

**EUROPEAN
EXPERT
NETWORK
ON CULTURE
(EENC)**

***Culture and the Structural Funds
in Ireland***

by Gráinne Millar

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This document has been prepared by Gráinne Millar on behalf of the European Expert Network on Culture (EENC).

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The EENC was set up in 2010 at the initiative of Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission (DG EAC), with the aim of contributing to the improvement of policy development in Europe. It provides advice and support to DG EAC in the analysis of cultural policies and their implications at national, regional and European levels. The EENC involves 17 independent experts and is coordinated by Interarts and Culture Action Europe.

About the author

Gráinne Millar joined Temple Bar Cultural Trust [TBCT, formerly Temple Bar Properties] in 1999 as Programming Manager with responsibility for developing an ambitious cultural programme for the public spaces in Temple Bar, with an emphasis on commissioning new work and introducing new family activities into the area. She was appointed Head of Cultural Development in 2003 to lead a new phase of growth and strengthen and build Temple Bar's identity as Dublin's Cultural Quarter - a role which she still holds. One of her key achievements has been the creation of Culture Night, introduced to Dublin in 2006. This was a development on hugely successful Open Day and Open Night events in Temple Bar and modelled on Culture Night in Copenhagen and the international White Nights initiatives.

Gráinne advised the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht on the National expansion of Culture Night in 2007. In 2011 she was appointed by the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht to the EU Expert Group on Culture and Creative Industries. In 2011, based on her success designing and implementing audience-centred culture programmes and cultural planning, Gráinne was invited to join the Public Engagement Programme Committee for Dublin's City of Science designation in 2012. She has also recently been involved with Fáilte Ireland in establishing the Merrion Square Innovation Network, aimed at strengthening the reputation of the Merrion Square area in Dublin as a cultural destination.

Prior to joining TBCT Gráinne worked at the internationally renowned artists' residency The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig and Interarts in Barcelona. Gráinne graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA in Pure English [1994] and subsequently gained a Diploma in Arts Administration from University College Dublin [1996]. She is currently undertaking a Masters in Business at the Irish Management Institute.

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1. Background and Methodology

1.1. Background

In June 2012, the Directorate General for Education and Culture of the European Commission (DG EAC) submitted a request for an expert contribution on behalf of the European Expert Network on Culture (EENC), involving the preparation of seven ad-hoc papers to analyse how the cultural and creative sectors could foster regional and local development in seven EU Member States. Following a similar initiative carried out previously for France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain, DG EAC asked for new analyses to focus on Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia.

The request arose in the framework of the design and negotiation of the EU's Cohesion Policy and the Operational Programmes for the funding period 2014-20. In this context, the Commission is preparing internal 'negotiation mandates' that will identify the type of investments that should be prioritised, based on an analysis of the national and regional economic outlook of past and current spending and the identification of potential for development and structural weaknesses to be addressed. The mandates will allow the Commission to discuss 'Partnership contracts' with Member States, which should ultimately set the strategy, priorities and arrangements for using the Common Strategic Framework (CSF) Funds in an effective and efficient way to achieve the EU 2020 objectives of 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth'.

Initial documents for the design of the CSF of the Structural Funds 2014-2020 have identified a number of areas in which culture can contribute to the achievement of EU objectives in this field, including the role of creative clusters and the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in 'Strengthening Research, Technological Development and Innovation'; the CCI and new forms of tourism in 'Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs'; cultural heritage and the rehabilitation of cultural infrastructures in 'Protecting the Environment and Promoting Resource Efficiency'; and the development of creative skills and creativity in 'Investing in Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning.' In any case, it can also be argued that the approach taken by preliminary documents regarding the place of culture in regional development may seem slightly narrow.

The main aim of this paper is thus to enable DG EAC to identify the potential for strengthening the role of culture in the Structural Funds' 'Partnership contract' with Ireland, by providing a critical analysis of how 'the unused potential of cultural and creative sectors' can foster regional and local development in this country. The main

focus of the research is on the Funds which have an impact at local, regional and national level (particularly the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund). Attention has also been paid to cross-border and interregional funding where this was deemed relevant for the purposes of territorial development, growth and jobs.

Context for Ireland

Ireland is adjusting to a severe recession complicated by banking and fiscal crises. The scale of this challenge is without domestic precedent, and has few international parallels. The economy contracted three consecutive years, leaving real GDP and GNP around 12% and 15% respectively below 2007 levels. For the year 2011 as a whole Irish real GDP recorded an increase of 0.7%. This represented the first year of growth in the Irish economy since 2007.

Due to this profound banking, fiscal and jobs crisis, Ireland was forced to seek external financial assistance provided by the IMF and the EU which provide a loan facility to Ireland. The big challenge for Ireland economically and socially is to develop a strategy that will allow job growth and sustainable enterprise. Government policy focusses on programmes and further education opportunities for the unemployed which is the fourth highest (14.7%) across the EU27 (Eurostat, July 2012) The number of unemployed in the U25 age group is 80,000 -a rate that is twice that of the general population.

Results of the 2011 census, undertaken just less than a year ago, show that Ireland's population has continued to grow strongly since 2006, increasing by 348,404 to 4,588,252, and that the total number of non-Irish nationals has increased by 124,624 persons or 29.7 per cent from 419,733 to 544,357. Ireland is unique in that it has the highest fertility rate across the EU as well as the fastest ageing population. The average number of children per woman in 2009 was 2.1, meaning the Irish have the highest fertility rate of the 27 EU member states.¹

Ireland's economic recovery must be export-led, thereby increasing exports and long-term development of new markets.² Economic policy is focussed on innovation and commercialisation policies, supporting the indigenous digital game industry and promoting Ireland as digital gaming hub; a leader in the emerging I.T. market of cloud computing. Supporting investment in technology research, development and commercialisation is also a priority. The importance of culture is linked to tourism, (genealogical tourism) touring, extended opening hours and increased access to the public.

¹ Central Statistics Office (2012).

² Programme for Government (2011)

The Irish Government is fully committed to the EU2020 strategy and its creation of employment and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Following this introduction and a short description of the methodology used, the paper presents an initial overview of how culture has been integrated in the implementation of the Structural Funds in 2007-2013 (Chapter 2). It then goes on to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the cultural and creative sectors in the light of local and regional development objectives (Chapter 3). Finally, the paper closes with a section that identifies potential priorities for the European Commission's negotiation mandate with Ireland with a view to the implementation of the Structural Funds in 2014-2020 (Chapter 4).

1.2. Methodology

Until now, there has been no comprehensive research conducted in Ireland focusing on the current state of culture in the framework of the Structural Funds during the support period 2007-2013.

Interviewees in the context of the undertaking of this paper confirmed that while the timeframe involved in compiling this research has been a constraint, it has allowed for the emergence of a number of high level themes in addition to a range of specific measures for consideration in designing the 2014-2020 programme. Most notably it has highlighted the fact that the role of arts, culture and the creative industries by EU Structural Funds in the period 2007-2013 is underdeveloped. It also confirmed however that the overall arts, culture and creative sector needs to be better integrated and aligned with National/EU strategic priorities around job creation and economic growth if it is to successfully participate in the EU Structural Programmes in the future. It is important to note however, that the findings in this paper cannot reflect the entire current practice in Ireland.

Methodology

The approach to this piece of research has involved a combination of desk work, face to face interviews and telephone interviews with policy makers, management agencies of the Operational Programmes and project managers involved in funded projects.

The methodology of the research is also based on:

- A review of documentation and relevant research in the field;

- An examination of the 2 regions in Ireland Border Midlands and Western Regional Assembly and the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly;
- Analyses of the cultural relevance in the objectives and thematic priorities in fundamental documents: National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) for Structural Funds in Ireland 2007-2013; Operational Programmes (OP) for ERDF and ESF of the regions mentioned above. The European Agricultural Fund for Regional Development (EAFRD) was not in the focus of the research;
- In-depth, semi-structured interviews, conducted by the author by face –face, telephone and e-mail exchange with representatives involved in culture and EU structural funding programs at national and regional level.³

2. Culture and the Structural Funds 2007-2013 in Ireland

2.1 General Framework

This **National Strategic Reference Framework** (NSRF 2007-2013) sets out the policy context within which the funding available to Ireland under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective over the 2007-2013 period through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) may be applied.

One of the key elements in the Irish achievement has been the ability to align domestic national and regional policy with the EU strategic dimension. This has allowed policy makers in Ireland to concentrate on a number of key clearly defined objectives aimed at increasing economic potential. The priorities identified have a strong focus on the Lisbon Agenda and demonstrate a clear European added value.

The Department of Finance had responsibility for co-ordinating the overall preparation of the NSRF. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment took the lead responsibility for preparation of material on the **European Social Fund**.

When the Irish Government was negotiating the regionalisation arrangements with the EU in 1999 in the context of the Agenda 2000 Agreement, the country was designated into two NUTS1 II regions for EU Cohesion Policy purposes. These new regions, which were established in 1992, are:

³ List on interviewees included in the annex.

- (a) the Border, Midland and Western (BMW) Region which qualified as a Phasing-in region under the transitional arrangements as a previous Structural Funds Objective 1 for the full period to 2006; and
- (b) the Southern and Eastern (S&E) Region which qualified for a six-year Phasing-out regime for Objective 1 status up to the end of 2005, and for part of the region to 2006. As of 2007-2013 the S&E is a Convergence Region.

The specific designation of the two Regions was part of the process of achieving more balanced regional development, in that it enabled a clear focus on the key issues facing each of the Regions and allowed for a differentiation and targeting of policies in a manner which recognises their key attributes and needs. In particular, it highlighted the differentiation in the level and rate of development between the more prosperous S&E Region and the BMW Region and has thus emphasised the priority which was afforded to the latter Region in terms of investment and development. A brief outline of the regions will be provided in the next section.

The priorities chosen for the **European Regional Development Fund** are around:

- supporting innovation, knowledge, and entrepreneurship in the regions;
- and strengthening the competitiveness, attractiveness and connectivity of the National Spatial Strategy Gateways and Hubs through improved access to quality infrastructure and promoting environmental and sustainable development.

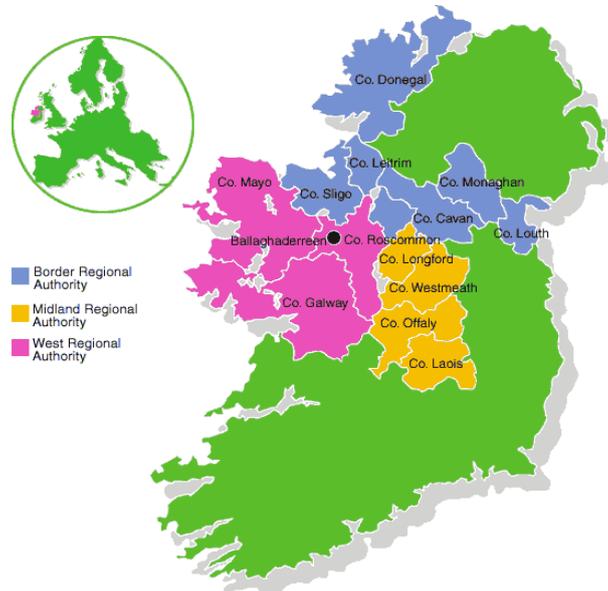
The priorities chosen for the **European Social Fund** are focused around

- up skilling the workforce and
- measures to increase participation and activation of the groups outside the workforce.

2.2 The Regions

- **Border, Midland and Western Region**

The eligible region as covered by this OP is called the Border Midland and Western (BMW) Region which is a NUTS II region. It covers a total of thirteen counties and encompasses the BMW Regional Authority areas. These are classified as NUTS III regions. The BMW Region accounts for 47% of the land area of Ireland, 26.5% of the population and 19% of GDP. The territory is presented in the map (below).



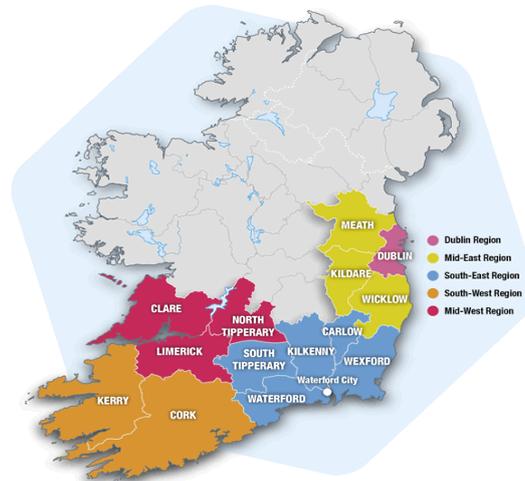
In 2006, its population was 1.132 million, representing 26.7% of the national population. Unemployment in the region is well above the EU average. Total unemployment in Ireland is 14.7 per cent with the EU average at 10.2%.⁴ The unemployment figure for the region is 16.4 % .The region accounted for 18.6% of national Gross Value Added in 2003. Of the total for the region, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing accounted for 5% with Manufacturing, Building and Construction and Services contributing 32% and 63% respectively. The corresponding figures for 1995 were 13%, 36% and 51% respectively, indicating that the BMW region is in a period of transition with a marked change from agriculture towards services .⁵

- **The Southern and Eastern Region**

The Southern and Eastern NUTS II Region comprises the following constituent five NUTS III Regional Authority areas and their respective Counties/Cities (see map below).

⁴ Central Statistics Office (2012).

⁵ Border, Midlands and Western Region, *Regional Operation Programme, Annual Implementation Report 2011*.



The region covers 53% of the land area of Ireland. In 2006, its population was 3.103 million, representing 73.3% of the national population. The Greater Dublin Area accounts for over half of the population of the region. It also has the highest unemployment rate in Ireland in the under 25 age group. The population is expected to expand by 21% between 2006 and 2021 with two-thirds of the increase concentrated in the Greater Dublin Area. This will put further pressure on an already overstretched economic infrastructure.

The region is the main driver of national economic growth. It accounts for four-fifths of national industrial output and 81.4% of total GVA. Its shares in services output and in agriculture are similar. It is heavily export-dependent with around 80% of its manufacturing production destined for export. This underlines the importance of competitiveness, in all its aspects, for the Region.

In 1999 the Southern and Eastern region was dominated by the Market and Non-Market Services sector and the Building, Construction and Manufacturing sector accounted for 81.4% of the national GVA. The Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries sector in 1999 accounted for 61.5% of the national distribution of GVA. By 2003 the change was only slight with the Building, Construction and Manufacturing sector being the lead sector with 84.2% of national GVA, followed closely by the Market and Non-Market service sector at 80.3% and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries at 63.1% of national GVA..⁶

⁶ Southern and Eastern Region, *Regional Operational Programme, Annual Implementation Report 2011*.

2.3 Structural Funds allocation to Ireland

Both of Ireland's regions are funded under the **Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective (RCE)** which is aimed at strengthening regions' competitiveness, attractiveness and employment, with the BMW region qualifying for additional Phasing-in support. There is also a third objective, **European Territorial Cooperation**, under which Ireland receives funding for, among other things, the PEACE III Programme.

The size and profile of the Funds over the period has an impact on the type of priorities that have been chosen for the NSRF. The allocation for Ireland is €901 million of which €750 million is assigned to the **Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective (RCEO)**. The funding is split between ESF and ERDF, with 52% towards ESF and 48% for ERDF which is quite unusual in that typically across the member states ERDF receives more funds than ESF. The preference for the Irish Government during the negotiation stages was a 50% / 50% split. Table 1 below provides general data on the Structural Funds 2007-2013 in Ireland are based on initial estimates that are likely to have changed over the lifetime of the programme.

Table 1: Structural Funds 2007-2013 in Ireland

General data, in EUR and %

	Million €	%
Total EU Structural Funds allocation	901	100.0
a. Convergence Objective	-	-
Cohesion Fund		
ERDF		
Convergence		
Phasing-out		
ESF		
Convergence		
Phasing-out		
b. Regional Competitiveness & Employment Objective	751	83.3
ERDF	375	
Regional Competitiveness & Employment	147	
Phasing-in	229	
ESF	375	
Regional Competitiveness & Employment		
Phasing-in		
c. European Territorial Cooperation Objective	151	16.7
<p>Source: European Commission, <i>Cohesion Policy 2007-13: National Strategic Reference Frameworks</i> (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007), ISBN 978-92-79-07465-3</p> <p>NB: Data presented in this table is based on the initial national and regional programmes and may have varied afterwards.</p>		

It is also important to note that the EU Regional Policy funding available to Ireland is smaller than in previous funding rounds. This reflects the increased concentration of Cohesion Funding on those Member States where GDP per capita is lower as well as the economic progress which Ireland has made in recent years. Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective funding, the subject of this NSRF, will average 0.05% of GDP. To put this in context, the Structural Funding available to Ireland peaked at 2% of GDP from 1994 to 1999 before falling to 0.5% of GDP in the 2000-2006 period. Structural Funding for the next round is therefore about one-tenth of its relative size during the last round and one-fortieth of that which was available from 1994 to 1999. This has implications for the approach to be adopted in relation to the setting of goals and for the monitoring of results and will have further implications for culture in an increasingly competitive environment.

2.4 The place of culture in the National Strategic Reference Framework Strategic Priorities 2007-2013

When the Irish Government was negotiating the Partnership Agreements with the EU a strong case was made for culture and sport projects; however, when the agreements were finalised with the EU, there was little or no scope for inclusion of these sectors. Interviews suggested that this decision was taken at EU level, which highlights the potential difficulties experienced by Member States in setting specific sectoral priorities.

As a consequence there are no specific measures for culture or creative industries under the BMW Regional OP 2007-13 or the SE Regional OP 2007-13. When this is viewed in a broader EU context, Ireland is the country with the second lowest percentage of funds categorised under culture (UK has 0.3%). Ireland is also the country with the lowest volume of funds in absolute terms at €3million and this “cultural allocation” is categorised under Heritage. Despite that, culture and creative industries have benefitted in different categories such as Innovation and the Knowledge Economy, Sustainable Urban Development, Environment and Accessibility as outlined in the examples below.

Table 2: Culture and the Structural Funds 2007-2013 in Ireland and the EU

General data at national level, in EUR and %

	Ireland		EU	
	Million €	%	Million €	%
SF amount (Convergence + RCE)	751	100.0	344,322	100.0
Amount dedicated to culture, of which:	3	0.4	5,966	1.7
Protection & preservation of heritage	3	(100.0)	2,934	(49.2)
Development of cultural infrastructure	-	-	2,233	(37.4)
Other assistance for cultural services	-	-	798	(13.4)

Source: European Commission, 'Cohesion Policy 2007-2013: Culture', May 2010.

NB: Figures presented on this table do not include funds allocated to the European Territorial Cooperation Objective.

The BMW OP had made provision for co-financing of the Arts Capital Programme in designated Gateways, but no exchequer funding was forthcoming and the measure was dropped. Notwithstanding this, the cultural and creative industries sector has benefited in many respects from support under the programme, as outlined in the next section.

2.5. Specific Examples by Region

As outlined above arts, culture and creative industries have benefitted in different categories such as Innovation and the Knowledge Economy, Sustainable Urban Development, Environment and Accessibility as outlined in the examples below.

Southern and Eastern Region

Priority: Innovation, ICT and the Knowledge Economy

Theme: Development of the Region's RTDI Capacity

Investment was made in building the research capacity and capability within Higher Education Institutes through the Research Equipment Renewal Grant. *The Arts & Humanities, Education, Creative Arts & Media* benefitted from this where equipment was purchased in the area of Digital Archives and Research Repositories for University College Dublin and MIC which both lacked major data repositories, for qualitative data, and a repository for research papers. There was also a lack of Postgraduate seminar rooms with AVC equipment. Various pieces of audio-visual and videoconferencing equipment were purchased in the areas of Teacher Education, Social & Educational

Research, and *Creative Arts & Media* (Dublin Institute of Technology, National College of Art and Design, MIC, and Trinity College Dublin).

The Enhancement Scheme (RFES) also funded a quality, fit-for-purpose research space for 3 University Designated Research Centres within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, thereby fostering innovative collaborative links. (€430,000).

Theme: Entrepreneurship in Micro Enterprise

The Micro-Enterprise Theme is delivered through the 22 County and City Enterprise Boards located in the S&E region to develop local indigenous enterprise in the micro-business sector. It supports 'Start-Your-Own-Business', provision of Business Information, Schools Enterprise Programmes, Awards schemes, thematic networks based on identified sectoral- and enterprise-requirements, to include addressing specific needs under networks such as 'Women-in-Business', 'New Enterprising Women', 'Plato'. Specific examples that impacted on the creative industries include in Dublin City the launch of **Designer Dublin**; the support of DLR Jewellery **Designers Network; Summer Fair** to support exhibitors in jewellery, print, glass, woodcarving, textiles, bags, slate, candles, designer knitwear, fashion accessories, gourmet foods, children's gifts, aromatherapy, photography, art and much more.

PRIORITY : Sustainable Urban Development

Cork Gateway: €2.80m: This covered the Christ Church project under which it is proposed to be converted into an Arts Centre in conjunction with the adjoining Triskel Arts Centre. (Grant amount €2.18m), plus the Phase I costs of the St Luke's project consisting of essential conservation works to be undertaken to ensure that the fabric and integrity of the building is protected. The church which dates from the 18th Century opened its doors as a state-of-the-art 250-seat concert, cinema and exhibition venue in April 2011. Christchurch, a historic building situated in the heart of Cork city, is transformed into one of the country's most exciting multi-purpose arts and cultural hubs.

Dublin Gateway: €2.4m: This grant is in respect of the Smithfield project and consists of the completion of the public realm improvements to the Square. The project will complete the Smithfield civic space; enhance facilities for Events and Markets; increase footfall to the area, making Smithfield easier to get to and to find; green the area; introduce play equipment and upgrade the public lighting.

Waterford City Council: The project was physically completed mid-way through 2010 and opened to the public in June 2010. The project is the cornerstone to the revitalising of Waterford City as a tourist destination and will be added to with the development of the overall Viking Triangle and investment in the city's heritage assets. Whilst only open for half of the year in 2010, the House of Waterford Crystal attracted in the region of 70,000 visitors and visitor figures increased to 170,000 during 2011. It is anticipated that visitor numbers will increase further during 2012.

PRIORITY: Environment & Accessibility

Theme: Information and Communication Technology Accessibility Broadband

The significant investment under the ERDF co-financed National Broadband Scheme has provided broadband to areas, particularly in the BMW Region, that were largely unserved up to now, enabling creative industries businesses to develop an on-line presence and operate more effectively. It also reduces the pressure to relocate to urban areas.

Broadband services under the National Broadband Scheme (NBS) are available to all businesses and residences in the designated NBS electoral divisions. As a consequence of investment by industry and Government over the last number of years, all parts of Ireland now have access to at least a basic broadband service.

Table 3: Culture in the ERDF Regional Operational Programmes

Figures per region and topic, in EUR and %

	Million €			% of total funds for the relevant region
	Protection & preservation of cultural heritage	Development of cultural infrastructure	Other assistance to improve cultural services	
Phasing-in regions				
Border, Midland & Western ROP	3	-	-	1.3%
Competitiveness regions				
Southern & Eastern ROP	-	-	-	0%

Source: information obtained from the individual Operational Programmes, accessible via <http://www.rim-europa.eu/>.

NB: Information above is based on the amounts allocated to categories of expenditure 58-60 in the common framework of the ERDF's Regional Operational Programmes 2007-2013, which refer to culture. Other expenditure for cultural activities, services and infrastructure may be included under other categories (e.g. tourism).

Figures given in this table are mostly taken from the initial framework planning in 2007 (updates have been used where available); changes may have been introduced thereafter.

Border, Midlands and Western Region

Priority: Innovation, ICT and the Knowledge Economy

At National University of Ireland (NUI) Galway Arts Humanities & Social Sciences Research Building (AHSSRB) – In the form of a PRTL (Programme for Research in Third-Level Institutions) Cycle 5 Capital award of €12,035,000 (as well as a recurrent element of €636,000, also under Cycle 5).

Theme: Postgraduate R&D Skills Programme

The Postgraduate R&D Skills Development Programme provides research and development training for graduates leading to the award of a Master's Degree. The programme includes education/training in advanced research techniques and the application of new technologies. Projects are based in the areas of Science/Technology or Business/Humanities. The main objective of the programme is to increase the supply of graduates with the necessary skills to provide the advice and technical support required by industry/business.

Theme: Entrepreneurship in Micro Enterprise

Under the ERDF micro-enterprise measure, each of the City and County Enterprise Boards (13 in the BMW region) selects enterprises for financial supports (direct grants and repayable aids) and for entrepreneurial capability supports (training, mentoring, and networking) in accordance with an agreed enterprise strategy for the city/county. These supports may be targeted at particular sectors, which may include creative industries (crafts, design, digital media, gameware, software, media) etc.

Priority 2: Environment and Risk Prevention

Theme: Built Heritage

In 2011, three properties in the counties of Donegal, Offaly and Roscommon benefited from funding, under the programme, to ensure that vital conservation works were carried out. Conservation works were carried out on Newmills Corn and Flax Mills (Donegal), Cadamstown Bridge (Offaly) and Boyle Abbey (Roscommon) thus ensuring that such historically important buildings are preserved for the enjoyment of locals and visitors alike.

Theme: Natural Heritage

This included the provision of two new National Park Visitor Centres (Ballycroy & Clara) and several heritage restoration works across the BMW region. In this way, the Operational Programme supports cultural tourism. At the end of 2011 the number of visitors to the two new National Park Visitor Centres was reported as 14,541.

Priority 3: Urban Development and Secondary Transport Networks

The BMW Regional Assembly announced the allocation of €17.15m under the scheme in October 2009, following a competitive call for proposals which was launched in July 2009.

The **Dundalk Gateway** was allocated €1.9m towards the redevelopment of Market Square in the centre of the town which will re-instate Market Square as a multi-functional civic and social focus of the gateway. These plans include provision for public performance space, street festivals, shows etc.

In the **Midlands**, €1.45m has been allocated towards the Athlone Art Gallery and €1.2m each to both the Mullingar Cycle Network and the Canal Corridor in Tullamore.

In **Sligo**, €2.4m has been allocated towards the redevelopment and refurbishment of the Model Arts and Niland Gallery and provision of outdoor performance spaces.

The **Mayo Hub** Towns of Castlebar and Ballina have each been awarded €1.4m. In Ballina, this will fund the refurbishment of Pearse Street along with the refurbishment of a former bank on Pearse Street to house the Jackie Clarke Library and Archives. In Castlebar, the funding will go towards town centre regeneration and streetscape refurbishment along with the development of the river walk as an amenity corridor.

Monaghan Town has been awarded €0.75m towards the enhancement and refurbishment of the Dublin Street area of the town and the provision of enhanced recreation and amenity facilities.

Priority 4: Environment & Accessibility

Theme: Information and Communication Technology Accessibility Broadband

In addition, the significant investment under the ERDF co-financed National Broadband Scheme has provided broadband to areas, particularly in the BMW Region, that were largely unserved up to now, enabling creative industries businesses to develop an on-line presence and operate more effectively.

EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL CO-OPERATION (ETCP)

The following suite of programmes is a part of the family of European Territorial Cooperation programmes (ETCP) formerly known as INTERREG.

Ireland/Wales Programme 2007-2013 (Interreg IVA)

The Ireland/Wales Programme 2007-2013 supports cross border projects. Its aim is to address issues relating to innovation, entrepreneurship, the knowledge economy, climate change, sustainable development and providing more and better jobs between the two EU neighbours.

Examples of projects as follows:

Project Name	Project Description	Partner
CIME	The overall aim of the CIME project is to analyse, develop and deliver innovative/creativity techniques, through dedicated programmes involving specialists, into the micro-enterprise and SME sectors in the Ireland-Wales INTERREG cross-border area.	South-East Regional Authority
HERCULES	The HERCULES project pilots an innovative education and community development approach to empower communities to develop sustainable cultural tourism products built on a 'Sense of Place' defined as embracing the distinctive sights, sounds and experiences rooted in a country, including the unique and memorable qualities that resonate with local people and visitors alike (Welsh Government).	Kilkenny County Enterprise Board

North West Europe (NWE) INTERREG IVB Programme

INTERREG IVB NWE funds projects that support transnational cooperation.

Examples of projects as follows:

Project Name	Project Description	Partners
<p>ECCE Innovation Developing economic clusters of cultural and creative enterprises in the innovation process</p>	<p>The aim of the Project is “to foster the innovation capacity of Creative Industries in order to access new markets”. Turning creative ideas into businesses is the key aim of the project.</p>	<p>Dublin City Council Sub-Partners: Dublin City Enterprise Board Digital Hub</p>
<p>COLLABOR8 Collaboration for identity-based economic development</p>	<p>To contribute to the economic prosperity, sustainability & cultural identity of NWE in increasingly competitive global markets. This will be done by forming & supporting new clusters in the Cultural, Creative, Countryside, Recreation, and Hospitality (CCCRH) sectors using uniqueness of place as a binding force & overcoming barriers to regional & transnational collaboration.</p>	<p>South Kerry Development Partnership (Lead partner)</p>

Atlantic Area Programme (INTERREG IVB)

The Atlantic Area Programme is a transnational cooperation programme in "European territorial cooperation", financed by the European Commission through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), with a total of €158 million. The Atlantic Area covers the entire territory of Ireland and the Atlantic regions of Spain, France, Portugal and United Kingdom. There was no evidence of cultural/creative industries projects supported here.

Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013

The Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013 aims to help peripheral and remote communities on the northern margins of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential. The success of the programme will be built on joint projects

creating innovative products and services for the benefit of the programme partner countries and Europe as a whole. The programme covers Ireland (Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Galway, Mayo, Clare, Limerick, Cork, Kerry) and parts of Finland, Sweden, UK; Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Norway.

Examples of Projects as follows:

Project Name	Project Description	Partners
Creative Edge	The main objective of the Creative Edge project is designed to be an increase in the active participation of local creative organisations and businesses in global markets and equally in their ability to attract and utilise local emerging creative talent in these markets.	Project leader: National University of Ireland, Galway; Partners: SEED; Western Development Commission
CI Craft International	The new heritage craft project will build on the success and on the experience gained from the current phase to create an innovative project using new media and the internet to sell artisan products closely linked to cultural heritage. The partners now know more about how to develop and convert and support artisan businesses and this knowledge will be applied in the new project to extend the partnership and to expand the network of artisans.	Teagasc (Agriculture and Food Development Authority)
ENE Economusées Northern Europe	ENE will combine culture, craft and tourism to create an economy platform for craft artisans practicing traditional techniques in order to help the crafts survive and create new jobs. The project, which focused on rural or remote communities, will assist with transformation of businesses to showcase their indigenous crafts and traditions as economusees, with business development, job creation and training of young people.	Edge of the Shore Ireland

INTERREG IVC Programme

The INTERREG IVC programme helps the regions of Europe share knowledge and transfer experience to improve regional policy. It aims, by means of interregional cooperation, to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies and contribute to economic modernisation and increased competitiveness of Europe.

Project Name	Project Description	S&E partners
INNOCRAFTS	The overall objective of the project is to promote entrepreneurship and business creation in the field of artistic and contemporary crafts by improving the effectiveness of regional and local development policies through sharing and exchanging experience and good practices.	Crafts Council of Ireland, Kilkenny

URBACT

Dublin City Council has also been involved in URBACT through OPEN Cities - a British Council project led by Belfast City Council in collaboration with a network of European cities. The partner cities include Bilbao, Cardiff, Dublin, Dusseldorf, Nitra, Poznan, Sofia and Vienna.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

The priorities chosen for the European Social Fund as outlined in the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme in Ireland are:

- To provide education, training and other supports necessary to up skill the workforce as a means of enabling it to respond to the challenges posed by international competition, to enhance worker productivity and to assist in meeting the evolving needs of industry and the economy.
- To provide for increased activation and participation with certain groups who can contribute to Ireland's workforce but who face barriers to employment, progression and participation.

The target groups are

- People with disabilities
- Lone parents
- Early school leavers
- Unemployed people
- Travellers
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless people

- Older people
- Persons from ethnic minority backgrounds

Priority 1 – Increasing Activation of the labour force

ESF investment under the Back to Employment Initiative will support individuals to obtain employment through improving their skills and to training programmes in the areas of information and communications technology, electronic technician, language skills, enterprise development, business, tourism, art and craft, child care, and a broad range of disciplines within the industry and services sector. It will also facilitate access to state examinations such as the Junior and Leaving Certificate. There was no clear evidence of specific training relevant to the cultural sector.

Priority 2 – Increasing participation and reducing inequality in the labour force

Youthreach seeks to provide unqualified school leavers with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to participate fully in society and progress to further education, training and employment. Senior Traveller Training seeks to provide an opportunity for members of the Traveller community and others to engage in a programme of learning that affirms their cultural identity, acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence to participate fully in society and progress to further education, training and employment. There was no clear evidence of specific training relevant to the cultural sector.

3. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Cultural and Creative Industries make a significant contribution to the Irish economy with existing estimates placing the total number employed at 60,855 in 2006 generating a total added value of nearly €5.5bn in 2006 - approx. 3% of total Irish employment and 3.5% of total Irish GVA.⁷
- Recent studies by DG Enterprise and Industry⁸ however show that Ireland has the lowest number of cultural and creative industries across European regions given the size of its population and suggest that there is room for development and growth.

⁷ Indecon Report (2011)

⁸ The EU Cluster Observatory (2011)

- There is also increasing public awareness among elected representatives of the importance of the arts thanks to the work of the National Campaign for the Arts and other high profile initiatives in Ireland such as Culture Night which attracts hundreds of thousands of people to cultural attractions, venues and spaces on one night of the year.
- There is also strong political representation of culture at many levels of Government. The President of Ireland is a poet and former Minister for Culture and there are a number of recently appointed Senators to Government who are strong advocates for the arts.
- Ireland has also successfully used Structural Funds in the past to invest in Cultural Infrastructure and the hugely successful Temple Bar is a working model of culture-led integrated area development. However this success is not so evident in the 2007-2013 Structural Funds programme.
- There is growing awareness of the creative industries and the importance of design as a result of Dublin's bid to become World Design Capital and being shortlisted to the last four Cities.

Weaknesses

- In general, it is likely that in 2014-2020 Ireland will have less funds because its GDP is increasing in spite of the fact that the country is in the middle of an economic crisis with some of the highest rates of unemployment in Europe. This means that it will be more of a challenge for Culture to be included in Partnership Negotiations, especially when it has not been a priority in recent years and more importantly if it is not specifically aligned to the National/EU strategic priorities for job creation and economic growth.
- The economic progress which Ireland has achieved in recent years means that the volume of EU Regional Policy funding available to Ireland is significantly less, both in absolute and in relative terms, than in the 2000-2006 round. EU budget transfers under the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective will total €750 million over the seven years. The implications of this for Culture mean that it needs to make a very strong case in terms of its important role in regional development and how it can contribute to job creation and economic growth, training and development. Overall the cultural sector is not as engaged as it could and should be in the opportunities available through the Structural Funds. This is matched by the low profile given to culture by the Regional Management Authorities in making its case for inclusion in Partnership Contracts. As there is a very competitive bidding process, the cultural sector needs to make a very strong case in the negotiations for 2014-2020 which have

already started. The plan in Ireland is to have the draft programme in place by 2013 with a view to being ready to start by 1 January 2014.

- It is also important to manage expectations around the amount of Structural Funds in Ireland. Over the 2007-2013 programme Ireland had a total allocation of €950m over 7 years.
- A lot of the impacts of budgetary spend on the Structural Programme are longer term and difficult to capture. This poses an additional challenge for the cultural sector which has its difficulties in making the case for investment.
- Overall there is a lack of evidence and raw data to define the value and contribution of the cultural and creative industries at local/regional level and very little understanding of the regions' strengths in terms of CCIs and their scope for entrepreneurship and stimulation of local economies. This is particularly of relevance in the context of Smart Specialisation Strategies which are not well understood in Ireland and where there is a view that Ireland is not in a position to respond to such strategic planning at local level.

Opportunities

- While the Government's Smart Economy framework plan (2008) implicitly recognizes the important role that the cultural and creative sectors will play, it could be argued that both sectors are still poorly understood and fragmented. There are multiple definitions and a lack of consistent treatment on what is classified as a creative activity. There is however other research from Forfas (the enterprise and economic development policy agent for the Government) who identified the cultural and creative industries as a sector with potential for growth⁹ and there is an opportunity to align this policy with EU Structural Funds.
- Equally, relating to ESF, the Future Skills Needs report identifies the importance of investing in creative skills to develop people in the Knowledge economy (Future Skills Needs, 2009).
- In relation to the draft Common Strategic Framework thematic objectives, there may be scope to support cultural and creative industries via the co-financed support schemes selected.
- The micro-enterprises selected for co-financed support may include cultural and creative industries and it is open to City and County Enterprise Boards individually to include this as one of their priority sectors. There is already evidence of this happening through the EU PLATO funded programme which supports designers, craftspeople and creative enterprises through business development and training skills. The opportunity exists to grow and develop this.

⁹ *Growing Small Business in Ireland* (2010).

- In relation to RTDI supports, these are largely awarded on the basis of competitive calls launched by the Higher Education Authority, Science Foundation Ireland or Enterprise Ireland or the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation but there is an opportunity for the arts and cultural sector to create research projects here that for example, would aim to study the societal benefits of the arts.
- The thematic objectives related to environment, social inclusion and education are unlikely to be priorities for ERDF support for the next programming period, although the latter will certainly feature for ESF supports, managed by the Department of Education and Skills. The opportunity exists here to make a case for the importance of culture in terms of developing the creative capacity and skills of the workforce to help adapt to the knowledge economy. A report conducted in Ireland in 2010 entitled Future Skills Needs highlighted the importance of creative skills and the potential to include culture as a way to achieve this through the Structural Funds is significant.
- An urban agenda is likely in the 2014-2020 programme now which suggest that 5% of EU Structural Funds of a country's allocation must be centred on integrated urban development. There is an opportunity to ensure that culture forms a key pillar of integrated urban development through an initiative such as creative industry/cultural cluster project. Interviews suggested that this would be largely determined by the quality of the proposal submitted. Recently, a €2m exchequer-funded clustering initiative was launched in Ireland by Enterprise Ireland and the EU cluster initiatives support this. However, lack of understanding again around the cultural and creative industries can contribute to poor take up on these opportunities.
- The new Partnership Contract between the European Commission and Ireland could potentially change the paradigm in which culture is understood in the context of integrated regional development; however, it requires political will and strong advocates and champions on the ground in Ireland as well as at EU level to make this happen.
- The fact that Ireland had one of the lowest allocations to Culture in the Structural Funds across the EU raises the opportunity to conduct a more formal analysis to get a broader understanding of why this is so and also to highlight how other EU countries have been so successful in culture-related projects.

Threats

- In the design of the Operational Programmes there is need for greater representation from the culture and creative industries. A high level committee was formed in Ireland to prepare the National Strategic Reference Framework and it is important for culture to be represented at the highest level possible. If this does not happen there is a strong possibility that the role of Culture in the Structural Funds will diminish further.
- As a result of the sustained economic crisis government funds for culture, as well as other services, continues to be cut and there is increased emphasis on the cultural sector to articulate its value and also to become more self-sustaining. If this does not happen, the future for the sector will be further damaged.
- There is however a strongly and widely held view by the main interest groups that culture is a right and deserves public funding and that the “commercial arts” are not as valued for their cultural quality. This presents huge difficulties for the successful integration of arts, culture, heritage into the Structural Funds if the sectors themselves do not see the opportunities to generate “spill-over” effects into the wider economy.
- Overall the cultural sector show very little engagement with EU funds of any description (e.g.: Ireland has the lowest participation rates in the EU Culture Programme) however the projects and organisations that do get involved are very successful. This is for a variety of reasons which have to do with the lack of information on the funding opportunities available to the culture sector; the perception that the process is overly bureaucratic and the perceived challenge in Ireland in being an “island” and disconnected from mainland Europe. These negative perceptions pose a challenge which must be overcome in order to incentivise greater participation. It has been overcome in the FP7 programme where Ireland is one of the top performers and a new approach to the Structural Funds for arts, culture, heritage is also possible.
- Overall there is little or no evidence of alignment between National Government Policy and EU policy on Culture and Creative Industries and this is a fundamental obstacle to unlocking the potential of the cultural sector through the Structural Funds. The other comments made about negotiating for culture in the Structural Funds is the importance of aligning arts, heritage, cultural initiatives with achieving targets for jobs and growth.

4. Priorities for Cultural Investment 2014-2020

4.1 General Recommendation

In Ireland, the understanding of culture is very traditional and is not in line with the wider EU policy agenda on culture and creative industries. This is in part, due to the way that the Government funds and understands culture. This is an obstacle when it comes to looking strategically at how the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries can contribute to economic growth, innovation and job creation in an EU context. This is exemplified in the kinds of cultural projects that have been funded during the 2007-2013 Structural Funds.

This view was confirmed during interviews and therefore there is potentially a role for the EU to play in assisting national and regional governments to fully appreciate and understand the social and economic impact of the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries in Ireland. The recently produced Policy Handbook from the OMC Group on the Culture and Creative Industries (May 2012),¹⁰ for example, is a welcome development in that regard and is a valuable tool for local and regional governments. However it is still at the discretion of the national/regional governments to decide on the value of investing in arts, culture, heritage and creative industries through the Structural Funds.

In 2010 in a response to the EU Green Paper *Unlocking the Potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries*, co-ordinated by Temple Bar Cultural Trust, a number of ways were identified in which the European Commission could help the Irish Government to recognise the importance of the sector. This could be achieved through:

- A. Supporting research to highlight the ways in which culture is a resource for creativity and innovation and given greater prominence in the broader policies on the knowledge economy, innovation and social cohesion.
- B. Recommending and providing a working definition on the CCIs for the Member States to consider and help to raise the profile of the CCI sector, particularly as a vehicle for integrated and sustainable area development through the Structural Funds.
- C. Taking a strong leadership and advocacy role for the CCIs and their role in the creative economy in partnership with Member States and local government in

¹⁰ *How to strategically use the EU support programmes, including Structural Funds, to foster the potential of culture for local, regional and national development and the spill-over effects on the wider economy?*, EU OMC Group on the Culture and Creative Industries, May 2012.

order to respond to the new economic, social and environmental challenges through the Structural Funds.

- D. Creating a new award under the European Enterprise Award, targeting cultural and creative industries to publicly celebrate their achievements and raise the profile of the European creative sector.
- E. Adopting a definition of innovation that specifically includes creativity and arts/culture based creativity as suggested by the KEA Report *Culture Based Creativity*. Policy documents, programmes and guidelines give overdue emphasis to technology. The insufficient reference to culture makes it more difficult for cultural projects or cultural and creative industries to benefit from instruments designed to foster innovation and support increased participation in the Structural Funds.
- F. Promoting arts education at primary and secondary level to support the creative competencies of individuals in a lifelong learning perspective through ESF.
- G. EU-wide Cultural and Creative Industries Ambassadors programme to raise awareness of the importance of creativity and innovation for personal, social and economic prosperity and wellbeing, to share examples of good practices and to stimulate education and research to support increased participation in Structural Funds.

4.2 Specific Recommendations Based on the 11 Thematic Objectives CSF 2103-2020

1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation	
Investment Priority (b)	Product and service development, demand stimulation, clusters, open innovation through Smart specialisation and social innovation
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	<p>2011 Programme for Government focuses on the application of technological innovation in established sectors of the economy including creative industries, high-value services and architecture. Opportunity for the Structural Funds to emphasise the link between innovation and culture and the development of “cultural clusters” to support tourism.</p> <p>The Government Clustering initiative launched in 2012 to support Gaming. Structural funds could provide greater awareness around the concept of “cultural” clusters [e.g. Temple Bar¹¹] to support Smart Specialisation strategies and regional development.</p> <p><i>Creative West</i> is an example of a project funded under the DG Enterprise and Innovation’s Creative Industries Alliance that brings together the arts, culture and creative businesses with traditional business sectors to solve problems and add value. The concept could be applied and designed in to Structural Funds.¹²</p>

¹¹ www.templebar.ie

¹² www.creativestatenorthwest.com

2. Improvement of access and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	
Investment Priority (b)	Developing ICT products and services
Programme relevance	ERDF and ESF
Main fields of action	<p>Programme for Government emphasizes the use of ICT in education in teaching and learning across the curriculum. Opportunities to integrate this into local areas using arts, culture and creative industries as a way to enhance creative learning</p> <p>Opportunities for ICT to be used as a vehicle to create new products such as <i>Open Window</i>. A web-based technology platform that integrates art into hospitals to assist patients recovering from bone-marrow transplants. The results show a 30% decrease in anxiety and depression. The technology is being expanded to nursing homes and hospitals in Ireland and overseas. This could be applied to support a regional context.</p> <p>Opportunity to support e-tourism at local/regional level. The <i>dublinculturetrail.ie</i> app or <i>culture night</i> app is an example of bringing cultural experience to life for tourists and visitors.</p> <p>The tourism authorities in Ireland – Fáilte Ireland – have also launched a scheme for Interpretation and Animation of culture and heritage sites with the scope to use technology to create immersive experiences.</p> <p>Also the <i>arts audiences.ie</i> project in Ireland is assessing the digital capacity of the arts and cultural sector. Opportunity to develop capacity in this regard particularly for local cultural and heritage organisations.</p>

3. Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs	
Investment Priority (a)	Promoting entrepreneurship
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	<p>Facilitate the creation of networks of like-minded organizations working in the CCI sector whose future growth can be accelerated through transnational co-operation.</p> <p>2011 Programme for Government emphasises the support to SMEs and introduction of a Single Business Tax for micro enterprises. Opportunity to emphasise the importance of the cultural and creative industries as a sector with potential to stimulate and grow local and regional economies through the Structural Funds.</p> <p>Create opportunities at regional level to make public procurement more accessible to innovative cultural and creative SMEs particularly for EU-funded projects</p> <p>.</p>

4. Supporting the shift towards the low-carbon economy in all sectors	
Investment Priority (c)	Supporting energy efficiency in public infrastructure
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	Programme for Government emphasises the importance of insulating all public buildings in the state.

5.Promoting climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management	
Investment Priority (b)	Promoting investment to address specific risks, energising disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	Build into Structural Funds a criteria for sustainable development models for cultural tourism and access to heritage sites such as UNESCO.

6. Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency	
Investment Priority (c)	Protecting, promoting and developing cultural heritage
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the e-capability of our tourism product will be a priority. • Develop niche tourism products and activity packages that are attractive to international visitors focusing on culture, ecotourism, activity breaks, recreation and festivals. • Support event tourism to bring major fairs and events to regions • Promote genealogical tourism • Work with local authority arts officers in developing cultural tourism opportunities.

8. Promoting employment and supporting labour mobility	
Investment Priority (a)	Development of business incubators and business creation
Programme relevance	ERDF
Main fields of action	<p>Support clustering of cultural and creative industries through designated hubs within regions to encourage the exchange of skills and expertise. An example in the digital sector is the Digital Hub in Dublin.</p> <p>Make provision for co-working spaces/hot desks in developing new infrastructure.</p> <p>Map the CCIs at local level through regional Enterprise Development Agencies and Local Authorities</p>

9. Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty	
Investment Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Investing in health and social infrastructure which contribute to national and regional local development b) Support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities c) Support for social enterprise
Programme relevance	ERDF and ESF
Main fields of action	<p>Programme for Government emphasises social innovation projects for young people through education, community and voluntary structures. There is an opportunity to support local arts and cultural projects that solve regional problems such as unemployment particularly in the U25s/ marginalised groups etc.</p> <p>Support of urban regeneration and opportunity for integration of culture like Temple Bar (www.templebar.ie)</p> <p>Identify buildings that have no commercial potential, and which might be suitable as local facility for art and culture projects and community groups.</p>

10. Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning	
Investment Priority (a)	Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure
Programme relevance	ERDF and ESF
Main fields of action	<p>Government's Expert Group on <i>Future Skills Needs</i> identified in its 2009 report the importance of Creativity, Design and Innovation Skills across a range of enterprises and occupations. In addition the Higher Education Authority Strategic Plan 2008-2010 emphasises creativity and innovation.</p> <p>Programme for Government recognizes the importance of Lifelong Learning, community education and vocational training for jobseekers will be a high priority. The cultural sector can contribute enormously to this.</p> <p>Up skilling of the labour force through skills development in cultural and creative industries. This is dependent on the cultural sector identifying the business development needs of the sector and where the gaps exist. Without this strategic development focus it is unlikely that the sector will benefit from ESF funds. For example the Meat sector designed an education programme that was tailor- made for the sector to fill a gap in skills.</p> <p>Problems of adult literacy through the integration of literacy in vocational training and through community education.</p>

11. Enhancing institutional capacity and ensuring an efficient public administration	
Investment Priority	Enhancing institutional capacity and ensuring an efficient public administration
Programme relevance	ERDF and ESF
Main fields of action	Developing business and professional development opportunities for managers in the cultural sector.

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