



# Ireland

## Area based and Community Partnerships

### Framework and setting

- Geographic scale** There are 38 Area-based Partnerships (in designated areas of disadvantage), 31 Community Partnerships (in other areas of disadvantage) and two Employment Pacts. Some of the Area-based Partnerships and the two Employment Pacts cover whole counties or municipalities. Other partnerships cover parts of counties or municipalities. The population covered by partnerships is approximately 2,900,000.
- Policy framework** The primary policy framework is the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP), which is part of the Local Development measure within the National Development Plan (NDP). The LDSIP forms part of both of the Regional Operational Programmes in Ireland.

### Partnerships at work

- Rationale** To respond to the multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion through a locally responsive, innovative, integrated approach, built on a partnership model, with local ownership.
- Objectives** The main objectives are to counter disadvantage and to promote equality and social and economic inclusion, through a partnership approach at local level. The Area-based Partnerships, Community Partnerships and Employment Pacts work in areas of greatest need in the country and target the most disadvantaged communities.
- Functions** The partnerships' multiple functions include:
- \_ developing and implementing programmes and projects;
  - \_ facilitating strategic planning and practical co-ordination at local level among the Social Partners, statutory bodies, and the community and voluntary sector; and
  - \_ leveraging additional funds from multiple sources.
- Policy areas** While actions under the LDSIP are integrated responses to the multi-dimensional nature of disadvantage, they are grouped into three measures, which are services for the unemployed (measure A), community development (measure B) and community-based youth initiatives (measure C).
- Policy tools/ Instruments** Representative actions include: (within measure A) employment guidance, advocacy with employers, tailored training programmes, support for new enterprises, and the Local Employment Service Network (which offers information, mediation and guidance services); (within measure B) development and pre-development work with target groups to build their capacity and organisational structures, and promotion of community participation in local development; and (within measure C) education access programmes, support for retention in school, study supports, capacity building for parents, developmental youth work.
- Timeframe** The first 12 Area-based Partnerships were set up in 1991 on a pilot basis. The current funding envelope by NDP covers all 71 Area-based Partnerships, Community Partnerships and Employment Pacts and runs from 2000 to 2006.
- Partners** The boards of all partnerships include representatives of local communities, Government bodies, the Social Partners and elected representatives.
- Contracts** All partnerships have contracts with Pobal (formerly Area Development Management Ltd), which manages the LDSIP on behalf of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Boards are required to be constituted on a partnership basis.
- Legal status** All partnerships are companies limited by guarantee, without share capital.

**Sources of Financing** The primary source is the LDSIP as part of the National Development Plan. Partnerships also leverage additional funds from a range of sources, such as e.g. National Government, EU, charitable foundations and businesses.

**Results** Between 2000 and 2005, the LDSIP supported 143,200 adults (54% female) under measure A, 5,600 community-based projects under B, and 303,000 young people (51% female) and adults (63% female) under measure C. Under measure A, 54% were supported into education and training, 20% into employment, and 12% into self-employment. Of those supported into education and training, 45% participated in certified education and training, of whom 51% achieved certification. Less easily quantifiable benefits include increased co-ordination at local level, mainstreaming of innovative actions, and strengthened community participation in local decision-making.

## Partnerships' highlight

**Programme/Project** Local Employment Service (LES)

**Timeframe** Piloted in the early 1990s, it was extended during the later 1990s to 24 Area-based Partnerships and two non-partnership areas.

**Objectives** Provision of a client-centred, one-to-one intensive adult guidance employment service for unemployed people and people who wish to return to work.

**Activities** On an outreach basis in disadvantaged areas, the LES provides one-to-one support that includes: provision of information on education, training and job opportunities; tailored advice and guidance; and links to other relevant State and community organisations. It is organised on a network partnership basis with local stakeholders in the local community, education, training and employment sectors.

In parts of the country that do not formally operate the LES, the local Partnership often offers a similar service under the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme.

**Results** After gradual expansion during the 1990s, the service was mainstreamed following a Government decision in 1999 to make the service one strand of the dual National Employment Service, alongside FÁS – Ireland's training and employment authority. While the LES is now operated under contract from FÁS and receives on-going funding from it, the service continues to be implemented by the 24 Partnerships and in is closely integrated with their other work under the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme.

## Contacts

### Partnership co-ordination at national / sub-regional level

Contact for Pobal, which manages the LDSIP on behalf of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs: Pobal, Lola Brogan, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2, Ireland, Tel.: +353 / 1 / 2400700, e-mail: lbrogan@pobal.ie

Contact for Planet, the network of Area-based Partnerships: Planet, Brian Carty, 68 Main Street, Gorey, Co. Wexford, Ireland, e-mail: bcarty@planet.ie

Contact for CPN, the network of Community Partnerships: Community Partnership Network, Midleton Community Enterprise centre, Owenacurra, Business Park, Knockgriffin, Midleton, East Cork, Ireland, e-mail: nationalcoordinator@cpn.ie

### Partnership co-ordinators at regional / local level

Contact details for all the local partnerships are available on the LDSIP pages of the Pobal website: [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)