



Creative West

The Creative Sector
in the Western Region



Creative Industries, Innovation & the Smart Economy

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Creative Sector Definition

'Occupations and industries centred on creativity, for the production and distribution of original goods and services.'
(WDC, 2009)

- Creative Application
- Creative Expression
- Creative Technology

Background

- Research & policy on creative sector focused on urban areas – ‘Creative City’
- Potential for rural regions? Role in Smart Economy? Regional Policy?
- *Creative West: The Creative Sector in the Western Region* (www.wdc.ie)

Western Region

- 7 counties
- 68% of pop. in rural areas - few large centres
- Unemployment rate 10.8% (up from 5%)
- Rising education levels
- Potential growth areas: Green; Creative; Medical devices; ICT; Tourism; Marine; Elder care

Creative Sector & Rural Regions

- EU-27 – 24% of cultural emp in sparsely populated areas
- 50 fastest growing rural districts in Britain (5.5% creative emp) v 50 slowest growing (4.6% creative emp)

National Policy Context

- No national policy for Creative Sector
- Framework for Economic Renewal 2008-2014: *Building Ireland's Smart Economy* (2008)

'We need to pursue an integrated policy framework to maximise the return economically, culturally and socially from [the arts, culture and creative] sectors.'

Western Region's Creative Sector

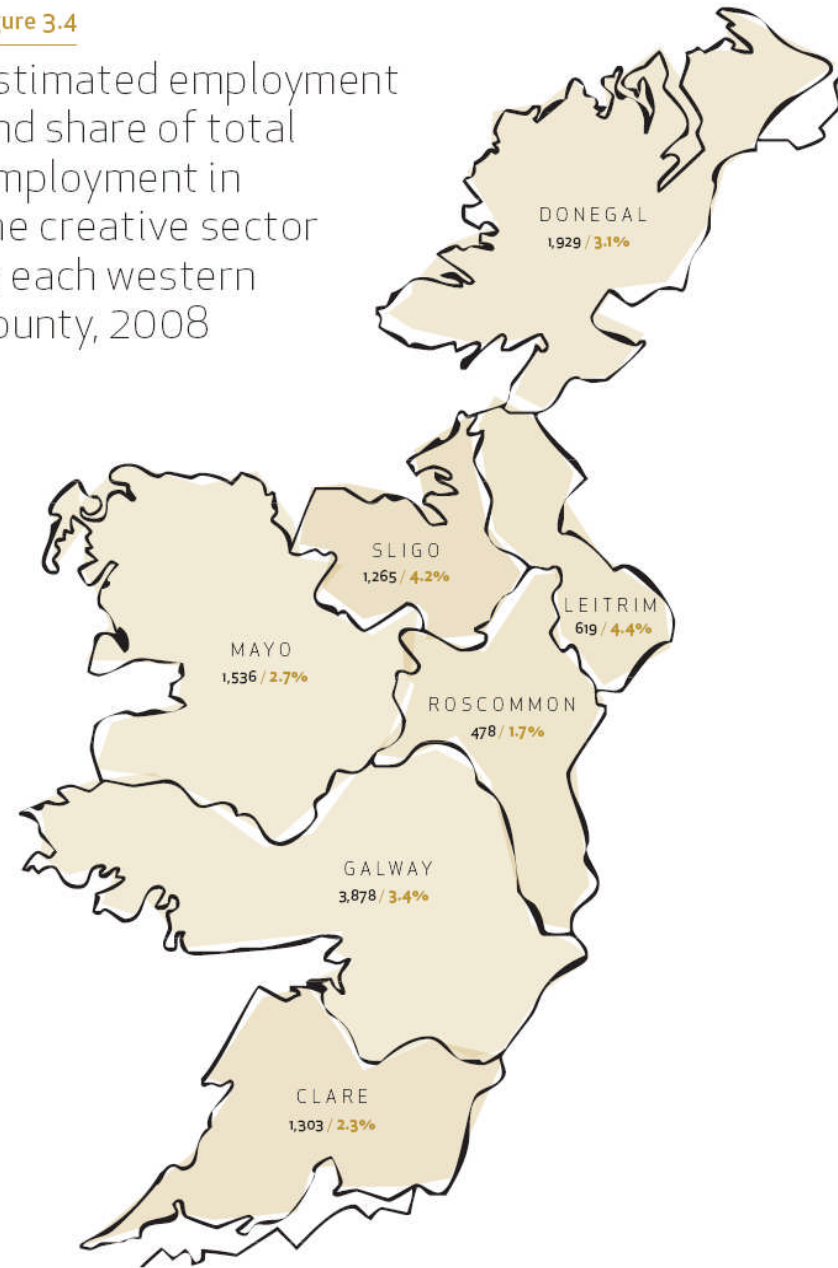
- 4,779 businesses
- €270m contribution to region's GVA = 1.7% of total
- Direct employment 11,000 = 3% of total
- Size of businesses: 39% self-employed; 12% >10 employees
- Low export activity - Total exports €72m

Creative Employment by County

County	Employment	Share of total employment
Donegal	1,929	3.1%
Sligo	1,265	4.2%
Galway	3,878	3.4%
Mayo	1,536	2.7%
Clare	1,303	2.3%
Roscommon	478	1.7%
Leitrim	619	4.4%
Western Region	11,000	3.0%

Figure 3.4

Estimated employment and share of total employment in the creative sector in each western county, 2008



Creative People: Issues & Recs.

- **Creative Talent:** Pool of creative talent, but difficult to access; Skills gaps in creative tech; Highly mobile
- **Education & Training:** Creativity not adequate in schools; Culture of creativity; Insufficient business-HE links (training, R&D); Lack of business skills
- Integrated national policy needed
- Mainstream creativity in curriculum
- Business training tailored for creative sector needs

Creative Place: Issues & Recs.

- **Quality of Life, Natural Environment & Creative Inspiration:** Important attractors; Quieter lifestyle; Landscape; Gaeltacht
- **Connectivity:** Lack of sufficient quality broadband in rural areas; Weaknesses in transport access
- Regional pilots for Next Generation Networks in rural areas to allow creative people operate where they want to live
- Improve transport access infrastructure & services

Creative Place: Issues & Recs.

- **Workspace & Infrastructure:** Lack of low cost workspace; Many built own
- **Planning & Development:** Impact of recent developments on sense of place; Attractiveness of built environment
- Provide high-spec facilities & meeting hubs
- Local design councils to advise LAs on urban design to improve built environment

Creative Support: Issues & Recs.

- **Networking & Alliances:** Low networking activity in sector & with wider economy
- **Marketing & Promotion:** Coherent marketing/branding seen as priority; Showcasing opportunities
- Networks of practice & transfer of creative capabilities to wider economy through events
- Creative website with database of operators, funding information, profiles etc.
- Promotion of a '*Creative West*' brand

Creative Support: Issues & Recs.

- **Access to Funding:**
Eligibility criteria for funding & public procurement;
Suitability for creative businesses; IP
- **R&D:** not sufficient R&D for creative sector; role of creative sector in innovation
- Review enterprise supports to assess suitability for creative sector
- Public procurement criteria, weighting for good design
- Examine research needs of CS;
Creativity in Science & Technology research

Creative Sector & Regional Policy

- ❑ Preserving QoL, landscape, heritage, built environment critical for rural regions
- ❑ Creative talent is an asset in a rural region – needs to be retained & attracted
- ❑ Infrastructure to access international markets (physically & virtually) to reduce peripherality
- ❑ Catalytic & spillover impacts on regional innovation may outweigh direct benefits
- ❑ Public sector resources & regional policy under pressure



Thank You



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