2,000. ii) Funding required in the order of €3,000 for the development of the initial workshop in the form of staff costs, facilities rental, catering and travel. iii) CIT and the Programme Manager of South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 to put together a short policy briefing to facilitate both B2B introductions and research connections between Tech and Enterprise Hub members and academia in order to promote collaboration and innovation through solid connections regionally, nationally and internationally. Staff Costs = €20,000. iv) CIT to measure and raise awareness of public funding mechanism for the support and or development of co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs. Staff Costs €5,000.
<p>Funding Sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding and South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 staff funding to develop the mapping exercise. ii) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding plus South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 staff funding to develop the network for co-working and digital innovation hubs. iii) A combination of ecoRIS3 Interreg Europe staff funding, Core CIT staff funding and South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 staff funding to develop solid connections regionally, nationally and internationally. iv) National / Regional and Local funding for public funding mechanism for the support and or development of co-working spaces and digital innovation hubs e.g REDF and Economic Development Funding from regional councils.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE ACTION PLAN

The Cork Institute of Technology, Southern Regional Assembly and South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 hereby agree to support and promote the implementation (and where appropriate implement) the actions detailed above.

The undersigned confirm that they have the required authority of their organisations to do so and that the required authorisation process in each organisation has been duly carried out.

Name and Job Title: Mr David Kelly, Director, Southern Regional Assembly

Signature:



Date: 18/12/2019



Stamp of the Organisation:

Name and Job Title: Dr John Hobbs, Senior Lecturer, Cork Institute of Technology

Signature:



Date: 18/12/2019



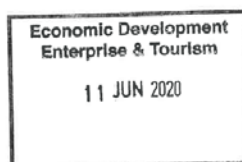
Stamp of the Organisation:

Name and Job Title: Mr Ross Church, Programme Manager, SWREP

Signature:



Date: 18/12/2019



Stamp of the Organisation:

ECORIS3 LOCAL STAKEHOLDER GROUP

The Local Stakeholder Group for the ecoRIS3 project was developed in Semester 1 2017 and includes participants from the following organisations:

- Cork City Council
- Cork BIC
- Cork County Council
- Cork Innovates
- COwoRK City
- Culture Co-Working
- Cyber Ireland
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
- Energy Cork
- Enterprise Ireland
- Halpin
- IDA Ireland
- InterTradeIreland
- IT Tralee
- IT@Cork
- Local Enterprise Office
- Republic of Work
- Rubicon Centre
- South West Regional Enterprise Plan
- Southern Regional Assembly
- Tyndall National Institute
- University College Cork

Members of Cork County Council, Cork City Council, Cyber Ireland, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, InterTradeIreland and University College Cork travelled with Cork Institute of Technology as Local Stakeholders for the various workshops, seminars and study visits in Phase 1 of the ecoRIS3 project.





ecoRIS3

Interreg Europe



ecoRIS3 researches and shares best practices in Regional Innovation Systems to promote sustainable enterprises contributing to regional economic growth and employment.

www.interregeurope.eu/ecoRIS3

Irish Partner

Project Partner: Cork Institute of Technology



Managing Authority

Southern Regional Assembly

