



Profile of Social Inclusion Target Groups in County Clare

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For Clare Local Development Company

JOE SAUNDERS
research & communications

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1 Introduction

This profile has been prepared to assist with the next Local Development Social Inclusion Plan for County Clare. The new LDSIP will differ in two significant ways from previous programmes – 1) it will be extended countywide from its existing three areas and 2) there will be a single delivery agent, the Clare Local Development Company, which will also deliver the LEADER programme.

The previous LDSIP ended in 2006. Since then, interim funding has been provided to the existing three LDSIP delivery agents to keep the programme going in the existing areas. There has also been some funding provided under the Cohesion Process and through LDSIP interim funding to facilitate limited actions in the programme's extended territory.

Budgets for the next LDSIP are as yet unknown but they will require actions and structures that are targeted and focussed on tackling social exclusion based on accurate assessments of where disadvantage and exclusion lies and which needs are not currently or potentially met by state or community providers.

The key objective of this profile is, therefore, to “establish a picture of unmet needs, opportunities and evidence for prioritizing of needs in relation to target groups”.¹ It will inform a wider consultation process and action planning for the programme when called for by Pobal during 2009. The information compiled includes socio—economic statistics and an outline of existing services in relation to the LDSIP's target groups - Disadvantaged women; Disadvantaged young people; Travellers; Older people; People with Disabilities; Homeless People; Ex-prisoners and ex-offenders ; Low-income Farm Households; Migrants, Asylum seekers and Refugees; Substance Misusers; Lone Parents; Young People at risk; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People. Analysis of the data and setting priorities remains a matter for the new company within programme guidelines and budgets yet to be laid down.

I am grateful to the agencies and voluntary groups that provided data for the Profile and to Gerry McDonagh and Marie Bonfield for chasing down information for various sections.

Joe Saunders

¹ *Pobal Guidelines June 2008*

2 Population

Key Statistics

The population of Clare is 110,950 (2006), an increase of 7673 or 7.4% since 2002 and 18% since 1996. The increase compares with a national increase of 8.2% and 16.9% in the same periods respectively. The figure of 110,950 is 2.61% of the state's population.

Components of Population Change 2002 – 2006

Of the increase of 7673 persons since 2002, 3504 (45.7%) is accounted for by natural increases (birth minus deaths) and 54.3% (4169) is caused by net migration.²

Table 1.1 Composition of Population Increase 2002 – 2006

	Clare	Ireland
Total Numerical Increase	7673	322,722
% Increase	7.4	8.2
Natural Increase	3504	131,314
Estimated Net Migration	4169	191,331
Estimated Net Migration Rate per 1,000 Population	9.7	11.7

Population Projections

To predict population change, the CSO³ uses six combinations of fertility and migration assumptions, weighted across 40 year trends and current patterns. The highest variant (M1F1 = Highest Fertility/Highest Migration) is 1.6% per annum and the lowest variant (M2F3 =) is about 1.2% per annum. Comprehensive CSO projections were published in December 2004 but their highest projection underestimated the state's population in the

² Please note that these figures supersede those given in Volume 4 of the Census published in July 2007 and later corrected in an Error Note published by the CSO.

³ CSO, *Population and Labour Force Projections 2006 – 2036, December 2004*

2006 Census by 66,000. Therefore, it revised its projects upwards after the Census to project a national population of 4.64 million in 2011 and 5.05 million in 2016.

The subsequent economic downturn will reduce the rate of migration below 2004 – 2006 levels but fertility rates nationally and locally remain high. The annual birth rate (number of births per 1,000 of population) was 16.3 nationally and 15.7 for Clare in 2007. There are over two births for every death in the county in recent years,

Table 1.2 Births and Deaths in Clare 2006 and 2007⁴

	Births	Deaths
2006	1741	813
2007	1782	768

Taking the factors that influence fertility and migration trends into account, the range of population change in the period of the next LDSIP, 2008 – 2013 can be estimated in the original range of 1.2% to 1.6% per annum. This would give the following projected population ranges -

	Projected growth of 1.2% per annum	Projected growth of 1.6% per annum
Census 2006	110950	110950
End of LDSIP 2013	120610	123987
End of NDP 2016	125003	130034

As two and a half years have elapsed since the Census took place, the new LDSIP begins with a population base already considerably altered since 2006.

⁴ CSO, *Statistical Yearbook of Ireland, 2007 and Vital Statistics, Fourth Quarter and Yearly Summary 2007*

3 Spatial Profile and Disadvantage

Population density in Clare is 32.3 persons per square kilometre, compared to a national average of 60.6, reflecting the rural profile of the county.

42,899 persons, 38.7% of the county's population, live in towns with a population over 1,000 persons. Larger settlements are heavily concentrated along and adjacent to the central eastern corridor from Killaloe to Limerick City to Ennis. 63,833 persons (57.5%) live in this area encompassing the Meelick and Ennis Rural Areas, parts of the Scarriff and Tulla Rural Areas and Ennis Town. This area is referred to as the 'dynamic core' by Neylon in his analysis of Census returns from 1991, 1996 and 2002.⁵

The principal unit of Census enumeration is the Electoral Division and the following table shows those EDs with the most significant deviation from the county's average population growth of 7.4% since 2002 and 18% since 1996.

Table 3.1 Population of EDs with Significant Change 2002 - 2006⁶

Electoral Division	2006	2002	% Change	Comment
Liscannor	282	352	-19.9	This is the largest fall in any rural ED over 100 persons and highlights the relative scope of decline in rural areas.
Ballysteen	277	330	-16.1	Adjoining Liscannor showing cluster effect
Ennis Urban No.1	1714	2017	-15	19.7% decrease since 1996 but wider town had large growth
Newmarket – on - Fergus	1795	2114	-15.1	Unlike Ennis, ED population fell whilst town grew.
Sixmilebridge	2034	1754	+16	33% increase since 1996

⁵ M. Neylon, 2007, for Clare County Development Board, *The People of Clare, 1991 - 2002*

⁶ Adapted from CSO, *Small Area Population Statistics (www.cso.ie), Census of Population, 2006 and Census of Population, 2002.*

Ennis Rural	16304	14023	+16.5	On the periphery of Ennis, this is exemplary of the growth that has occurred and amounts to 58.2% since 1996
Doora	1580	1343	17.6	Increase of 34.2% since 1996
Killaniv	726	584	+24.3	Increase of 43.2% since 1996 south of Kilnamona showing large growth close to Ennis
Ballyvaskin	364	275	+32.4	This is the largest rise in any rural ED over 100 persons outside the central eastern corridor ⁷ and highlights the scope of rises experienced in such areas
Spancilhill	795	545	+45.9	This highlights the largest growth on the periphery of Ennis and amounts to 64.9% since 1996
Cappavilla	674	372	+81	On the edge of Limerick City, this ED has grown 103% since 1996

Growth since 1996 has been most pronounced in the central eastern corridor described earlier whilst most EDs in west, north and mid-east Clare have experienced population change in the range – 10% to +15% in the period 1996 - 2006.

The area between Kildysert and Kilrush adjacent to the Shannon Estuary suffered a large decrease over a wide area with the four adjoining EDs of Killofin, Rinealon, Coolmeen and Knock losing -14.4%, -19.4%, -18.8% and -21.9% respectively in the decade.

Principal Towns

CSO enumerates towns with legally defined boundaries. In Clare, these are Ennis, Shannon, Kilkee and Kilrush. In addition, concentrated settlements outside towns with legally defined boundaries are known as ‘census towns’ whose boundaries are determined for Census purposes only by the CSO. These settlements are smaller than

⁷ Note that Carran ED increased by 40.2% but it had only 82 persons in 2002. Its growth followed a decline of 16.3% from 1996 to 2002

the electoral districts in which they are situated and are defined as clusters of 50 or more occupied dwellings. Population figures are, therefore, available for the following towns:

Table 3.2 Population of Towns in County Clare over 1000 Persons, 2006⁸

	2006	2002	% Change
Ennis Town and Environs ⁹	24253	22051	+10
Shannon Town and Environs	9222	8586	+6.9
Kilrush Town and Environs ¹⁰	2694		
Sixmilebridge	1659	1327	+25
Newmarket-on-Fergus	1542	1496	+3.1
Kilkee	1325	1260	+5.2
Ardnacrusha (Castlebank)	1169	926	+26.2
Killaloe	1035	1174	-11.8

Other Census Towns with over 100 persons include Ardskeagh (245), Ballycannan (651), Ballyvaughan (224) Clonlara (504), Corofin (485), Cratloe (643), Crusheen (377), Doonbeg (228), Ennistymon (813), Feakle (122), Inagh (170), Kildysert (311), Kilfenora (169), Kilkishen (443), Kilmurry (278), Lahinch (607), Lisdoonvarna (767), Miltown Malbay (570), Mountshannon (133), O'Brien'sbridge-Montpellier (378, partially in County Limerick), Quilty (194) Quin (565), Tulla (645) and Whitegate (218).

In the case of Ennis, like many Irish towns, there has been decline in the central urban area and large scale growth in the periphery and environs.

⁸ Table derived for CSO, Census of Population, 2006 Volume 1 Table 12

⁹ The biggest component of this growth has been in Ennis Environs (+27.6%) rather than Ennis Town (+7%)

¹⁰ Environs not classified in 2002 - town population fell by 42 persons or 1.6% between 2002 and 2006

Spatial Pattern of Deprivation/Affluence

The Deprivation Index devised by Haase and Pratschke is designed to provide a single measurement of the overall deprivation of areas in Ireland. Three dimensions of affluence and disadvantage, as recorded in Census data, are measured. These are

- Demographic Profile – this is mainly a measure of rural disadvantage
- Social Class Composition – of equal relevance to urban and rural areas
- Labour Market Situation – mainly an urban measure

Scores range from minus 50 to plus 50, from extreme deprivation to extreme affluence. The affluence/deprivation of each area is measured on a single fixed scale set at a mean of zero in 1991 and having a standard deviation of ten. As the economy has improved considerably since the 1991 Census, the Absolute Index Scores for most EDs have increased significantly. Therefore, if we wish to target resources towards disadvantaged areas, the relative position of each area at a specific point in time is of greater importance. This is represented by the Relative Index Score.¹¹

Clare is ranked the as the ninth most affluent county with a score of 4.2. This is a relative decline from 5.2 in 1991.

Within the county, the majority of Electoral Districts are ranked as either marginally below or marginally above the national average for relative affluence/deprivation. 11 are ranked as disadvantaged, 42 are ranked Marginally Below Average, 67 are ranked Marginally Above Average, 27 are ranked Affluent. No EDs are ranked as Very Disadvantaged, Extremely Disadvantaged, Very affluent or Extremely Affluent.

The Affluent EDs are concentrated in the areas from Ennis and its environs along a corridor to Limerick via Shannon; north of Killaloe around Ogonnelloe and in parts of north Clare. The EDs with the highest Relative Deprivation scores are Dereen (north of Fanore, -16.3). Killanena (-15.1) and Ennis No.2 Urban (-14.6).

¹¹ Note that this has been rescaled since the 2006 Census so as to have a mean of zero and standard deviation of ten at each census wave. Therefore, any future planning for social inclusion measures should use the 2006 Relative Index Score as the appropriate deprivation measure, as it shows the position of any given ED relative to all other EDs in 2006.

The other EDs classified as disadvantaged are Killballyowen (-10.1), Moveen (on the west coast south of Kilkee, -11.5), Mullagh (-12.7) and adjoining Knockaboley (-13.5), Killofin (the Labasheeda peninsula, -10.9), Kilmurry (south of Kilmihil, -11.8), Clooney (east of Ennistymon, -11.8) and Kilrush Urban (-11.2). Besides Ennis No.2 Urban and Killanena, all Disadvantaged EDs are in the west of the county.

Most of east Clare is classified as Marginally Above Average whilst most Marginally Below Average EDs are located in south and north west Clare.

Age Dependency

Age Dependency (the proportion of the population under 15 and over 64 years as a percentage of total population) has decreased significantly in Ireland from 38.1% in 1991 to 31.4% in 2006. There has been a similar decrease in Clare from 40% to 33.3% in the same period.

The lowest rates are in Ennis Rural and Urban Districts. Most rural EDs have rates between 35% and 40%. The highest rates are found in St. Martin's (49.1%) and Queerin (45.9%), adjoining EDs west of Kilrush; Ayle, west of Feakle (45%) and Cloonaha (44.4%), east of Miltown Malbay; Knocknagore (44.1%), north of Kilkee.

Local Authority Housing

The location of local authority and voluntary housing is relevant for those planning social inclusion actions and strategies. The total number of units of Local Authority Housing currently rented is 2094. A further 1110 units have been purchased by tenants in the Clare County Council area. Respond Housing Association rents 121 units.

Clare County Council provides housing units in the following locations:

Table 3.3 Local Authority Housing Units provided by Clare County Council¹²

Area	Rented	Private/ Purchase	Vacant
Lisdoonvarna/Doolin/Kilshanny/Ballyvaughan	43	46	0
Corofin/Crusheen/Ruan/Kilfenora/Ballinruan	68	29	7
Miltown Malbay/Kilmaley/Connolly/Inagh	69	50	4
Ennistymon/Lahinch/Liscannor	95	58	3
Kildysert/Labasheeda/Ballynacally/Kilmihil	75	14	5
Quilty/Mullagh/Doonbeg/Cree/Moyasta	49	66	1
Kilkee/Carrigaholt/Cluain na Mara	118	77	1
Newmarket-on- Fergus	60	103	1
Clarecastle	116	169	3
Shannon	251	107	38
Killaloe	44	43	2
O'Brien'sbridge/O'Callaghan's Mills/Broadford	21	9	2
Scarriff/Feakle/Flagmount/Bodyke/Whitegate	67	67	2
Sixmilebridge	73	107	5
Kilkishen	21	11	1
Quin/Tulla	29	25	1
Meelick/Parteen/Clonlara	54	129	3
Ennis	12	0	0
Total	1265	1110	79

¹² Source: Clare County Council statistics, 07/11/2008

Of Clare County Council's 1344 units (rented plus vacant), approximately 310 are in areas currently covered by LDSIP. Approximately 507 are in areas served by FRCs and CDPs.

Ennis Town Council has 568 houses rented, of which 400 are in the Ennis RAPID area which is also served By Ennis West Partners. 168 are outside this area and many of these are more recently built. Of the 168 outside the RAPID area, 55 are at Westbourne, 33 at the Watery Road and 58 in Roslevan.¹³

Kilrush Town Council is currently providing 182 housing units for rent.¹⁴ There is LDSIP and FRC coverage in Kilrush.

Respond Housing Association has 121 units rented in the County. These include:

- Ennis: estates at Stone Court, Drumbiggle, Ennis (26 units and a Community Building with childcare, after schools, youth and community activity), Orchard Grove, Gort Road, Ennis (8 units) and Bridge View, Roslevan, Ennis (20 units). Cooper's Place, Drumbiggle Road is a development of 14 apartments for Older Persons and a small Community Facility. The Stone Court Estate is located in the RAPID and Ennis West Partners operational area.
- Beech Grove, Newmarket-on-Fergus (10 units), close to Obair's Family Centre.
- Shannon: Rineanna View (33 units with an unoccupied group home and a large Community Building that accommodates Shannon FRC, Clare Youth Service and the Brothers of Charity) and Fána Gheal (10 units, mainly occupied by Older Persons).

Most of the Respond estates are closely linked to social inclusion programmes e.g. LDSIP, FRC, RAPID or Respond's own community development programmes.

¹³ Source: Ennis Town Council statistics, 07/11/08

¹⁴ Source: Kilrush Town Council statistics 10/11/08

4 Economic/Employment Base

The 2006 Census recorded over 50,000 Clare residents as being at work in the county. Of these 7364 are involved in industrial manufacturing, 6071 in construction, 5636 in retail, 3408 in transport, storage and communications and 3213 in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Over 7,000 persons are engaged in public services including education and health.

There is a considerable concentration of employment at the three centres of Ennis, Shannon and Limerick City – the main centres along the central eastern corridor or the ‘dynamic core’ as described by Neylon.

Approximately 13,000 persons, work in Shannon at the Free Zone, Smithstown, airport or Town Centre. It should be noted that almost 5,000 of these reside outside the county, mainly in Limerick, North Tipperary, Galway and Cork. The principal industries are international services, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, light engineering, transport/logistics and aviation related goods and services. In the Ennis area, there is significant employment in public services, retail and hospitality. Large internationally-traded manufacturing and service employers include Essilor (healthcare), Roche (pharmaceuticals), Vitalograph (healthcare), Microsemi (Electronics), Olympic Diagnostica (healthcare), Panalok (manufacturing), Monster Cable (customer services, acoustics industry), LoyaltyBuild (customer services) and Bijur (engineering).

5688 persons commute out of the county into Limerick City whilst 4155 commute from Limerick into Clare, mainly to Shannon.¹⁵

The employment profile of West Clare features high numbers of small scale tourism operations and farms. There is one large tourism employer (Doonbeg Golf Club) and significant services employers at ESB Moneypoint, Billpay and Revenue Commissioners at Kilrush. Other large employers include St. Gobain and Shannonside Timber Products.

The main employment in North Clare is agriculture, small scale services, retail, construction and hospitality/tourism. Data Display (Ennistymon) and the White Hotel Group are amongst the largest employers.

¹⁵ CSO, *Census of Population 2006, SAPS*

East Clare employment is largely focussed on Limerick City and Shannon. Local employment is dominated by services and retail. Larger employers include Finsa Forest Products and AJ Precision (moulding engineering) at Scarriff.

The following table shows the 2006 sectoral breakdown of those at work in the county and selected towns.

Table 4.1 Persons aged 15 and over at work, classified by sector¹⁶

Industry	Clare	Ennis	Shannon	Kilrush	SMB	N-O-F
Total	50607	11497	4592	999	828	740
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	3213	94	31	13	11	10
Mining, quarrying & turf production	261	60	7	1	2	4
Manufacturing industrial	7364	1657	1330	85	178	139
Electricity, gas, water	636	102	8	83	3	1
Construction	6071	1355	267	147	88	71
Wholesale & retail trade	5636	1492	419	170	90	62
Hotels & restaurants	3102	869	300	63	59	90
Transport, storage, communications	3408	712	585	33	98	94
Banking and financial services	1406	386	197	18	28	19
Real estate, renting & business	3747	963	542	54	85	50
Public admin & defence	2539	746	115	29	30	23
Education	3465	811	158	72	33	36
Health & social work	4128	1019	133	104	42	49
Other comm., social & personal service activities	1877	482	127	31	21	31
Not stated	3754	749	373	96	60	61

¹⁶ CSO, *Census of Population, 2006*, adapted from 'Collaborating to Compete, County Clare Enterprise Strategy', 2008. Note that Shannon figure is for the legally defined town area and does not include most of industrial area.

At Electoral Area level (not towns), the 2006 Census recorded the following levels of employment:

Table 4.2 Numbers at work and Unemployed by Electoral Area 2006¹⁷

	At work	Unemployed	Total
Clare	50607	3470	54077
Ennis	14510	1172	15682
Ennistymon	8184	506	8690
Killaloe	6809	360	7169
Kilrush	8091	612	8703
Scarriff	4319	254	4573
Shannon	8694 ¹⁸	566	9260

¹⁷ CSO, *Census of Population, 2006*

¹⁸ Note that this figure includes Clare residents only and not the total number

5 Unemployment

Live Register

There were 6944 persons on the Live Register in Clare in November 2008. This is an increase of 2538 (58%) since November 2007 and 516 (8%) since October 2008. 1392 (20%) of those currently signing are under 25 years of age. Family Income Supplement is paid to 849 recipients.

Table 5.1 Live Register by Local Office, November 2008¹⁹

Ennis	3968
Ennistymon	1135
Kilrush	935
Tulla	906
Clare Total	6944

(Note that the Live Register includes part-time, seasonal and casual workers entitled to Jobseekers Assistance or Benefit.²⁰)

These figures do not include those living in Clare who make their claim for Jobseekers Assistance, Benefit or Credits in Gort or Limerick. The total number of Clare *residents* making claims in December 2008 was 8230 (Jobseekers Assistance 3814, Jobseekers Benefit 3850, Jobseekers Benefits Credits 566).

Parts of Ennis continued to experience significant unemployment during the recent era of high employment growth. The Principal Socio-Economic Results of the 2006 Census (June 2007) identified this as one of 62 unemployment blackspots nationally. The electoral division Ennis No.2 Urban has an unemployment rate of 21.2%. In other words, the principal economic status of 21.2% of the area's labour force at that date was 'unemployed'.²¹

¹⁹ Source: CSO, *Live Register, November 2008*

²⁰ For information on eligibility and rates of payment, see Appendix

²¹ CSO special request

Location of Claimants²²

Limerick Local Office

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	45	127	32	35	239
Jobseekers Benefit	34	175	11	137	357
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	14	0	32	46

The addresses in County Clare which are covered by Limerick Local Office include Meelick, Parteen, Ardnacrusha, Clonlara, O'Briensbridge, Killaloe, Sixmilebridge, Cratloe, Kilbane and Corbally.

Ennis Local Office with an address of Ennis entered on claim details.

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	216	660	114	265	1255
Jobseekers Benefit	111	565	52	390	1118
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	55	1	116	172

Ennis Local Office with an address of Shannon entered on claim details.

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	51	142	34	40	267
Jobseekers Benefit	44	183	21	139	387
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	19	0	30	49

Ennis Local Office with an address other than Ennis or Shannon on claim details

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	90	216	36	68	410
Jobseekers Benefit	50	274	21	187	532
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	1	30	0	63	94

Addresses include Clarecastle, Crusheen, Newmarket on Fergus, Quin, Corofin, Ruan, Bunratty, Kildysert, Kilmaley, Kilnamona.

Ennistymon Local Office

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	85	323	51	122	581
Jobseekers Benefit	39	263	17	226	545
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	16	0	52	68

²² Special request sourced from Department of Social & Family Affairs, December 13th 2008

Kilrush Local Office

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	113	327	66	97	603
Jobseekers Benefit	45	194	17	116	372
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	12	1	31	44

Tulla Local Office

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	91	225	30	62	408
Jobseekers Benefit	47	21	244	176	488
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	24	2	57	83

Gort Local Office

Scheme	Male<25	Male>25	Female<25	Female>25	Total
Jobseekers Allowance	8	29	4	10	51
Jobseekers Benefit	2	24	4	21	51
Jobseekers Benefit Credits Only	0	2	0	8	10

The addresses in Co Clare covered by Gort Local Office include Tubber, Flagmount, Caher, Bellharbour and Crusheen.

Current Users of DSFA Employment Supports Service

In the 12 months to the end of November 2008, approximately 1200 clients have availed of the Department of Social & Family Affairs' employment supports service.

The number receiving Technical and Assistance Grants in that period was approximately 400 (Ennis 240, North Clare 60, East Clare 60 and West Clare 60)

The number granted the Back to Work Enterprise Allowance was approximately 30 (Ennis 18, North Clare 6, East Clare 3 and West Clare 3). Numbers for the Back to Work Allowance are not available.

In general, the caseload is up over 100% in the course of the year.

6 Education

At national level, there has been a continuous improvement in the level of education amongst adults in recent decades. In 1991, 36.7% of the adult population had primary education only. This halved (18.9%) in 2006 and the rate for County Clare fell from 34.8% in 1991 to 17.6% in same period.

Participation rates in third level education have more than doubled in the same period – just 13% of the adult population had completed third level education in 1991 and this rose to 30.5% in 2006. The rise in Clare was from 12.7% to 29.2%.

Table 6.1 % of Population aged over 15 years who have completed education²³

Education Level	Clare	Ireland
Primary or no formal	17.6	18.9
Upper second level	22.6	20.6
Third level	29.2	30.5
Education ceased before age 15	9.8	11.9
Education ceased after age 20	24.8	25.6

Retention and achievement rates are higher for females. For example, 12.8% of male adults left school before the age of 15, compared to 10.9% for females and 24.8% of males continued in education beyond the age of 20 compared to 26.4% of females.

During the economic buoyancy of recent years, unemployment continues to adversely affect young people of low educational attainment. In 2004, 46% of young people without qualifications nationally were unemployed, according to the ESRI Annual School Leavers Report of that year. There is, therefore, a considerable challenge to meet the needs of those who are leaving the formal education system without certified qualifications.

²³ Sources: CSO, Census 2006, SAPS and GAMMA, 2008, Analysis for Clare

Spatial Spread of Educational Achievement

Primary Only

The EDs with the highest rates of primary only education amongst adults include Moveen (south of Kilkee, 44.3%), Dereen (Fanore, 40.2%), Killanena (39.8%), Tullig (south of Moveen, 38.9%) and Knocnakboley (east of Mullagh, 30.4%).

Two relatively large clusters of EDs have rates over 30% -

- 1) In the area between Kilrush and Kildysert, along the Shannon Estuary, there are six adjoining EDS (Killofin, Coolmeen, Rinealon, Kilfiddane, Knock and Kilmurry) where the number of adults with primary only education ranges from 31.8% to 36.2%.
- 2) Four EDs on the Loop Head peninsula (Killballyowen, Tullig, Moveen and Kilfearagh) have rates from 30.5% to 44.3%.

Other EDs with significantly high proportions are Carran (39%), Dereen (40.2%), Killanena (39.8%), Knocknaboley (38.4%), Mullagh (35.5%) and Clooney (east of Ennistymon, 34.9%).

Most of the remainder of West Clare and North Clare have rates of 20 – 30% whilst the majority of East Clare EDs are in the 15 -25% range. The central eastern corridor EDS have rates less than 15%.

Third Level

The situation for third level mirrors the 'primary only' situation. Most of the central eastern corridor has rates over 35% of all adults whose education has ceased having third level education. The highest rates are in Ogonnelloe (49.5%) and Caherbaun (48.3%) in East Clare, 46.1% in Ballyblood, near Quin and 43.1% in Quin.

In the EDs close to Loop Head and between Kilrush and Kildysert, along the estuary, rates vary between 10 - 20%. Most of the remainder of West Clare has rates between 20 - 30%. Much of North Clare has rates in excess of 25% except for Ballysteen (10.8%),

Particularly low rates are found in Ennis Urban No. 1 (21.9%) and No.2 (17.9%). The rate for Clenagh (Shannon) also lies significantly below the national average at 24.9%.

Early School Leaving

There are up to 350 students in Ennis schools with a variety of educational difficulties and/or from groups with indicators of educational disadvantage e.g. availing of the Book Grant scheme, Travellers, non-nationals, those without sufficient English to achieve fully at school etc.²⁴ Figures are not available for the rest of the county.

39 young people from Ennis schools alone left early in the academic year 2005 – 2006. The figure for county is not available but local information suggests that it is close to 80. Of the 39 in Ennis, 13 were Travellers and 12 were Roma. The majority (23) did not complete Junior Certificate. Their destinations were as follows:

Table 6.2 Destinations of Early School Leavers in Ennis 2005 - 2006²⁵

	Male	Female	Total
Full-time Job	6	0	6
Apprenticeship	1	0	1
Training Course e.g. FÁS, Clare Youth Service Community Training Centre, Youthreach etc.	10	0	10
Residential care	2	0	2
Doing nothing in particular	5	1	6
Don't Know (all Roma)	4	8	12
Emigrated (but school unknown)	0	2	2
Total	28	11	39

²⁴ Source: Ennis West Partners, Educational Supports Research, 2007, p.15

²⁵ Source: School Completion Programme, Annual Report, 2006

DEIS - Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools

As part of the National Childcare Strategy, the Department of Education and Science works with the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in tackling educational disadvantage by providing the Social Inclusion Programme, Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS). DEIS aims to complement and add value to existing childcare programmes in disadvantaged communities, with a view to ensuring that the care and education of children are delivered in an integrated manner. The key objective of DEIS is to meet the educational needs of children and young people in disadvantaged communities, from pre-school (including Early Start) to second-level education (13-18 years). It also includes second-chance education, training and access measures for adults and provision for students with special needs.

The DEIS Programme provides a standardised system for identifying and regularly reviewing levels of disadvantage, and a new integrated School Support Programme (SSP) which will bring together and build on the following existing schemes and programmes including:

- Home School Community Liaison Scheme;
- School Completion Programme;
- Giving Children an Even Break
- Breaking the Cycle
- Disadvantaged Area Scheme

School Completion Project

The School Completion Programme (SCP) in Clare supports local strategies to ensure maximum participation levels in education. Recognising that schools cannot be expected to deal with early school leaving either individually or in isolation from the wider context, the programme provides whole school support and direct targeting of young people at risk, both in and out of school, based on an integrated approach involving the schools, parents, relevant statutory, voluntary and community agencies.

List of primary schools in the School Support Programme (SSP) under the DEIS action plan for educational inclusion²⁶

Primary - Urban Band 1: Chríost Rí, Cloughleigh, Ennis

Primary - Urban Band 2: Holy Family Senior Ennis, Ennis Convent Infants NS Ennis, Ennis Educate Together NS Gort Road Ennis, Convent of Mercy National School Kilrush

Primary – Rural: Mullagh NS, Scropul NS Mullagh, Scoil Na Coradh Mullach, Doonaha NS Kilkee, Annagh NS Miltown Malbay, Baltard NS, Doonbeg, Quilty NS, SN Realt Na Mara, Kilkee, Ennistymon NS.

Post Primary: Ennis Community College, Kilrush Community School

Home School Community Liaison Scheme

The scheme was established in 1990 to increase the link between home and school by encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's education, organise locally based activities aimed at encouraging greater contact between parents, teachers and with local voluntary and statutory groups.

Participating Primary Schools: Holy Family Senior, Ennis, Holy Family Junior School, Ennis, Chríost Rí, Cloughleigh, Ennis, Convent of Mercy National School Kilrush, Ennis Educate Together.

Participating Post-Primary Schools: Coláiste Mhuire, Harmony Row, Ennis, Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Ennis Community College, Kilrush Community School, Kilrush

Giving Children an Even Break

Giving Children an Even Break provides additional teaching and/or financial resources to schools with large numbers of disadvantaged pupils. The project co-ordinator covers 5 primary schools in the North Clare area and acts as a Home-School link person. The role is to support parents so that they are better able to support their children's education. The brief also includes a community aspect to identify gaps and to assist in the better co-ordination of services in the community for at-risk children.

²⁶ http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobServlet/deis_school_list.htm

Current Third Level Participation

3982 students from Clare attended full-time courses third level institutions in Ireland in 2006/2007: 1258 (31.6%) Institutes of Technology; 2562 (64.4%) HEA institutions (universities); 19 (0.5%) Teacher Training Colleges; 145 (3.6%) private colleges.

Approximately 51% of these attend institutions in Limerick. 24% go to Galway, followed by Dublin and Cork at 9% each.

The Millennium Fund (Access to Third Level Education) is administered by Pobal and has been available thus far to students in the Eirí Corca Baiscinn and Ennis West Partner's areas of operation. Typically, the Fund grants qualifying students amounts in the €500 - €1000 range per year. Funding has usually been available for 20-30 students annually.

Adult Education and Training Services

The previous figures for current third level participation refer to full-time course only. Lifelong learning has, in recent years, become more central to the goals of personal achievement and social inclusion as well as the economy's need for upskilling. Further education usually takes place on modular, part-time and flexible bases.

With 80% of the 2015 workforce already in the workforce²⁷ and an economic downturn reducing opportunities for young workers without qualifications, the provision of flexible, affordable adult and continuing education is central to tackling social inclusion.

The following is a summary of current raining provision in the county.

County Clare VEC

- Community Education – this is described in the 2000 White Paper as ‘a process of communal education towards empowerment, both at an individual and a collective level. Such an approach to community education sees it as an interactive challenging process, not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its methodologies and decision making processes.’ Community Education course do not have certification. They are available at various centres throughout the county.

²⁷ National Centre for Partnership and Performance presentation on *The Learning Workforce*

- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) - The BTEI provides part-time Further Education programmes for young people and adults. The aim is to give people an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities. BTEI offers FETAC Levels 3- 5 qualifications. In 2007, 952 students participated on BTEI programmes in over 20 centres.
- Clare Adult Basic Education Service; CABES operated the Clare Reading & Writing Scheme, Clare Family Learning Project, English language programmes and Workplace Basic Education Programme. Its centres of operation are Ennis, Kilrush/Kilkee, Shannon, Ennistymon and Scariff/Killaloe.
- The Clare Family Learning Project aims to provide an integrated family learning service to support the educational needs of families who are marginalised from the education and employment sectors by the double disadvantages of low income and low educational achievement.
- Vocational Training Opportunities Schemes (VTOS) – offered at Ennis, Kilrush and Scariff.
- Youthreach provides education and training programmes to young people who have left school without adequate qualifications. Centres are located at Milton Malbay, Shannon, Scarriff, Kilrush and Ennis.
- Post Leaving Certificate courses – PLCs are offered in VEC schools, catering for school leavers or adults wishing to return to education.
- St. Joseph's Senior Traveller Training Centre, Ennis
- The VEC also operates the Clare Adult Guidance Service with weekly information points at Miltown Malbay, Ennistymon, Scariff, Kilrush, Shannon and Ennis.
- The Clare Lifelong Learning Network is a VEC-led initiative that aims to promote lifelong learning in County Clare.

Others

Other providers include:

- Clare Youth Service offers literacy programmes, FETAC Level 3, 4 and 5 courses and the Leaving Certificate Applied in Ennis to 65 Learners each year. In most cases, the Learners come from the following groups, early school leavers, lone parents, members of the Travelling Community, Non-nationals, Young people with drug or alcohol addiction/misuse issues, young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, young people with behavioural and/or psychological issues and difficulties. Typically, Learners are between 15 – 17 years of age and have opted out of mainstream provision aged 15 years. They have completed 2 to 2½ years of secondary education and will have covered most of the curriculum for the Junior Certificate examination.
- Alfa Project, Scarriff - Active Learning for Adolescents. The aim is to facilitate disadvantaged students to reach their full potential and take responsibility for their education and their lives. The Alfa curriculum is based on the Steiner/Waldorf curriculum. There were 30 students in 2007/8, though there are just five students currently, aged from 15 to 17. One of the main reasons why this number has fallen is due to funding difficulties. The five current students are doing a FETAC level IT, Personal Development, Maths and Stone Carving. Modules are taken through the BTEI. At present Alfa rents a classroom and an office from the East Clare Community Co-operative. Alfa is part of the management of the co-operative along with the other groups renting space. The remit of East Clare Community Co-op is the development and support of facilities in the local community. While it hosts the Alfa Project, it also hosts a youth club for the 12-15 years age group as well as supporting the Clarecare early years service in the area.
- Eirí Corca Baiscinn is accredited as A FETAC Centre and offers courses at FETAC Level 4 and 5 in Hotel & Catering, Horticulture, Community Care and Radio Production.
- Ennis West Partners offer the Ennis Access Programme, a part-time FÁS funded Local Training Initiative lasting a year. The programme offers a FETAC Level 3 award in Vocational Employment Skills. It is open to anyone in receipt of a Social

Welfare Payment. Modules offered include, Health and Safety, Preparation for Work, Work Experience, Computers, Personal Development and much more.

- Several schools such as Mary Immaculate Secondary School (Lisdoonvarna), Convent of Mercy (Ennistymon), St. Anne's (Killaloe) and St Patrick's Comprehensive (Shannon) offer FETAC, BTEI and night classes on academic or hobby subjects. Courses such as Community & Health Services, Childcare, Business Studies and Art and Design are typical of the range offered.
- Congress Information & Opportunity Centre offers IT courses at non-certified and FETAC Level 3 and 4.
- NUIG and GMIT offer pre-college supports for mature students and those without a Leaving Cert. Direct placement onto undergraduate courses is attainable through this service.
- Private business colleges in Ennis and Shannon offer a variety of personal development and employment related courses.
- The University of Limerick, LIT, GMIT and NUIG offer a range of Lifelong Learning Programmes at their campuses whilst NUIG offers a small number of diploma courses in Ennis.
- The Shannon Consortium (comprising UL, LIT, Mary Immaculate College and ITT) intend to offer a range of third level courses from the County Museum in Ennis, starting in 2009.
- Clare College of Further and Higher Education was established in 2006 as a not for profit organisation charged with facilitating the provision of third level learning opportunities in County Clare. It aims to "to provide higher and further education opportunities in Clare with a recognised central facility that will coordinate delivery of programmes that meet the cultural, economic and social needs."

7 Homeless Persons

The number of individuals who presented Homeless to the HSE's Community Welfare Officer from January to November 2008 was 438 - 167 Men, 142 Women and 129 Children. The yearly total to November 2008 was 559. There has been a steady increase in recent years from 267 in 2003 to 526 in 2006.²⁸

Of the 526 in 2006, 34% were men, 28% were women and 38% were children. The Place of origin for 76% was Clare, 5% Limerick and smaller number from other parts of Ireland and from Poland. Whilst they present in Ennis, there is no breakdown available of the parts of the county where they come from.

49% are aged 26-45 years; 28% are 18-25 years; 21% are 46-65 years; 1% are under 18 years and 2% are over 65 years.

The Clare Homeless Strategy cites the following causes given as the primary reason for homelessness in Clare – 37% domestic violence; 17% breakdown of independent living; 17% family dispute; 13% transport problems; 8% eviction from private rented accommodation; 7% discharge from hospital/treatment/care; 5% house damage; 3% returned from abroad; 3% alcohol and drug addiction. Multiple causes bring figure over 100%.²⁹ The figures should be treated with caution as they are subjective opinions. Nevertheless, they are indicative of the range and complexity of the causes of homelessness.

Modern definitions of homelessness are moving away from an emphasis on rough sleeping or staying in agency-provided emergency accommodation to include those who lack the usual characteristics associated with a home. Focus Ireland includes three categories of homelessness – 1) Visible – sleeping rough, in emergency shelters or B&Bs, 2) Hidden – involuntary sharing with relatives or friends or other insecure accommodation and 3) At risk – those likely to become homeless due to high rents, insecure tenure or health difficulties³⁰. The figures above relate only to those in the first category. It should also be borne in mind that homelessness manifest itself in different ways in urban and rural environments. Rural homelessness tends to be dispersed from its

²⁸ Clare County Council, HSE, Clare Homeless Forum, Homeless Strategy & Action Plan 2008-2010, p.39

²⁹ Ibid p.41

³⁰ O'Sullivan for Focus Ireland, 1996

originating location to urban settings that attract homeless people on account of both services and greater anonymity.

The only emergency residential facility for homeless people in Clare is that provided by Clare Haven House for victims of domestic violence. Those presenting as homeless can be accommodated in local authority or private rented accommodation or are generally referred to local B&Bs or hostels outside the county. Galway and Limerick are prime destinations for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness from Clare

The current services for those experiencing homelessness in County Clare is

- HSE, Community Welfare Officers
- Clare County Council Homeless Unit - local authorities have responsibility for homeless persons and for providing accommodation. The Unit also acts as a coordinator of inter-agency services and monitor of service users.
- Clare Haven House emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic violence – refuge with capacity for 6 families; 2 transitional houses; drop-in and emergency services; outreach service.
- A voluntary organisation called HELP is currently providing a soup facility for the Homeless at the Maria Assumpta hall, Ennis.

Proposals at development stage include

- A men's hostel with 13 beds is due to open on the Limerick Road in Ennis early 2009. There is a significant gap in provision for single women.
- Simon Mid-West has made proposals regarding the purchase of a facility in Ennis for a Transitional Housing facility for Homeless Women (non domestic violence). A feasibility study is required and may be conducted in the near future.
- The Clare Homeless Forum has commissioned a Homeless Strategy and Action Plan 2008 – 2010. This is currently at draft stage, due to be finalised once the Forum get an opportunity to assess the government's recently published strategy. 'The Way Home – A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness 2008 – 2013'.

- Clare County Council plans to prepare a policy framework with regard to Homeless Services in the near future.

8 Lone Parents

The category of Lone Parents includes anybody who is parenting alone whether through separation of any kind, bereavement or never having been in a joint parenting arrangement.³¹

National Lone Parent Population

There are 189,240 one parent **families** in Ireland.

162,551 (86%) of Lone Parents are mothers; 26,689 (14%) are fathers.

The total number of children in Lone Parent **family** units is 311,749, equal to 1.65 children per family unit. 58% of Lone Parents have one child, 27% have two, 5% have four or more children.

The proportion of lone parents (as a proportion of all households with dependent children under the age of 15) in Ireland has doubled from 10.7% in 1991 to 21.3% in 2006. There are significant spatial variations with rates in some city areas as high 40%.

36% of Lone Parents are single; 30% are divorced or separated; 29% are widows; 5% are other categories, mainly those who were previously in legally recognised relationships and now parenting alone without a legal change to the previous relationship having taken place.

Note the difference between families and households. A **household** is defined as a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping arrangements. A **family** is defined as either a husband and wife or cohabiting couple; a husband and wife or cohabiting couple with one or more children (usually resident, never married, of any age); or one parent with one or more children.

³¹ All figures in this section are taken from the Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population 2006 Volume 1, 2, 3, or Small Area Population Statistics* or from information provided by the Department of Social & Family Affairs.

Clare Lone Parent Population

In Clare, there are 19792 family units with dependent children. Of these, 4389 (22.2%) are headed by Lone Parents.

There are 12451 family units with at least one dependent child under the age of 15. Of these, 2104 or 16.9% are headed by Lone Parents. This is below the national average and reflective of the spatial composition of the county.

The total number of children in families headed by a Lone Parent in Clare is 6797, an average of 1.55 per family. In half of these families, all children are under the age of 15.

Of the 4389 Lone Parent family units, 3671 (83.6%) are headed by a mother and 718 (16.4%) are headed by a father.

Whilst figures are available to break down Lone Parents into single, separated, divorced, widowed and other at national level, these are not available at county level at this time. There is no reason to expect significant local deviation from the national profile.

Deprivation and Disadvantage

Lone Parents are recognised as being at risk of multiple facets of social exclusion including poverty, low labour market access, low educational participation and low participation in community life. For instance, 31% of one parent families are living in consistent poverty – this is more than four times the national rate of 7%.³²

Whilst there may be empirical differences in the social exclusion rates of different Lone Parent sub-groups (e.g. separated, single, widowed, etc), the entire category experiences more exclusion indicators than if they were not parenting alone when all other socio-economic variables remain constant.

823 persons (18.75% of Lone Parents in the county) receive the One Parent Family Payment.³³

³² CSO, 2005, *EU Survey of Income and Living Conditions*

³³ Department of Social & Family Affairs, *Special Request, figures refer to December 6th 2008*

A key indicator of disadvantage is the percentage of lone parent households with at least one dependent child aged under 15 years as a proportion of all households with at least one dependent child under 15 years

The EDs with the highest proportion are Ennis Urban No. 2 (40.9%), Ennis Urban No.1 (36.3%) and Kilrush Urban (31.3%). 58 of the county EDs, all in rural areas, have rates under 10%.

Other EDs with high rates are Ennis Urban No. 4 (32.2%), Ballynacally (30.3%), Mountshannon (27%), Boston (26.5%), Killaloe (26.1%), Ennistymon (24.1%), Clenagh where Shannon is located (23.2%), Scarriff (23.1%), Ogonelloe (23%) and Kilfenora (22.9%).

The numbers for towns are as follows: Ennis 1021; Shannon 432; Kilrush 112; Sixmilebridge 79; Newmarket – on – Fergus 90.

Not all of these locations have high population densities, especially the Boston ED in North Clare. There is also a cluster in Mid - East Clare where six adjoining rural EDS each have proportions over 20% (Glenmore, Ayle, Coolreagh, Boherglass, Caherhurley, Scarriff).

The 823 recipients of One Parent Family Payment make their claim through the following local offices: Ennis 480 (of these 260 have Ennis addresses and 106 live in Shannon); Kilrush 107; Tulla 70; Ennistymon 75; 87 people claim in Limerick and 4 in Gort have Clare addresses.

Services to Lone Parents

The existing LDSIP groups, FRCs, CDPs, Clarecare and others are working with lone parents and target them as part of their programme provision. However, in common with the national experience, participation rates are not high. National organisations such as Open, Gingerbread and One Family have comprehensive advocacy and research activities and have several local affiliate organisations. The challenge of working with lone parents is likely to change and intensify when the Department of Social & Family Affairs Activation Policy comes into being. For further information on local services and group profile, readers are referred to the recent study on Lone Parents in Clare produced by the Clare County Development Board SIM group.

9 Low Income Farm Families

According to the 2006 Census, there are 2962 farmers and 301 farm workers in the county. The combined 3263 persons account for approximately 6% of the Persons aged over 15 in the labour force.³⁴ This figure is based on CSO classification which may not adequately record those with multiple occupations. The figure can be considered an underestimate as there were 6078 Single Farm Payments made in the county in 2007 and the 2000 Census of Agriculture recorded 6,720 farm holdings.

The average farm size in Co. Clare is 31.2 hectares. 70% are engaged in specialist beef production, compared to 51% nationally. The number of farms producing milk is continuing to decline and the number of producers was just 909 in 2005. More than half of those producers supply less than 40,000 gallons and the average Milk Quota size is 31,749 gallons per supplier.

Almost 40% of farmers in Clare are over 55, consistent with the age profile of farmers nationally.

Farm family income in Co. Clare is less than the national average. This can largely be attributed to the decline of dairying within the county along with a greater dependency on drystock systems and a lesser Single Farm Payment than is the case nationally. The average Single Farm Premium in the county is €7945 compared to €9876 nationally and almost half of the payments are for less than €5,000.

2,300 farmers across the county are in REPS. There are 410 farmers receiving the Farm Assist payment. These claims are made at Ennistymon (156), Kilrush (106), Ennis (89), Tulla (36), Gort (12) and Limerick (11) offices of the Department of Social & Family Affairs.³⁵

Few studies have been carried out into the reasons why farmers do not take up the Farm Assist payment given that the average farm income in 2007 was €19,687³⁶. A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of 204 farmers in Co. Clare by Bogue

³⁴ CSO, *Census of Population, 2006 Volume 8, Tables 16A and 16C*

³⁵ *September 23rd 2008. Source: Department of Social & Family Affairs. For Farm Assist eligibility and rates, see Appendix.*

³⁶ *National Farm Survey 2007*

(2006) found that while the benefit of participating in Farm Assist was financial, the main reason why farmers did not participate in Farm Assist was that they thought that they did not qualify³⁷. Other reasons often cited are the means test and lack of awareness of the payment's existence. Departmental records on the impacts of advertising campaigns and the local Farm Family Service experience indicate that active promotion leads to higher uptake.

Numbers working off-farm

The increases in off farm work over the last number of years have been as a result of both push and pull factors. Falling farm incomes vis-à-vis non-farm incomes have pushed farmers out of full-time farming and a stable macro economy pulled farmers out of full-time farming.

The push factor of declining farm incomes is set to continue. It is being aided by a new push factor, the Single Farm Payment. However, the previous pull factor of the stable macroeconomic environment no longer exists. This will undoubtedly demand more focused responses to such change by all those engaged in working with rural households.

It is difficult to get a precise figure on the numbers of part-time farmers in Clare from existing data sources. What is known is that:

- A total of 2962 gave their occupation as farming and 301 as farm worker in the 2006 census³⁸
- There were 5970 Herds given for Co. Clare in the CMMS Report 2007³⁹
- There were 6496 applications for the Single farm Payment in 2007. 6078 received a Single Farm Payment⁴⁰

The Teagasc NFS for 2007 gives the following data⁴¹ for Region 5 which includes the counties of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary North - On 63.8% of farms, either the holder

³⁷ Bogue, P., (2006) *Farming post Decoupling-a Co. Clare Survey, A Research Survey of the Opinions of Farm Families in Co. Clare*

³⁸ Source: CSO *Persons at work or unemployed by sex and occupation*

³⁹ Source: *CMMS Statistics Report 2007*

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/publicat/publications2008/CMMSreport2007.pdf>

⁴⁰ Source :Single farm Payment Section, Portlaoise

⁴¹ *National Farm Survey 2007* By L.Connolly A.Kinsella G.Quinlan B. Moran

http://www.agresearch.teagasc.ie/merc/downloads/NFS/2007_FullReport_Final_pdf.pdf

and/or spouse has an off-farm job, compared to a national figure is 58%. On 42.8% of farms, the holder has an off-farm job whereas the national figure is 41%.

The inclusion of Clare with adjoining counties may skew the numbers of full time and part time farmers in that Clare would have a greater proportion of part time suckler farmers while Limerick and Tipperary would have a greater number of full time dairy farmers. Teagasc Ennis⁴² estimate that 66% of Clare farmers are not full time and that 80% of Clare farmers have a non-farm source of income.

Training of Farmers (including for off-farm work)

Historically, Teagasc has had the remit of providing training to farmers. While the focus was on agricultural training in the early years of the CAP, the training requirements of farmers today are much different in the light of the numbers engaged in off-farm employment and are now further complicated by the sudden downturn in the traditional employment sectors of construction and manufacturing.

Teagasc have revamped their Options Programme which now sees a greater co-operation with FÁS. The new service has been put in place and is built around four distinct programmes; Business and Technology, Good Farm Practice, Rural Development and Adult Training. All four include an options analysis of the farm business.

The Business and Technology Programme will deliver technology supports to commercial farmers on dairy, drystock and tillage farms. The Good Farming Practice program will provide REPS planning and advice as well as assistance with EU and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food schemes. The Adult Education team will provide opportunities for lifelong learning with particular emphasis on business, technology, rural enterprise and internet usage. The Rural Development team is available to evaluate the financial and technical aspects of alternative enterprises and off-farm opportunities.

Individual Training Plans for Low Income Farmers

The possibility of offering individual training plans for low income farm families is worth looking at based on the following observations:

Farmers are not selling their wide range of skills when applying for jobs - "Self-marketing" courses could be provided so that farmers can make the most of their skills in a shrinking

jobs market. This would also help them identify the new skills required that would equip them to seek more skilled employment. IFA Skillnets could be approached to assist with funding. It has been the experience of the Farm Family Support Service that many farmers have never had the need to put a CV together before and many do not know how to do so.

Almost 29% of farmers nationally only have primary education. This will be a barrier to many when seeking employment

When drawing up a training plan with a farmer who wishes to access off-farm employment, the possibility of them doing a FETAC course should be highlighted.

County Wexford Partnership provides Driver Theory Test training and a mobile IT service-initiative that can make a great difference to a farmers employment prospects.

Life Planning Courses for Farmers who are seeking off farm employment opportunities have been provided by a number of Rural Development Companies including Ballyhoura Resources⁴³ and West Offaly Partnership⁴⁴ and County Wexford Partnership⁴⁵.

Services

Farm Family Support Services

Farm Family support services are in place in west and north Clare through Eirí Corca Baiscinn and the North Clare Farm Family Support Service, established as a Cohesion Action.

Eirí have operated a support programme for Smallholders/ Low Income Farm Families since 1998. This has been used by 263 individuals (177 males and 86 females). The North Clare service is working with 260 clients with a particular focus on low income EDs around Ennistymon, Lisdoonvarna and Liscannor.

⁴² Source: Gerard McMahon, Teagasc, Ennis

⁴³ <http://www.ballyhouracountry.com/harnessingruralcapital/Outside%20the%20Farm%20Gate%20Training%5COutside%20the%20Farm%20Gate%20Training%5COutside%20the%20Farm%20Gate%20Training.do>

⁴⁴ <http://www.westoffalypartnership.ie/lifeskills.htm>

⁴⁵ <http://www.wexfordpartnership.ie/Tus.htm>

The focus of this support work has been to assist farming families to maximise their income through:

- Farm Assist and social welfare entitlements
- Alternative enterprises & new business opportunities
- Training for off- farm employment
- Farm financial and debt management
- Information on farm schemes and services

Interventions are of two main types:

- Direct Work with Individual Farm Family Members e.g. Farm Assist enquires, provision of training
- Initiatives focused on creating new opportunities. In West Clare, these include Kilrush Farmers' Market, the West Clare Dairy Marketing Group, the Clare Energy Action Network (CLEAN), Kilrush Community Garden, Multi-skills Training, Horticulture and Food Training Groups. Examples in North Clare include a Farm Heritage Tours Co-operative, a social farming project with the Brothers of Charity, health initiatives and training courses.

There is also a focus on non-economic supports.

Rural Social Scheme

There are 117 persons (109 male and 8 female) engaged on the RSS. The aims of the scheme are to provide income support to low income farmers and fishermen who are currently in receipt of long-term Social Welfare payments and to provide certain services of benefit to rural communities. The scheme is administered by Rural Resource Development Ltd (RRD).

Today's Need

A recent review of Eirí's supports described the current needs of the West Clare target group. Many of the same issues pertain in other parts of the county and thus, the section is worth reproducing:⁴⁶

“At the level of income, the following are key areas to be addressed -

- The Single Farm Payment is not guaranteed beyond 2013 and the project has a role in helping individual farm families to respond and, at an area level, to help to stimulate and promote ideas that will garner Modulation funding and lead to progression routes and income generating opportunities
- Identification of new agricultural income opportunities in conservation and heritage work, fuel crops, fashion crops and other emerging practices
- Given the demographic and particular age profile of the area, there are many farmers caring for relatives. Being assessed as working more than 15 hours weekly renders them ineligible for Carers Allowance. This is impacting negatively and creating fear for many families.
- As construction activity scales down, it is anticipated that local off-farm income-generating opportunities for younger people from smallholder families will contract significantly. This will lead to renewed pressure to create alternative employment and/or provide relative training and progression routes.

Current and emerging needs continue to span both social and economic spheres and the focus needs to go further than economic viability. There is a need to validate farmers who can make a satisfactory living and contribute to local community life even where their economic activity does not meet technocratic definitions of viability. Their income levels may nevertheless be significant to the area and the retention of a viable social fabric.

With the transition to off-farm work in the area, farmers are often the only working people present in rural areas during the day. They have a key role in social care, in looking after older family members and neighbours. Often, their work patterns mean that they are the disproportionately high contributors to volunteerism in rural areas. The project has a role

⁴⁶ *Saunders, 2008, Qualitative Review of Eirí Corca Baiscinn*

to play in ensuring that the validation of farming goes beyond narrow definitions of viability.

At a social and community level, the project has recently identified the disappearance of local farmers' networks such as creameries and the decline in pub life and local services. Older farmers become more isolated as more young people have gained non-local off-farm work in the recent boom. Whilst such older farmers may not have much need of income support, their isolation is significant. There are many Art Farm and Rural Art projects abroad that have relevant learning for rural communities wishing to address the impacts of social and economic restructuring on their communities through the arts. These can also help to counteract the devaluation of the knowledge, experiences and skills of older farmers that is happening under current market conditions.

The Multi-Skills Course has been an effective hook to engage Low Income Farmers in networking and social activities as well as assisting some to re-orientate their future plans. Recruitment for this has become more difficult whilst the demand for social activities and networking as articulated by farmers in contact with the previous Smallholder Worker remains. The model of Men's Clubs is very unlikely to work but the experience of the Worker suggests that renewed effort needs to be put into addressing how to facilitate new networks on cultural terms and conditions that will be acceptable and attractive to the target group and that can ultimately empower them to orientate their own futures.

Whilst the central focus of the national Smallholder programme has been on income generation, such social initiatives have been validated by the programme in recent years. The current Pobal Smallholder Good Practice Guide lists Social Isolation & Mental Health as action areas and projects around the country have been working on equality issues, strategies to combat isolation and other social inclusion strategies. The social dimension of Smallholder work is also strongly endorsed by Pobal's submission to the Rural Development National Strategy Plan (2007 -2013) that recommends greater supports for community and groups to deliver social inclusion services at local level and that social inclusion be an objective of all axes of the Rural Development Plan. (see Pobal, *Assessing the Impacts of the Services to the Unemployed Measure*, 2006, p.38)"

Initiatives to Combat Rural Isolation and Loneliness

Initiatives aimed at addressing the loneliness experienced by many small holders and rural dwellers have been growing in recent years. The LDSIP groups in Monaghan, Longford and Roscommon have each developed projects such as men's groups, Friendly Call services, projects where growers share experiences with school groups etc.

In Clare, a local Friendly Call Service has been developed by Clarecare -

Clare - Conas atá tú

- A Friendly Call Service which is a free and confidential alert and good neighbour service to older people and those feeling vulnerable⁴⁷.
- It is available to all members of the Community, without reference to age, status, social/financial standing, religion or nationality.
- Service delivery involves a daily telephone call to provide a friendly greeting, check on well-being, remind on appointments and medication, and inform Clients on available services within their own Area.
- Call Operators also record all complaints or areas of difficulty experienced by individual Clients
- All of this information is logged on a data base and passed on the Area Committee for investigation and action.

Other local services include:

- East Clare Community Support Ltd. has recruited a worker to facilitate a Rural Men's project in the Feakle area on a part-time basis.
- Clare Accessible Transport offers services throughout East, West and North Clare that assist communities where many Low Income Farm Families reside.

⁴⁷ http://www.friendlycallservice.com/loc_1298-43_k_2.html

10 Travellers

The Traveller Community in Ireland consists of approximately 25,000 people who live nomadic, semi-nomadic or settled lives⁴⁸. 41.5% of Irish Travellers are aged under 15 years and 62% are under 25 years.

In Clare, the Traveller population was recorded as 660 persons (344 male, 316 female) in the 2006 Census of Population. This equates to 5.9 persons per 1,000 of total population, slightly above the national average. Local estimates put the figure higher, possibly over 800.

428 of these reside in Ennis Town where the Traveller population is 17.6 per 1,000 of total population.

At Electoral Division level, the principal residential locations for Travellers at the time of the Census were as follows:

Ennis Area

Ennis Rural 234; Ennis Urban No. 2 113, Ennis Urban No. 1 64; Clareabbey (Clarecastle) 53; Doora 48;

Rest of County

Ennistymon 68; Clenagh (Shannon) 33

Clare organisations with a dedicated service to Travellers include Ennis CDP, Ennis West Partners, Ennis Traveller Homework Club, Clarecare, HSE, St. Joseph's Training Centre, Clare Traveller Enterprise Office, Clare County Council, Shannon Family Resource Centre and North West Clare Family Resource Centre.

In general, Travellers experience significant, documented barriers to full participation in society and fare poorly on every indicator used to measure disadvantage: unemployment, poverty, social exclusion, health status, infant mortality, life expectancy, illiteracy,

⁴⁸ *The 2006 Census records 22,435 Travellers but there has traditionally been under-recording in this category.*

education and training levels, access to decision making and political representation, gender equality, access to credit, accommodation and living conditions.

In 2003, a High Level Group on Traveller issues was established under the aegis of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Social Inclusion to find ways of securing better outcomes for Travellers and improve the use of resources allocated to Traveller specific measures. One of the pilot counties has been Clare where the County Council had been working on a strategy with similar aims to that of the HLG. A Strategy for the Co-ordination of Public Services to the Traveller Community in Clare (2005 – 2008) has been in place since 2005.

The over-arching aim of the strategy is the long-term sustainable improvement in the quality of life for the Traveller Community in Clare, while providing Traveller services in a more effective manner. The strategy aims to strengthen the culture and self-governance capacity of the Traveller Community in Clare, while enhancing their quality of life, in the immediate and long term; to identify and address gaps in current provision of public services; to coordinate and integrate existing service delivery.

A steering group, comprising of seven Traveller representatives and senior staff from lead agencies (Clare County Council, FÁS, Ennis CDP, St Joseph's Training Centre, Department of Education and Science, Co. Clare VEC and the HSE) has been overseeing the implementation of 90 specific actions.

The overall impacts of the Strategy are due to be reviewed in late 2008 and it is likely that a successor inter-agency programme will be put in place in 2009.

11 Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees

10, 837 of County Clare's population were enumerated as non – Irish in the 2006 Census of Population. This represents 9.96% of the Usually Resident population of 108,760.⁴⁹

In the inter-censal period 2002 – 2006, estimated net migration into County Clare was 4169 persons, a rate of 9.7 persons per 1,000 of total population each year.

The nationalities of the Clare population are enumerated as follows:

Table 11.1 Composition of Usually Resident Clare Population by Nationality, 2006⁵⁰

Total Enumerated	108,760
Total Irish	96745
United Kingdom	3742
EU 15 excluding Ireland and UK	1204
EU 15 to 25 Accession States 2004	2421
Other European	572
America (United States)	582
Africa	984
Asia	667
Other	603
Multi – nationality,	62
No Nationality	35
Not Stated	1143 ⁵¹

⁴⁹ Note that the figure of 108,760 is less than the total population of Clare. Only those who are usually resident in the country are included in this calculation - unlike the overall census, those resident for less than 3 months or on vacation, business trips etc are not included in this question.

⁵⁰ Adapted from CSO, Census of Population, 2006, Volume 4 Table 35A

European migrants are the largest group of migrants (4197 persons including all EU and other European nationalities but excluding the UK). Their overall profile is quite diverse and includes a Roma population of 300 - 400.

There are 3742 UK nationals. Africans (984) and Americans (582) represent small but significant minorities.

From the records of the Irish Refugee Council, the asylum seeker and refugee population in the county is approximately 1300, of whom Africans make up a sizeable proportion. Current asylum seeker numbers stand at just over 300.

The year following Census 2006 (taken in April) was a period of high immigration in the state. Net migration was 67,300, comprising 109,500 immigrants and 42,200 emigrants.⁵² Whilst county figures are not available, it is reasonable to estimate a large rise in migrants from EU Accession States in the period April 2006 – 2007. No figures are available to record the impacts of the current economic downturn on migration. As asylum applications and African, Asian and non-EU European immigrants had previously slowed to very low levels, the effect of unfavourable employment and economic conditions are likely to impact greatest on EU 15-27 nationals. This group accounted for 48% of those who migrated into Ireland in April 2006 – 2007.

There were 4179 applications for PPS numbers in Clare in 2006. Over half of these (2466) were made by Polish nationals, followed by those from Slovakia (308), Germany (151), England (130), Czech Republic (128), France (125), Latvia (117), USA (81) India (64), Hungary (42), Sweden (37) and South Africa (34).⁵³

Labour market participation amongst these groups is very high. The Multicultural Health study for HSE West requested a breakdown on non Irish national welfare claimants – this showed 723 adult claimants and 665 dependents. Of the claimants, the largest group were from the UK (337), followed by Poland (59), Nigeria (44), Germany (27), Slovakia (21), Lithuania (20), Latvia (19), USA (17) and France (11).⁵⁴

⁵¹ 1143 respondents did not state nationality and so the figure for Other Nationalities may be higher

⁵² CSO, *Population and Migration Estimates, December 2007*

⁵³ *Culturewise Ireland for HSE West, Multicultural Health, 2008, An Assessment of Health and Personal Social Services Needs relating to Ethnic Minority Groups within the Mid-West*

⁵⁴ *ibid p.30 date of statistics not stated – estimated as late 2006 or early 2007*

County level information is not available on the age group of immigrants. Nationally, 55% of those arriving in the period April 2006 – April 2007 were aged 25 -44 years; 28% were aged 15 – 24 years. Approximately 10% were under 15 years.⁵⁵

The immigrant population comes from 34 countries and speaks 32 different languages.⁵⁶

Spatial Distribution

Over half of non-Irish Nationals in the county reside in Ennis or Shannon.

Table 11 .2 Composition of Population of Towns by Nationality of Residents, 2006⁵⁷

	Total Enumerated	Total Irish	EU	Rest of Europe	Africa	Asia	America	Other	Not Stated
Ennis	23101	19358	2047	229	634	194	238	159	242
Shannon	8942	7364	847	174	122	291	72	23	49
Kilrush	2569	2293	205	2	-	9	3	9	48
Sixmilebridge	1624	1492	88	2	10	7	10	6	9
Newmarket on Fergus	1509	1419	60	3	-	10	7	1	9

There are six primary schools, all in the Ennis area, where non-Irish enrolment is between 16% and 48%. One second level school, Ennis Community College, has an enrolment of 16% non-Irish nationals. No other second level school exceeds 10%.⁵⁸

At Electoral Division level, the larger concentrations of migrants are to be found as follows:

⁵⁵ CSO, Population and Migration Estimates, December, 2007

⁵⁶ *Culturewise Ireland for HSE West, Multicultural Health, 2008, p.59*

⁵⁷ *Adapted from CSO, Census of Population, 2006, Volume 4 Table 39*

⁵⁸ *UL, Draft Study on the Needs of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in Clare*

Table 11.3 Composition of Population of EDs by Nationality of Residents⁵⁹

	Polish	Lithuanian	Other EU 25	Rest of World
Clare	1385	285	1969	3481
Ennis No.2 Urban	126	15	74	260
Ennis No.4 Urban	45	13	30	98
Doora	43	0	7	41
Ennis Rural	343	106	536	962
Kilrush Urban	84	4	23	22
Clenagh	276	80	236	752
Ennistymon	46	2	39	36
Kilkee	56	1	16	22
Miltown Malbay	28	19	30	29
Scarriff	32	4	35	17
Killaloe	13	1	26	14

In relation to the spatial spread, the two tables above show a clear concentration of Eastern European migrants in Ennis and Shannon.

The Census was enumerated in April 2006 and the effect of the current downturn, particularly in construction employment, has not been accurately measured but it is worth noting that inward migration from new EU states is strongly linked to employment opportunities - during 2006, over 90% of those holding PPS numbers from new member states were in employment. Many of these workers do not have families and are highly mobile.

⁵⁹ Adapted from CSO, *Small Area Population Statistics*

Profile of Migrant Groups

The HSE has recently commissioned UL to conduct a Study on the Needs of Immigrants and Ethnic Minorities in Clare. This offers the following profile information on different immigrant groups that can be summarised as follows:

Table 11.4. Profile of Significant Immigrant Groups⁶⁰

<p>Young migrants from EU Accession States</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually highly qualified • Highly mobile, with loose networks of friends/acquaintances. • Gender mixed. • Members tend to share accommodation in groups of single workers, usually in privately rented houses.
<p>Older migrants from the EU accession states</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade or craft workers, often employed in construction industry. • Primarily male • They tend to share houses in private rental market, again typically as groups of single workers. • In contrast to the younger group, poor English language skills and lesser educational attainments may lead to difficulties if they need to access local services.
<p>Roma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma families are well-established in Ennis. Statistical information in regard to actual numbers of Roma is scant. However, schools in Ennis estimate that the Roma population is in the region of 300 – 400, based on the numbers of children enrolled. • Typically members of this community live in family groups, • No access to labour market • Poor language skills • Low educational attainments. • They often experience difficulties with work, health and accommodation.

⁶⁰ Summary of Information contained in UL study pp.52-53

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Roma are nomadic, it is not unusual for them to arrive in Ennis to travel around picking up seasonal work and later moving on to England and Europe.
Africans	The majority of the African migrant community would have entered Ireland as asylum seekers, with a significant percentage going on to receive refugee status. Members of this group usually comprise family groupings. Africans tend to live in single familial occupancy in rental market, assisted by rent allowance.

Asylum Seekers

The asylum seeker population of 315 persons approximately all reside at two Direct Provision centres - Clare Lodge, Ennis accommodates 55 single men while Knocklisheen, Meelick accommodates 260 persons, both families and single people.

Immigrant Service Providers

The following are the key service providers for immigrants:

Statutory - Local Authorities, Health Service Executive, Department of Education/schools, VEC (inc. Clare Adult Basic Education Service- English as a Second Language service and CABES), An Garda Síochána, Department of Social and Family Affairs, FÁS.

NGOs - Clare Immigrant Support Centre, Ennis CDP, Citizen Information and Advice Centre, Clarecare, Clare Youth Service, Ennis West Partners, Church bodies, Akidwa and others. Ennis CDP has a particularly strong focus on the immigrant community as they are one of their two principal target groups. Clare Women's Network works with women of all backgrounds and publishes multi-lingual information aimed at migrant women.

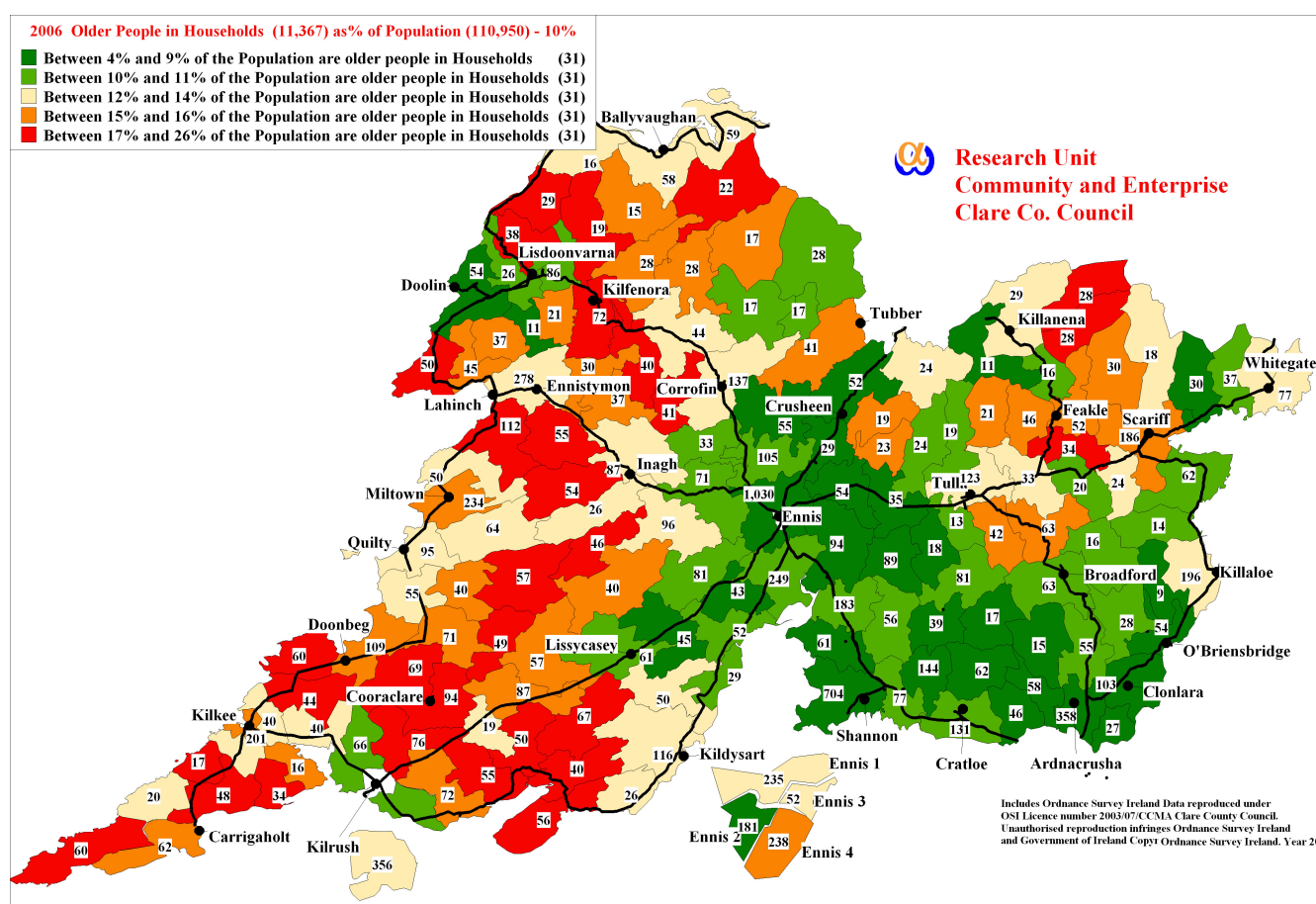
On foot of the Irish Refugee Council's cessation of its Ennis service in 2006, a number of service providers came together to devise an inter-agency strategy to meet the needs to ethnic minority groups in Clare. This led to the establishment of the Clare Immigrant Support Service, an independent organisation working with asylum seekers, refugees and the wider immigrant community. It operates an Information Service (3 morning per week, walk-in basis), Family Support work, Homework Club and English Language programmes. An outreach service will commence in January 2009. CISC dealt with 1447 queries from 440 individuals in the first half of 2008. Popular query categories are asylum issues, education, welfare, accommodation and employment.

12 Older Persons

The 2006 Census identifies 12,921 persons aged 65 years and over, equal to 11.65% of the total population. The Clare County Council Community and Enterprise Research Unit have undertaken a detailed quantitative and qualitative study of this group to be used as a planning tool for the next social inclusion programme. Readers are referred to this publication once it is finalised in late 2008.

The draft version outlines the location of high Older Person Dependency and Two Factor Older Person Disadvantage in the following maps⁶¹:

Map 1: Older Persons as % of Total Population⁶²

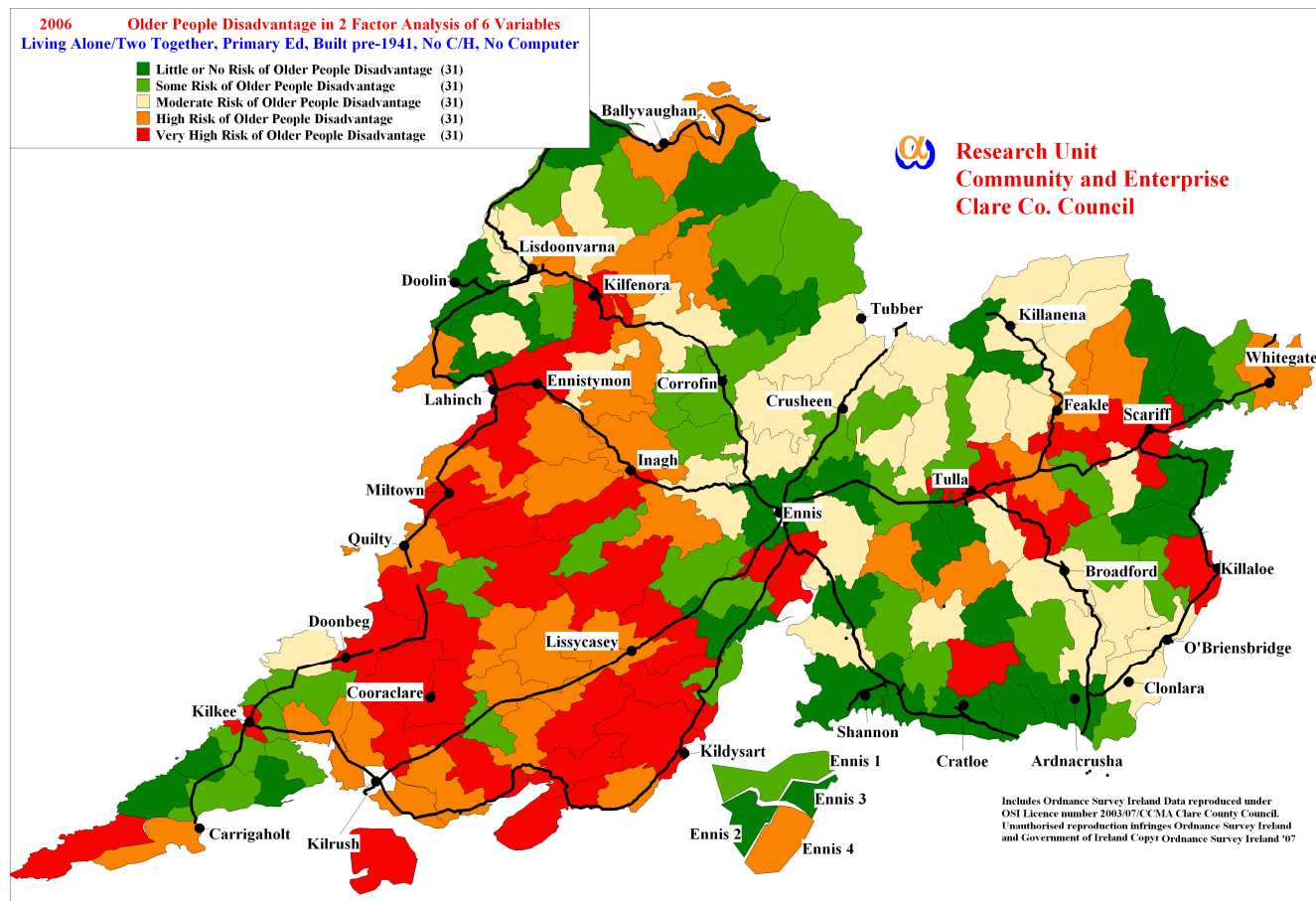


⁶¹ Maps prepared by Research Unit, Community & Enterprise, Clare County Council

⁶² CSO breakdown is only for persons in Households i.e. not Communal Establishments. Hence, total figure of 11,367 rather than 12,921.

Map 2: Older Persons Two Factor

Analysis



The study summarises that “the greatest Older Person dependency (older people in households as % of the population that ED) was apparent outside the economic corridor from South East Clare to Limerick through Ennis to Galway as shown by the deep red EDs. Those EDs ... displayed concentrations between 17% and 26%they were especially located in West and north west Clare and in a few pockets in North East Clare.”⁶³

The Study also makes a number of significant qualitative findings and recommendations.

It is worth noting the particular age profile of Shannon, which is a newly created town from the late 1960s. This makes for a unique age distribution within the county as the town begins to age and the proportion of Older Persons increases significantly. In the period 1996 – 2006, the population change in the age group 65-74 years was +113% (Clenagh ED) and in the 75+ groups was +125%. There is a spill over effect into neighbouring ED

⁶³ Research Unit, Community & Enterprise, Clare County Council, Older People in Clare, 2008 p.30

of Drumline (+38.6% and 100%). These compare with county averages of +10.2% and 11.6% respectively. Whilst part of the increase is obviously attributable to greater longevity in the Irish population as a whole, the Shannon phenomenon is mostly due to its newness as a settlement for young families in the 1960s and 1970s.

This increase in Older Persons in the Shannon area has obvious consequences for the provision of services and the inclusion of Older Persons in social and community life.

Day Care and Residential Centres

The following services are currently in operation:

Day Centres

Alzheimer's Society of Ireland, Unit 17, Clonroad Business Park, Ennis

Clarecastle Day Care Centre, Clarecastle

Community Nursing Unit for the Elderly, Regina House, Kilrush

Ennistymon Community Hospital Day Centre, Ennistymon.

Kilmaley Voluntary Organisation, Ballyillaun, Kilmaley.

Miltown Malbay Day Centre, c/o Clarecare, Miltown Malbay.

Raheen Community Hospital, Day Centre, Tuamgraney

Shannon Senior Citizens Social Club, 9 Purcell Park, Shannon, Co. Clare

Stella Maris Day Centre Facility, Lisdoonvarna.

Clare Private Nursing Homes

There are ten private nursing homes at Ennis (2), Newmarket-on-Fergus, Cratloe, Killaloe, Liscannor, Kilrush (3) and Ardnacrusha.

Home Help services

In Co. Clare, there are three main providers of the Home Help Service - Clarecare, Caring for Carers and the Alzheimer's Society.

Clarecare

Clarecare provide home help services to over 1000 clients aged over 65. The service is delivered by 480 Home Helps employed by Clarecare in five geographical areas: Ennis

along with North, East, Mid and West Clare. Referrals tend to come from the Public Health Nurse and GP. However, the person must be informed of the referral and the service will not be forced upon them against their wishes. Home Helps are only paid for hours worked. They are free to make private arrangements with their clients though they will not be covered by Clarecare's insurance. There is a 6 month waiting list at present. Clients are allocated hours according to their need and are means tested.

Caring for Carers

Caring for Carers differs from Clarecare to the extent that it has a particular focus on the Carer. However, it also delivers a Homecare package to 22 people. The Homecare package is an enhanced Home Help service. It includes personal care, meals and more home assistance duties.

Caring for Carers also has resources to grant, in consultation with the Public Health nurse, 12 two hour per week respite packages to carers known as a Carer Support Service. These packages enable the recipient to request to have any particular home duties they wish carried out. Referral is through the Carers Clinic.

Alzheimer's Society

About 1,200 people suffer from Dementia in Co. Clare⁶⁴. The Alzheimer's Society aims to increase awareness of Alzheimer's disease, provide day care for sufferers and to make information and assistance available to carers including aiding research.

The society delivers a Home Help service to the entire county to people of all age groups who suffer from dementia. This is done through 2 channels:

1. The Homecare Package Service is delivered directly by the Society. The HSE assess the needs and means of each client and grant them the services of a Home Help for a specific number of hours each week. 38 clients currently receive the Homecare service from 13 Home Helps employed directly by the Alzheimer's Society.
2. Home Support is delivered via a FÁS CE Scheme with 60 clients paying €4 per hour to avail of the service.

⁶⁴ Source: Joanna Burke, Alzheimer's Society

The greatest demand for the service emanates from West Clare and there is a short waiting list at present. While referrals may come from professionals such as the Public Health Nurse and GP, a feature of the service is the facility for clients to self-refer.

13 People with Disabilities

9923 persons are recorded in the 2006 Census with a disability. This is 8.94% of the total population compared to state average of 9.29%.

Table 13.1 Persons with a Disability by Age Group⁶⁵

Age in Years	0 - 14	15 - 24	25 - 44	45 - 64	65+
Persons	933	665	1784	2827	3714

Disability Payments and Geographical Breakdown

Disability Allowance is a means assessed payment where disability is expected to last for at least one year. Invalidity Pension is a payment made to people who are permanently incapable of work because of an illness or incapacity.

Table 13.2 Disability Claims by Area December 6th 2008⁶⁶

Address	Number of Claims for Disability Allowance	Number of Claims for Invalidity Pension
Ennis	750	310
Shannon	153	147
Kilrush	262	87
Other addresses	1187	548
Total	2352	1092

⁶⁵ Source: CSO, *Census of Population 2006, SAPS*

⁶⁶ Source: *Department of Social & Family Affairs, special request.*

Young People with Disabilities

Locations with significant clusters of young people with disabilities are as follows:⁶⁷

Locations	Number under 15 years	Number aged 15 – 24 years	Total Number under 25 years
Ennis area (Ennis Urban EDs, Ennis Rural, Clareabbey, Doora)	193	170	363
Shannon (Clenagh)	80	56	136
South east Clare adjacent to Limerick (Ballyglass, Ballycannan, Kiltenanlea)	84	70	154
Kilrush (Urban and Rural)	37	18	55

These 13 EDs account for 44.3% of the 1598 persons under 15 years with a disability in the county.

Services to People with Disabilities

The following organisations all operate services in the county:

People with Disabilities in Ireland (PWDI) is a cross disability organisation representing all people with disabilities, whether those disabilities are physical, emotional, intellectual or mental.

The Disabled People of Clare (DPOC) offer Advocacy, Information, Transport Service, IT Training and personal support services.

Clare Independent Advocacy Service (CIAS) is funded by the Citizens Information Board and is managed by the DPOC and the Ennis Citizens Information Service to provide a one-to-one advocacy service for adults with disabilities.

⁶⁷ Source: CSO, Census of Population 2006 SAPS

The Irish Wheelchair Association is a national organisation dedicated to the achievement of full social, economic and educational integration of people with disabilities as equal, independent and participative members within the general community.

Clare Supported Employment Service works to assist those with intellectual, physical, sensory and hidden disabilities and those with mental health difficulties to access employment. It provides a range of employer supports and candidate services. There are seven Employment Facilitators and a Team Leader, covering Ennis, North Clare, South Clare, West Clare & East Clare.

The Clare Brothers of Charity's service comprises three core resource centres for adults in Ennis, Ennistymon and Kilrush with community homes and rented accommodation attached to each. Children's services are based in Ennis. Respite breaks are offered in Corrovorrin and Ballybeg in Ennis. The outreach team provides support to those with a challenging behaviour. Training and development and administrative services are based in Banner House, Ennis.

Enable Ireland provides assessment, therapy and educational programmes for 41 children and 7 adults whose primary disability is physical. The aim of their centre in Ennis is to assist users to maximise their potential as an individual, family member and as a member of the local community. EI also provide classroom assistants for children as well as respite, transport and summer projects.

The Peter Bradley Foundation aims to enable people with Acquired Brain Injury to live an independent life in the community, by providing and maintaining a supportive living environment. They offer Assisted Living Services (two residential facilities), Community Rehabilitation Services (outreach), clinical supports and family support in Clare.

Clare Sports Partnership has recently secured funding for the recruitment of a Sports Inclusion Development Officer (SIDO) whose role is to support the strategic development and implementation of disability sport within County Clare, to increase the participation of people with disabilities in sport/physical activity and to ensure that local resources are used to best effect to facilitate inclusion.

The social inclusion of people with disabilities and the services they require needs greater consultation with the target group and representatives.

14 Substance Misusers

Substance misuse is a pervasive social phenomenon but reliable statistics and social or geographical breakdowns are hard to get. The 2006/07 Drug Prevalence Survey gives the following figures for the Mid West Region:

Table 14.1 Drug Prevalence Survey Mid - West 2006/07: All Adults 15 – 64 Years⁶⁸

	Lifetime Prevalence (%)	Last Year Prevalence (%)	Last Month Prevalence (%)
Any Illegal Drugs	18	5.8	1.4
Alcohol	90	83	71
Sedatives & Tranquilisers & Anti – Depressants	18.8	8.6	4.5

Drug Treatment Services in Clare

The Health Research Board provides figures for the three services below. In addition, people in Clare have access to four addiction counsellors working with Clare Mental Health Services (Ennistymon, Kilrush, Shannon and Ennis/East Clare⁶⁹), and Sláinte.

Table 14.2 Persons Treated for Drug/Alcohol Misuse in Clare⁷⁰

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Bushypark Treatment Centre ⁷¹	130	156	156	155
Ennis Day Hospital	16	28	25	-
Clare Community Drugs Team	36	29	56	27
Total	182	213	237	182

⁶⁸ National Advisory Committee on Drugs & Public Health Information and Research Branch June 2008: *Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland 2006/2007*. These figures should be treated with caution as they are based on a small sample (567 persons) and on self – disclosure.

⁶⁹ Currently no addiction counsellor is in place at Ennis or Kilrush.

⁷⁰ Adapted from HRB, *Analysis of 2004 – 2007 National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) and Bushy Park statistics*

⁷¹ Bushy Park is a residential centre. These are figures for residential treatment – over 350 screenings are conducted annually.

A considerable proportion of those undergoing treatment are unemployed – 40% at Bushy Park and 45% of those attending the Clare Community Drugs Team. 48% of those attending the former and just 27% attending the latter are in paid employment.

Over two – thirds of those who present for treatment are male. In the period 2004 – 2007, the most common drug to which clients at Bushypark are addicted is alcohol (over 80%) Whilst the Community Drug Team’s clients are more likely to be users of illegal or prescription drugs rather than alcohol, the latter is still the single biggest category (41%). However, although alcohol is the single largest category, the incidence of multiple or cross –addiction is rising and many of those addicted to other drugs are also categorised as alcohol addicts. Therefore, the high incidence of treatment for alcohol addiction should not mask the prevalence of the use of other drugs. For instance, of the 158 persons treated in Bushypark, 49 presented for alcohol, 14 for illicit drugs only, 54 for alcohol and illicit drugs and 18 for alcohol, illicit drugs and prescription drugs.

Whilst many of Bushy Park’s clients reside outside the county, some of this is due to the centre’s reputation, other travel for reasons of privacy. Therefore, it can be assumed that some Clare people also travel to centres outside their own county for treatment.

There is a current impetus to align national strategies on alcohol, illicit drugs and prescription drugs in terms of policy, treatment, education and preventative activities.

Aftercare Services

Bushypark Treatment Centre

Bushypark offers a 28 day residential treatment program for people addicted to alcohol, chemicals, gambling or suffering from eating disorders. Users of the service complete the primary programme and are then allocated to an aftercare group for two years. There are weekly After-care groups in Ennis and Limerick, Galway and Tralee facilitated by an aftercare support worker. Bushypark recommend that patients then attend fellowship meetings on a regular basis after that, (through the AA etc.). Aftercare support forms a major part of the Centre’s work in that it offers ongoing contact and support.

Day Hospitals

The day hospitals offer aftercare support but there is no addiction counsellor currently in place at Ennis or Kiltrush.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. Closed AA Meetings are for alcoholics only. Open AA Meetings open to all who may or may not have an alcoholic problem. Meetings take place at Ballyvaughan, Corofin, Ennis, Kilkee, Killaloe, Kilrush, Liscannor, Lisdoonvarna, Quin, Scarriff, Shannon and Tulla.

Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) is a non-profit fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. Groups are held in Ennis and Shannon.

Services for Young People

There is no residential facility for youth under 18 years in the county. In fact, there is only one in the country, the Aislinn Centre in Ballyraggett, County Kilkenny. This can only cater for 120 persons per year, covering the entire country. Whilst young people from Clare do attend, it does not have the capacity to cater for the entire level of demand. The centre provides an outreach aftercare facilitator in Shannon for former residents from Clare.

Mid - West Regional Drugs Task Force

The MWRDTF (Clare, Limerick and Tipperary North) strategy states the need to assess the need/demand for residential and other treatment services targeted at under 18s within the region and ensure that these services are made available and adequately resourced.

- A National Drugs Taskforce Research Study showed that in the Region the mean age of initial drug use was 15 years of age, relatively young in comparison to other areas⁷².
- There is a focus on Education and Prevention in Clare as there are insufficient treatment facilities to cater for the demand.

Clare Youth Service

CYS employs a dedicated drugs worker who covers the entire county with an education and prevention. The drugs worker works with clients in the Youth Service training centre, those who attend the youth café, the Garda Youth Diversion Project as well as on a one-to-one basis

Other CYS actions include:

- The Clare Youth Service Survival Project worked with two groups of young people who were at different levels of involvement in drug and alcohol misuse. These young people engaged in a Survival Weekend.
- Activities for young people at times of particular stress in their lives – Leaving and Junior Certificate Exams. These are often associated with alcohol and anti-social behaviour.

Clare Community Drug and Alcohol Team

- Provides advice, information and counselling around drugs and alcohol.
- Education and awareness raising
- Policy development.
- Development of prevention and education initiatives aimed at people aged 14+; people whose drug and/or alcohol use is problematic; those affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use; concerned communities; anyone interested in alcohol/drug awareness and education.

Sláinte

Sláinte is run by the HSE Clare Community Drug and Alcohol Team for the 14 to 25 age group. It has administrative staff plus three workers - counsellor, outreach worker and education officer. It is based in Ennis but provides an outreach service in Shannon, Kilrush and Ennistymon

⁷² <http://www.mwrdf.ie/uploads/MWRDTF%20Action%20Plan.ppt>

An Outreach worker sees people on a one-to-one basis for assessment, they may have been referred by somebody or self referred, then refers Under 18s to the Counsellor only, over 18s to other services. Outreach worker also liaises with GPs, pharmacists, etc

This is essentially a counselling service only, i.e., no methadone given to under 18s. The counsellor sees those who have already been assessed as having a problem. The Education worker liaises with other personnel who are engaged in combating drug abuse such as the Clare Youth Service Drugs worker. While they may also advise schoolteachers, they leave drugs education to the schools themselves.

Gaps and Weaknesses in Services

In discussions with those working in this area, the following gaps and weaknesses in existing services have been highlighted.

- Little back-up for older family members
- Lack of services for those under 18 years.
- Some young people may require intervention rather than education which places a strain on the service provided by the education and prevention services.
- Clare is one of the five counties without an ASAP officer. ASAP (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention programme) is a GAA initiative at club level around the country.
- Two Day Hospitals (Kilrush and Ennis) currently have no addiction counsellors.
- There is a great need for an addiction treatment centre in the Mid-west, especially for teenage girls. A person may be refused a place at Aislinn in Kilkenny because their family member may not be able to travel with them on a regular basis.
- Fragmentation in services and lack of up-to-date guide to services

15 Carers

The 2006 Census recorded 4507 Carers in Clare. Of these, 1067 (23.6%) are engaged in caring for more than 43 hours per week. 62% are women.

Table 15.1 Carers in County Clare⁷³

Hours per week	Male	Female	Total	%
1 -14	1016	1644	2704	60
15 – 28	173	315	488	10.8
29 – 42	112	136	248	5.5
43 +	358	709	1067	23.6
Total	1703	2804	4507	99.9

Spatial Distribution

1301 Carers live in the towns of Ennis & Environs (834), Shannon (273), Kilrush (81), Newmarket – on – Fergus (59) and Sixmilebridge (54). These towns have 28% of the county's Carers but 35% of the total population. This is not surprising, given that they have a younger profile than rural areas - because many carers are elderly spouses, we can expect to find more Carers in areas where the population is oldest.

Outside of these towns, there are some EDSs with significant number of Carers e.g. Ennis rural (535) Ennistymon (105), Clareabbey (100), Doora (73), Miltown Malbay (68), Cratloe (55) and Lisdoonvarna (52). There is a particular cluster in the south-east of the county where the adjoining EDs of Ballyglass (185) and Ballycannan (59) have high numbers.

Services

1167 persons in the county are in receipt of Carer's Allowance. This is roughly equivalent to the number caring for more than 43 hours per week. 44.7% of claimants have addresses in Shannon, Ennis and Kilrush although these three towns contain 26% of the

⁷³ Source: CSO, *Census of Population, 2006 Small Area Population Statistics*

county's Carers. This supports the view that there are many spouse carers in rural areas, possibly on pension payments but it does not contradict the fact that there are more people providing care in those areas, predominantly rural, with the oldest populations.

Table 15.2 Carers Allowance Claims in Clare December 6th 2008⁷⁴

Address	Number of Claims
Ennis	301
Shannon	85
Kilrush	147
Other Addresses	634
Total	1167

Caring for Carers is a national organisation, based in Ennis. CFC estimates that there are approximately 2000 family carers in the county. This roughly equates to the Census figure for those caring for 15 or more hours per week. In Clare, CFC communicates with and/or provides services to 600 carers on an ongoing basis and has partnership arrangements with Enable Ireland, Irish Wheelchair Association and other organisations. It also provides:

- Carers clinic with client base of 300, run by 2 nurses working part-time
- One full-time development officer
- Network of 9 carers groups in the county in partnership with HSE (Ennis, Ennistymon, Kilrush, Shannon, Carrigaholt, Scarriff, Kilmurry McMahon, Newmarket, Miltown Malbay).

Eirí Corca Baiscinn employs a Carer Coordinator to work with Carers in West Clare. There are three support groups (Peninsula Carers meet once a month in Carrigaholt,

⁷⁴ Source: Department of Social & Family Affairs, special request

West Clare Carers meet once a month in Kilrush, Shannonside Carers meet once a month in Kilmurry McMahon). The three groups come together as 'The Carer's Network in West Clare' for training, activities for Carers, social outings and for lobbying and campaigning purposes.

Training Needs of those in Caring Roles

Caring for Carers runs 3 training groups in Ennis, Ennistymon and Scarriff. The organisation provides a number of courses for carers including Caring in the Home, Manual Handling & Risk Assessment along with Therapeutic Hand Care Courses. These Courses are supported by the HSE and certified by the Irish Red Cross Society.

The Caring in the Home course was provided six times in 2007 - Ennis (2), Newmarket-on-Fergus, Kilrush, Ennistymon and Scarriff. Each course has the capacity to take 30 people but demand for places exceeded the availability in most areas⁷⁵. The Manual Handling & Risk Assessment course for Family Carers and healthcare workers was provided in 2007 to carers in Ennis (2), Kilrush and Ennistymon. The Therapeutic Hand Care was held once in Ennis in 2007.

Age Action Ireland offer a training Course for Carers which is designed to provide the practical skills necessary for caring in the home. It also offers an opportunity for carers to meet each other and the chance for carers to express their views. The courses are held in partnership with the Health Service Executive. Courses take place in South Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare.

There are still gaps in the training needs of Carers in Clare. In their Budget 2009 submission⁷⁶, recommendation No. 11, Caring for Carers argued that young Carers aged 17 years and under require an integrated support programme including practical help, counselling, respite, educational and financial support. Harkin and Sinnott (2008)⁷⁷ have noted that "in Ireland there are approximately 3,000 carers under the age of 18 years old carrying out caring responsibilities, responsibilities which are traditionally borne by adults.

⁷⁵Source: Susan Hogan, *Caring for Carers*

⁷⁶ <http://local.mobhaile.ie/caringforcarers/HelpAvailable/TrainingProgramme/tabid/18239/Default.aspx>
Caring for Carers Budget 2009 Submission

⁷⁷ http://www.marianharkin.ie/index.php?id=20&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=290&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=4&cHash=631f7363fe *Submission to the Irish Government on the Carers Strategy on behalf of the Carers Interest Group by Marian Harkin MEP and Kathy Sinnott MEP*

Caring has a range of impacts, including lost opportunities for training and education, changing to less well-paid, less responsible positions and being forced to take up part-time work.”

In recommendation No. 8, Caring for Carers argued for the establishment of the right of all Carers to a comprehensive Needs Assessment and a Care Plan to address their needs. “Internationally there is a growing acceptance of the importance of assessing the needs of Carers in their own right alongside an assessment of needs for people with disabilities and older people. As part of the needs assessment a Care Plan targeted towards the specific needs of Carers, arising from their caring responsibilities would be compiled dealing with e.g. health needs, employment and training needs, other family issues and social participation.”

Care Alliance Ireland is the National Network of voluntary organisations supporting Family Carers. In its 2009 pre-Budget submission⁷⁸, it stated that “there is a growing international acceptance of the importance of addressing the needs of Family Carers in their own right alongside an assessment of needs for their loved ones.” It also called for “a Family Carer needs assessment protocol for services coming into contact with such carers” as well as the provision of a key worker to implement a needs assessment plan and act as mediator.

Personal care and self care training were suggested. “Stress management was felt to be an important element of this, with carers likely to benefit significantly from learning coping skills and stress reduction techniques.” More generally, education and training were seen as having additional benefits for carers, such as providing some time away from caring, opportunities for networking with other people, and having somewhere to go for advice.

It is important to point out though that the courses run by Caring for Carers were provided at a time when funding was available. In the current climate of budgetary cutbacks, it is likely that such Care groups will be unable to provide the same number of courses as previously, despite an increasing demand for such courses.

Also, the “*Listen to Carers*” report identified significant barriers that prevented carers from accessing education and training. Transport difficulties were especially a problem for carers who do not have access to a car and who live in rural areas. The lack of a

⁷⁸http://www.carealliance.ie/Dept_of_Finance_Pre_Budget_2009%5B1%5D.pdf

comprehensive rural public transport system means that many carers simply cannot make their way from their home to the training centre. A very basic issue was the lack of short-term care cover for the time that the family carer would need to leave the home to participate in a course. The carers taking part in the consultations felt they would not be able to commit to a course without being able to access such care cover.

The HSE provide national certified training courses such as “Care in the Home” for carers and people working in the caring profession⁷⁹.

Other courses can include:

- Caring for Children with Special Needs
- Occupational First Aid
- Carers Support Programme
- Entitlement for Carers
- Patient Handling Course

Vocational Training Needs of those leaving caring roles

Carealliance, in its budget submission, stated that “the current cut-off period of Carers Allowance is 6 weeks following the termination of a caring role e.g. where care recipient is admitted to residential care. We believe that this does not give a sufficient time frame for carers who may have been caring over a long period of time to build up the skills necessary to return to the paid labour market. Instead, a system whereby the payment is gradually reduced over a period of 4 months should be introduced.”

In a situation where the person being cared for dies, Caring for Carers believe that Bereavement Counselling should be provided to carers in such situations. There is also the related issue in that a person may have to undergo another means test in order to qualify for a Jobseekers Allowance.

⁷⁹http://www.hse.ie/eng/Find_a_Service/Older_People_Services/Carers_and_Relatives/Support_for_Carers.html

Caring for Carers recommended in its Budget Submission (No 3) that Carer's Clinics should be provided in each Community Care area "acting as a one stop shop, providing needs assessment, advice and information and referral services for Home Carers". The Association also proposed (No.14) that Carers Allowance claimants be allowed to work 19.5 hours per week instead of the 15 they are currently entitled to work. This would mean that Carers would be able to access Community Employment schemes and education increasing their skills and knowledge and reducing the likelihood of social welfare dependency in future. More employment opportunities would also combat the social isolation felt by Carers and an increase in hours worked would alleviate the financial hardship felt by many Carers.

Carealliance has also advocated that Family Carers who work up to 19.5 hours per week remain eligible for the Carers Allowance This would also enable Family Carers on the Back to Work Allowance to claim the half rate Carer's Allowance. Additionally, this would allow Family Carers to participate in training opportunities such as the Community Employment (CE) Scheme.

The "*Listen to Carers*" report noted that Return-to-work training was considered important in order to enable those who have finished caring to re-enter the workforce. At some of the consultations the idea was raised that formal care training could be offered to those people who may wish to make a career of caring. There were mixed responses to this, with some carers thinking this to be a good idea, while others said that the last thing they would want to do is continue to care after their original caring role had ended. It also pointed out that many carers find themselves totally unprepared for return to work once their caring role has ended. "Current restrictions on those receiving carer payments can effectively prevent carers from accessing many forms of training."

Other Relevant Issues for Carers

Two key issues identified by Susan Hogan of Caring for Carers related to pensions for carers and the means test for Carers Allowance. As the carer is often the spouse of the income earner, they may not be entitled to a contributory State Pension in their own right at 66 and will have to do a means test in order to qualify for the Non-Contributory State pension. Caring for Carers has suggested that carers should receive credits which would count towards the Contributory State Pension.

In addition, applicants are currently means tested on the basis of their Household Income. Caring for Carers would recommend that means testing for Carers Allowance is carried out on the basis of Carer's income alone and that a common streamlined means test is used by Social Welfare Departments and the Health Service Executive.

Key Issues for Carers in West Clare

The Carers Network in West Clare, supported by Eirí Corca Baiscinn has been involved in

- Support for members at well attended monthly meetings.
- Workshop given by Caring for Carers informed members on their welfare rights and entitlements.
- Acknowledgement of enormous difficulties in accessing caring aids, and the identification of a practical solution to this problem.
- Focused campaign for an autism unit and team to be established at Kilkee NS, with potential to serve children in other schools in west Clare.
- Acknowledgement of the desolation, lack of confidence, and absence of employment history and opportunities faced by Carers when they cease caring.
- Produced information booklet for Carers.

Carers and Farming

There are many difficulties experienced by Carers who are involved in farming. For example, Carers in receipt of Carer's Allowance are only allowed to work a maximum of 15 hours per week. This applies equally to on-farm work, going against the tradition of caring and farming where the roles have always been combined. It further prohibits Carers who are involved in farming from taking part in FÁS training courses or joining the Rural Social Scheme.

16 Disadvantaged Youth

Disadvantaged young people are a target group outlined by Pobal. This group is sometimes referred to as youth at risk but there is no consensus as to what they are at risk of – it may be crime, anti-social behaviour, early school leaving, poverty, homelessness or a combination of these.

The following groups would seem to be most at risk of social exclusion which is defined under the 2000 – 2006 National Development Plan as

“cumulative marginalization from production (unemployment), from consumption (poverty), from social networks (community, family and neighbours), from decision making and from an adequate quality of life.”

- Children in care (136)
- Those with JLO cautions (600 per year approx),
- Early school leavers (80 per year approx),
- Those with Probation Orders
- Those with English Language and school difficulties,
- Those with intellectual and physical disabilities (1598 persons under 24 years in the latter group)
- Those experiencing Mental illness
- Drug and alcohol addicts
- Victims of bullying and homophobic behaviour.

Statistical or geographical information is not readily available on many of these groups. Some are covered in other section of this Profile such as early school leavers. Other information that is available on disadvantaged youth and social inclusion services to address their needs are listed below.

However it is important to note that within the LDSIP nationally to date, work with this group has always focussed on educational disadvantage and this emphasis may well continue into the new programme. Hence this section should be

considered in conjunction with the parts of Section 6 concerned with early school leaving and DEIS.

HSE Services for Disadvantaged Youth

The HSE provides a range of support services to disadvantaged youth including the following.⁸⁰

Family Support Worker

The Family Support Worker Service offers practical and emotional support to families during difficult times with a view to maintaining children at home with their families where possible. The Service offers home based support to families for an agreed number of hours per week in some of the following areas

The Family Support Worker is conscious of child protection concerns within the family and will report any concerns to the social worker. Family Support Workers attend all child protection meetings, courts or family welfare conferences.

Community Childcare Worker

A Community Childcare Worker works with other professionals to enhance the development of children both in the care of the HSE, and those who have been identified as being at risk, deprived, disadvantaged or requiring special attention for a variety of reasons. They work with children who display specific and general behaviour, learning and emotional problems. They will empower parents and carers to enable them to cope with and facilitate the development of the children in their care. Childcare Workers also work with children in care to help them make sense of past experiences.

Aftercare Worker

An Aftercare Worker carries out duties assigned by the Principal Social Worker or Team Leader in relation to the welfare and social needs of young people leaving care and their carers/families. They liaise with the medical, nursing, para-medical and other HSE staff and organisations involved with care plans for young people leaving care.

⁸⁰ http://www.hse.ie/eng/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/Roles_.html

Aftercare workers ensure that care plans focussing on the accommodation, education, employment, health and social care needs of young people leaving or having left the care system are implemented.

Social Worker

The Professionally Qualified Social Worker in the child care services can work in four main areas; Child Protection, Child Placement, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Family Support. Social workers may work with families and individuals who are experiencing a variety of problems, including emotional, social, psychiatric and behavioural. They may also work with individuals and their families on either a daily or weekly basis on matters such as child abuse, domestic violence, homelessness and adoption of both foreign and Irish children. Social workers work with a team of professionals to respond to the needs of clients.

Child Care Manager

The Child Care Manager is responsible for the overall management and development of Child Care Services within a designated geographical area. They are responsible for delivering cost effective services in line with HSE policies and within the resources allocated. The Child Care Manager receives all reports on child abuse and initiates appropriate action in consultation with relevant heads of discipline who in turn decides when and in what circumstances a case conference is necessary; and make suitable arrangements for same.

Springboard Project

Springboard is a national HSE family support initiative, which works in a targeted way with vulnerable families. The HSE are currently funding Clarecare to implement the programme in the RAPID area of Ennis. The programme has four staff from multidisciplinary backgrounds. The project will work with approximately twenty parents and children at a time, on an individual basis in their own homes, or in the Clarecare Springboard offices. It will run six different groups in the local community over the first year. These venues include the Respond Centre in Stonecourt, the Community Resource House at 16 Gordon Drive, Cloughleigh and the Clarecare Springboard offices. Referrals will be open to all agencies, and self referrals will be actively encouraged.

An Advisory Group consisting of a number of local agencies has been set up by the HSE West to guide and inform the overall direction of the Clarecare Springboard project and ensure that the project is meeting local need.

Others

HSE are involved in the funding and implementation of Family Support initiatives in the county.

Clare VEC

The legislative framework that governs the delivery of youth work services in Ireland is the Youth Work Act 2001. The act defines youth work as a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of youth persons through their voluntary participation. Youth work is seen as complementary to young people's formal, academic & vocation education & training & provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.

The VEC plays a very central role in relation to the provision of youth work services. They now have a statutory responsibility for the development of youth work in their areas and are required to produce a 3 year youth work service plan in consultation with key stakeholders. They also have a co-ordination role in respect of youth work programmes and services and linking them with other educational programmes and services targeted at young people.

Functions of VECs include:

- Providing assistance, including financial assistance, to youth work organisations.
- Preparation and implementation of Youth Work Development Plan (Three years).
- Drafting annual youth work budgets.
- Reporting on youth work services to the Minister.
- Establish a Youth Work Committee to advise and make recommendations to its youth work functions.

The VEC Youth Officer is responsible for youth budgets, local youth club grants, seeking additional grants for clubs and societies and then assessing and processing of same. The

VEC operates the local youth grant scheme, funded by the Department of Education and Science from the proceeds of the National Lottery. The scheme is open to all organisations that have youth work as their primary focus. However disadvantaged and marginal groups will be priority targets. The Scheme comprises a number of grants that can be grouped broadly under two headings:

- Youth Grants: Designed to aid the ongoing cost of youth clubs and groups
- Special Youth Grants: These grants are once-off in nature to aid special youth work initiatives, particularly those aimed at disadvantaged young people

Clare Youth Service

Clare Youth Service works to enable young people to develop to their full potential, through the co-operative work of trained volunteers and professional staff. Their target is the 12-25 years age group with particular emphasis on those affected by social exclusion. At the moment, 2500 young people are connected in some way with the various programmes offered by CYS.

CYS has three main divisions – youth work, education and training and youth information.

Youth Work programmes, clubs and projects are delivered by volunteers, in many towns and villages throughout County Clare, and by staff from central locations in Ennis, Shannon and Kilrush. In addition certain programmes are offered on an outreach basis where specific needs are identified. Programmes are open to all teenagers however many have specific age groups including under fifteens, over fifteens and over eighteens.

The Youth Information Bureau is headquartered in Ennis and conducts an active outreach programme to clubs, schools and civic centres around the county.

The primary focus of the Education and Training Section is to cater for 60 young people who do not or cannot avail of mainstream provision in these areas. Through a person-centred approach, emphasis is placed on building and enhancing self-confidence, social skills and overall personal development. Courses provide a blend of academic learning and practical skills with the ultimate aim of enabling participants to progress to employment or further training.

CYS operates the Garda Youth Diversion Programme in Ennis and Kilrush, supported by advisory committees comprising local Gardaí, JLO, Community Representatives, FÁS, Probation & Welfare Service and local schools.

The project works intensively with a small group of young people who are referred onto the project. Referrals are taken from members of the advisory committee as well as residents, parents; the young people themselves, the HSE and Social Workers.

The programmes are designed to provide a stimulating experience for young people using a range of methods including groupwork, education programmes and one-to-one supports.

Community Partnerships, FRCs and CDPs

As outlined in other parts of this Profile, the county's LDSIP groups, FRCs and CDP all operate a range of initiatives targeting vulnerable young people through educational, social and recreational activities. Many of these activities are in partnership with the HSE and/or Clare Youth Service.

Interagency Groups

There are inter-agency groups in Kilrush and Ennistymon focussed on addressing the needs of vulnerable young people. HSE, Clare Youth Service, Department of Education, schools, Clarecare, North West Clare FRC and Eirí Corca Baiscinn are key players.

17 Ex-Offenders and Ex-Prisoners

Number of Offenders

The most recent figures available for prison sentences relate to 2006 and this can be viewed as a typical year.

Table 17.1 2006 Prison Committals and Releases for those with Clare Addresses

Number of Individuals with Clare addresses committed to Irish prisons	150
Sentenced committals (remainder were remands)	92
Number of Individuals with Clare addresses released from Irish prisons	117

Based on 2006 figures, it is estimated that approximately 1000 persons with Clare addresses have left prison in the past decade.

Of the 92 persons committed, 22% were sentenced for a month or less, 37% for less than 3 months, 53% for less than 6 months and 67% for a year or less.

Profile of Offenders

Age Profile

<18	18 < 21	21 < 25	25 < 30	30 < 40	40 < 50	50 +	Total
3	19	26	33	40	19	10	150

Age Left School Profile

< 10	10 < 12	12 < 14	14 < 16	16 < 18	18 < 24	24 +	Total
7	2	18	45	41	34	3	150

48% of committed individuals with Clare addresses left school before the age of 16. This percentage is lower than national figures which show 56% of committed individuals leaving school before 16 years of age.

Level of Education Profile

For reasons of confidentiality, a general summary only is provided. Of the individuals committed with Clare addresses, 51% stated that they left school with no qualifications. This is relatively similar to the national figure of 53%. Just 10% had a third level certificate or higher.

Employment Status Profile

Employed	Unemployed	Other	Total
50	99	1	150

66% of the individuals committed were unemployed and 33% were employed, compared to 73% and 26% nationally.

73 of the 150 individuals (49%) committed to prisons with Clare addresses in 2006 stated that they had an occupation (whether employed in that occupation at the time of committal or not). Of those 73 people, the most common employment sectors were Construction (45%), Engineering (8%) and Catering/Hospitality (4%). This is compared to national figures of 53% for the most common sector, Construction, followed by Catering/Hospitality and Driving/Delivering with 6% each.

Services for Ex - Offenders

For those leaving prison, homelessness, unemployment and mental health issues are common difficulties.

PACE is a national organisation working with those with an offending background. Their vision is that “every individual leaving prison will have a plan to meet their training, employment and housing needs.”

Business in the Community (BITCI) and the Probation Service (with support from IBEC, the Small Firms Association and ICTU) runs the Linkage Programme that aims to offer training and/or employment placement for offenders referred by the Probation Service.

From its inception in 2000 until 2007, 5,816 ex-offenders have been referred to The Linkage Programme by the Probation Service nationally, resulting in 70% of the clients being placed in training, employment or education.

Here, the service is organised at a Mid-West regional level and has dealt with 450 referrals regionally since 2003, including 79 from Clare⁸¹. The Mid-West Training & Employment Officer (TEO) works with employers, FÁS, VEC, third level colleges etc to make training and employment opportunities available to those referred to the service. The service visits clients in Ennis for 1-2 days weekly with less frequent visits to Kilrush.

A current focus of the service is its liaison with the Limerick Regeneration Project through which it requests construction employers to give priority and opportunity to the target group.

Probation Orders

On average, there are 100 – 120 persons under probation supervision in Clare at any given time. There is increasing concern about the number of probationers who have mental health difficulties.

Youth Offences

Since May 2002, the Juvenile Diversion Programme has been placed on a statutory footing. The Children Act 2001 states that “*unless the interests of society otherwise require, any child who has committed an offence and accepts responsibility for his criminal behaviour shall be considered for admission to a Diversion Programme.*”

In order for a juvenile to be eligible for caution under the programme, the following criteria have to be met:

- The offender is under 18 years of age at the time of the commission of the offence
- The juvenile must admit involvement in the crime/offence
- The juvenile was not cautioned previously, or if cautioned previously it would be deemed appropriate to administer a further caution
- Parents, guardians or person acting in loco parentis agree to terms of the caution.

In Clare, referrals to the scheme have been averaging 600 in recent years.

⁸¹ Source: BITC

Year	Total Referrals	Formal Caution	Informal Caution	Unsuitable for Caution	No Further Action	Pending
2005	576	103	302	96	34	41
2006	580	222	136	169	24	29
2007	625	132	281	142	36	34

Formal cautions involve a period of Garda supervision for 12 months. This does not apply to informal cautions. Note that some children may receive more than one formal caution.

Approximately 80% of those receiving cautions are male. About 5% go on to full prosecution.⁸²

⁸² *Annual Report of the Committee Appointed to Monitor the Effectiveness of the Diversion Programme*

18 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People

Pobal's LDSIP 'Framework to Support Social Inclusion for Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual People' states that these are marginalised groups "facing numerous barriers to their full acceptance and inclusion."⁸³

Particular issues include: bullying, harassment, covert barriers to successful career paths, hate crime, access to health services and high rates of homelessness and suicide.

Within the Mid-West, service providers and advocacy groups cite rural isolation as a particular problem for this community.

Research

Research on LGBT Youth Needs in the Mid -West is due for completion in November 2008. This is the first research of its kind in the Republic of Ireland. . It is hoped that it will provide critical information on a) services available to young LGBT people, levels of usage and barriers to usage, 2) the main issues facing them and 3) the services they wish to see made available.

BeLonG To is a national organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people, aged between 14 and 23, providing youth work and advocacy services. Having noted anecdotal evidence of high levels of recreational drug taking amongst LGBY people deriving from an array of psychological, environmental, social and experiential risk factors, they secured funding through Pobal to commission research with young LGBT people between the ages of 18 and 26 to determine a) the extent and causes of drug use amongst this client group b) the impact of drugs on young people and c) the type of service response that is appropriate to meet the needs of those who are currently using drugs or who may potentially begin to do so in the future.

The headline findings include:

- 65 per cent of LGBT youth have had some experience of drug taking⁸⁴.

⁸³ Pobal, p.3

⁸⁴ In this research, the term 'drugs' refers to any psychoactive substance, excluding alcohol'.

- 21 per cent have systematically used drugs (i.e. have done so on more than 60 occasions).
- 60 per cent had taken drugs over the 12 months preceding the survey.
- 40 per cent had used drugs in the preceding month and 29 per cent in the seven days leading up to the survey.
- 56 per cent of LGBT youth have some history of taking cannabis, 44 per cent poppers, 33 per cent ecstasy and 32 per cent cocaine.

These findings suggest that drug use is widespread amongst LGBT young people and is more prevalent than recorded in comparable studies probing drug taking within the youth population generally.

At national level, the HSE and the Equality Authority have conducted research on access to services but other statistical information is lacking.

Services

At statutory level, the HSE and the Gardaí have placed special emphasis on targeting gays and lesbians.

Rainbow Support Services is a charity organisation that supports the LGBT community in the Mid - West region, covering Limerick City, Limerick County, County Clare and North Tipperary. They operate a confidential telephone helpline for both Gays and Lesbians each Tuesday 730 – 930 pm.

At a county level in Clare, there are fewer visible services, principally Gay Clare which operate a social programme for gay men and also interacts with the media on Gay advocacy issues.

East Clare CDP, in conjunction with Rainbow, offer individual supports in the Scariff area.

19 Social Inclusion Infrastructure and Services

SIM Group (Social Inclusion Measure)

The role of the SIM Group is to support co-ordination of local activities aimed at enhancing social inclusion in the county. Its primary task is to report to the County Development Board on progress surrounding implementation of the social inclusion actions contained within the Board's 10-year Strategy for Economic, Social & Cultural Development (2002-2012).

Family Resource Centres

There are four FRCs in the county at Shannon, Killaloe, North West Clare and Kilrush. Only the latter operates in a current LDSIP area. The North West Clare FRC company also operate a Community Service Programme and National Childcare Investment Programme.

Community Development Programme

There are three in Clare – Ennis CDP, East Clare CDP and the Clare Women's Network. One operates outside current LDSIP (East Clare) areas whilst the CWN is countywide.

Clare Community Forum

CCF is a countywide group consisting of representatives from all interested community and voluntary groups in the county. The twenty five members of the Forum are drawn from five networks across the county. The Community & Enterprise Section supports CCF and its Networks by providing information to community and voluntary groups, supporting linkage between sections of Council and the community and voluntary sector, promoting activities of interest through the Clare Community Forum and its Networks.

The Clare Community Forum has two representatives as members of the Clare County Development Board. The primary function is to facilitate feedback to the County Development Board from the representatives of the community and voluntary groups across the county.

RAPID

RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) is a Government initiative to target the 46 most disadvantaged urban areas and provincial towns in the country. Parts of Ennis (Old Military Barracks, Dalcassian, Hermitage, Cloughleigh, Drumbiggle, and Clancy Park) are included in the Programme.

Community Service Programme

The following CSPs are currently in place and more are expected to commence in late 2008 and 2009 when the current application round gets to final assessment.

Raidió Corca Baiscinn
Obair Environment Services Ltd
Obair Newmarket-on-Fergus Ltd
Burren Display Centre Ltd
Irish Seed Saver Association Ltd
Obair Childcare Services Ltd
Shannon Social Economy Maintenance Services Ltd
Vandeleur Walled Garden Enterprises Ltd
West Clare CSP
North West Clare FRC

Clare Accessible Transport

In recent years, the service has had over 30,000 users annually across 43 services and 9 routes. There has been a significant expansion of the service in May 2008 with routes now in the west and north of the county.

Community Childcare Providers

There are a total of 191 notified childcare providers in the county, including childminders who cater for up to five children. The number of Community Providers is 43. These are based at Ennis (5), Shannon (2), Ennistymon (2), Tuamgraney (2), Kilrush (2), Mountshannon, Loughraney, Clonlara, Scarriff, Killaloe, Barefield, Clarecastle, Kilmaley, Ballyea, Lisdoonvarna (2), Liscannor, Inagh, Ruan, Miltown Malbay, Connolly, Crusheen, Kilfenora, Sixmilebridge, Newmarket-on-Fergus (2), Knocklisheen, Kilmihil, Lissycasey, Doonbeg, Kildysert, Labasheeda, Kilbaha, Kilkee.

Rural Social Scheme

There are 112 persons (104 male and 8 female) engaged on the RSS. The aims of the scheme are to provide income support to low income farmers and fishermen who are currently in receipt of long-term Social Welfare payments and to provide certain services of benefit to rural communities. The scheme is administered by Rural Resource Development Ltd.

Community Groups benefiting from the Rural Social Scheme in Clare at the present time:

- North** Carron/New Quay/Noughaval Parish Development, Lisdoonvarna GAA – St. Breckans,
West Lisdoonvarna Community Health Facility Ltd, Lisdoonvarna Community Council, Burren Way Ltd.,
Clare Doolin, Liscannor Community Field Committee, Miltown Malbay Graveyards Committee
Tubber GAA/Gun Club, Kilfenora Tidy towns, Kilshanny Community Centre.
- North** Killanena/Flagmount Community Council, Feakle Community Council, Whitegate Community
East Council, Mountshannon Community Council, Broadford Parish Council, Seedsavers Environment
Clare Group, East Clare Way.
- South** Doonbeg Community Development Ltd., Moyasta Development Association,
West Carrigaholt Pastoral Council, Eirí Corca Baiscinn, Killballyowen Development Ltd.,
Clare: Kilkee G.A.A. Club.
- Mid**
South Ballynacally G.A.A. Club, Clare Daycare Centre, Clarecastle G.A.A. Club,
Clare Lissycasey G.A.A. Club, Cranny/Coolmeen G.A.A. Club, Kilmurray McMahon Community Group.
- Mid**
West Kilmurray Ibrickane G.A.A. Club, Cooraclare G.A.A. Club, Kilfarboy Graveyard Committee.
Clare Kilnamona Development Assoc, Inagh Development Co, Inagh GAA, Kilmihil GAA, St Patrick's
Clare Soccer Club, Kilmihil, Clarecastle Day Care Centre, Clarecastle GAA, Cooraclare GAA, Clare
Central GAA County Board, Connolly Tidy Towns, Kilmaley Day Care Centre.

Clarecare

Clare care offers a range of community, family support and social work services including Childcare Worker Service, Advocacy Service (for parent of children in HSE care), Traveller Support Service, Family Worker Service, Adolescent Worker Services, Social Work with Older People, Aftercare Service for young people leaving care, Traveller Primary Health Care programme, Social Work Programme.

The Family Support Team also provides Parenting Supports, Homework clubs, Transition programmes from Primary to Secondary school, Anti-bullying programmes, Personal Development, Women's group, Teenage Activity groups, Parent & Toddler groups.

Clarecare is contracted by the HSE to deliver the Springboard Project in the RAPID area of Ennis from September 2008. This is an intensive family support programme that involves school referrals and community based family support for vulnerable families. It aims to provide family support to promote the well being of children in families, reduce the level of risk of children going into care, and promote the parenting capacity of parents.

Clare Youth Service

CYS has three main divisions – youth work, education and training (outline in Section 5) and youth information.

Youth Work programmes, clubs and projects are delivered by volunteers, in many towns and villages throughout County Clare, and by staff from central locations in Ennis, Shannon and Kilrush. In addition certain programmes are offered on an outreach basis where specific needs are identified. Programmes are open to all teenagers however many have specific age groups including under fifteens, over fifteens and over eighteens.

The Youth Information Bureau is headquartered in Ennis and conducts an active outreach programme to clubs, schools and civic centres around the county

Garda Youth Diversion Programme

These programmes, in Ennis and Kilrush, are managed by Clare Youth Service and supported by advisory committees comprising local Gardaí, JLO, Community Representatives, FÁS, Probation & Welfare Service, CYS, and local schools.

The project works intensively with a small group of young people who are referred onto the project. Referrals are taken from members of the advisory committee as well as residents, parents; the young people themselves, the HSE and Social Workers.

The programmes are designed to provide a stimulating experience for young people using a range of methods including groupwork, education programmes and one-to-one supports.

Clare Sports Partnership

CSP employs a Sports Inclusion Officer with a remit for the development of opportunities for people with disabilities and their integration with other sports participants. CSP has also developed sport and recreation opportunities for isolated and disadvantaged Older Persons.

Interim Cohesion Activities

As part of the countywide extension, interim services have included the North Clare Farm Family Service; After School Clubs at Killaloe, Ennistymon and Meelick; and a countywide enterprise support service. The After School projects in Killaloe and Ennistymon have now got National Childcare Investment Programme funding. The North Clare Farm Family Support Service and the Meelick project continue to operate but the enterprise support service has ceased.

Others

Other local and regional networks/fora focussed on social inclusion issues include:

- Mid West Regional Drugs Task Force
- Travellers Inter-Agency Strategy Steering Group and Implementation Groups
- Implementation Group of Cohesion Older People Study
- South West Regional Network - Community Partnership Network
- Kilrush Youth Service Providers' Network
- North Clare Youth Network
- Clare Women's Action Group
- West Clare Carer Support Groups' Network

20 Summary Gaps and Needs

The foregoing sections provide a profile of groups experiencing social exclusion to some degree across the county. It is not a full picture as most of the information is quantitative and does not capture people's subjective experience. Neither is it comprehensive as it is a collation of the available information and is subject to some time lags, margins of error in conceptualisation and in gathering technique. Nevertheless, it can help us outline a picture of disadvantage and unmet needs. Further consultation with target groups and service providers can fill in the picture better before Programmes of Action are adopted.

The profile is presented as tool for the Clare Local Development Company to analyse needs across the county that could be addressed in the new social inclusion programme even if the combined needs will be beyond the scope of the programme.

A cursory reflection on the profile yields the following possible areas for action (list not in order of priority):

Area/Target Group	Comment
EDs between Kilrush and Kildysert Flagmount/ Killanena area	Consistent scores of disadvantage; no agency presence in these areas.
Older Persons	Enhancement of community services and fuller participation in community life
Unemployment	This is rising especially in the 'dynamic core' and the Ennis blackspot. Current education and training opportunities do not have sufficient focus on males whose employment prospects are affected by the construction downturn. Lifelong learning and upskilling opportunities are crucial to those most disadvantaged in the labour market. It will be important to offer

	<p>accessible, relevant courses and to maximise childcare and financial supports such as the Millennium Fund to assist people to gain meaningful qualifications.</p> <p>Enterprise supports are likely to be in greater demand across the county as employment opportunities become scarcer.</p>
Early school leavers and disadvantaged youth	Reliable statistics and other information on young people with drug problems and mental illness are not easy to obtain. A clearer picture of vulnerable young people should be gathered in the next phase through discussions with SCPs, CYS, JLOs, GYDP, homeless services, drug services and Mental Health Services.
Lone Parents	Those on OPFP in certain geographical clusters. Whilst LPs need targeting, provision for them should be integrated as lessons of recent NDP Gender Equality pilot actions show. The LDSIP in the county has not been very successful in recruiting LPs to date.
Low Income Farm Families	Outside of the existing services, there is need in East Clare. Further work need to identify EDs with greatest disadvantage outside the operation areas of the current farm Family Service. There is scope to go beyond the economic to cultural and social needs also.
People with Disabilities	The available statistics do not tell us much about the distribution of services and need. More consultation needed with service providers.
Disadvantaged Women	A POBAL target group but little information or shared analysis of who these are or how to define them. If something more than tokenism is to be applied, some attention needs to be given to this area, especially to defining and identifying the group.
Ennis and Shannon	Further consultation is needed to identify needs outside the Ennis West and RAPID area in Ennis. Likewise, further investigation is needed to assess areas of need and existing services' capacity in Shannon.

Appendix Welfare Payments: Eligibility and Rates

There are two direct employment supports available to the unemployed; Jobseekers allowance and Jobseekers Benefit. A certain group may also be eligible to apply for pre-retirement allowance while those who are classified as farmers and either actively or inactively seeking employment may be entitled to Farm Assist.

Jobseekers Allowance

Scheme calculations are based on the rates below - These figures may change subject to personal circumstances

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Maximum Personal Rate	€197.80	€204.30
Maximum Extra payment for dependant Spouse/Partner	€131.30	€135.60
Extra payment for each Dependant Child	€24.00	€ 26.00

If your adult dependent is providing full time care to another person he/she may also qualify for half rate Carers Allowance.

Jobseekers Allowance is a means-tested payment made to people who are unemployed and who do not qualify for Jobseekers Benefit, or whose entitlement to Jobseekers Benefit has expired

or

who do qualify for reduced Jobseekers Benefit but choose to claim Jobseekers Allowance instead.

Qualifying Conditions

To qualify for Jobseekers Allowance a person must:

- be normally resident in Ireland
- be unemployed
- be over 18 and under pension age (66)

- be capable of work
- be available for work
- be genuinely seeking work
- satisfy the condition as to means
- prove unemployment in the prescribed manner

You may also qualify for

- Medical Card
- Rent or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Assistance under the Supplementary Allowance Scheme
- Fuel or Smokeless Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- School Book Scheme

Jobseekers Benefit

Basic Rates

Jobseekers Rates are graduated according to earnings in the relevant tax year

Earnings	Personal Rate	Increase for Spouse/Partner
€150.00 and over	€197.80	€131.30
€125.00 and less than €150.00	€155.00	€85.10
€80.00 and less than €125.00	€127.80	€85.10
Less than €80.00	€88.90	€85.10

Extra payment for each Dependant Child - €24.00

If your adult dependent is providing full time care to another person he/she may also qualify for half rate Carers Allowance.

Unemployment Benefit is a PRSI based scheme. It is paid weekly to persons who were in employment and paid PRSI contributions and who are now out of work.

To qualify for Jobseekers Benefit a person must:

1. be unemployed
2. be under pension age (66)
3. be capable of work
4. be available for full-time work
5. be genuinely seeking work
6. have sustained a substantial loss of employment
7. satisfy the contribution conditions (PRSI Classes A, H & P)
8. have 39 weeks PRSI paid since starting work and 39 weeks paid or credited in the relevant Tax Year **or** 26 weeks PRSI paid in the relevant tax year and 26 weeks PRSI paid in the tax year prior to the relevant tax year
9. prove unemployment in the prescribed manner

You may also qualify for half the personal rate of Jobseekers Benefit if you are receiving

- One Parent Family Payment
- Widow or Widowers (Contributory) Pension
- Widow or Widowers (Non-Contributory) Pension
- Deserted Wife's Benefit or Allowance
- Prisoners Wife's Allowance

You may also qualify for

- Medical Card
- Rent or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel or Smokeless Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- School Book Scheme

From January 2009 it will be more difficult for new applicants to qualify for JB and it will be payable for a shorter period. The proposed changes will also apply to Health and Safety Benefit.

At present, you must have, among other things, at least 52 paid PRSI contributions in order to qualify. If you are applying for JB from January 2009, you will need 104 paid contributions – in effect, you will need to have worked and paid contributions for at least two years. About 1,600 people will be affected by this change in 2009. You must also have at least 39 paid or credited contributions in the Relevant Tax Year – this condition is not being changed.

A new condition is being introduced – which means that at least 13 of these 39 contributions must be paid contributions. In 2009, the relevant year will be 2007. About 800 people will be affected by this change in 2009.

The period for which Jobseeker's Benefit will be paid is also being reduced. It is currently payable for 15 months where 260 or more PRSI contributions have been paid. This will be reduced to 12 months for new claimants. If you make your claim for JB from January 2009 onwards, this new limit applies to you. It also applies to you if you are already claiming JB and you had been getting it for less than 6 months on Budget day (14 October 2008). If you had been on JB for more than 6 months on Budget day, then you may continue to receive it for the remainder of the 15-month period. If you have fewer than 260 contributions paid, your entitlement to JB is currently a maximum of 12 months. This is being reduced to 9 months. This new limit applies to new claimants and to those who had been on JB for less than 3 months on Budget day. It is expected that just over 9,000 people will be affected by this change in duration in 2009.

A reduced rate of JB may be payable to unemployed people who were previously working part-time. At present, the reduced rate may be payable if you had reckonable weekly earnings of less than €150 a week in the Relevant Tax Year. From January 2009 the reduced rate may be payable if your reckonable weekly earnings in the Relevant Tax Year were less than €300 a week. It is expected that over 2,000 people will be affected by this change in 2009. Illness Benefit

Pre-Retirement Allowance

Scheme calculations are based on the rates below - These figures may change subject to personal circumstances

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Maximum Personal Rate	€197.80	€204.30
Maximum Extra payment for dependant Spouse/Partner	€131.30	€135.60
Extra payment for each Dependant Child	€24.00	€ 26.00

If you or an adult dependent are providing full time care to another person you or your dependent may also qualify for half rate Carers Allowance.

Pre-retirement Allowance is a means-tested payment similar to Jobseekers Allowance for people aged 55 years or over who are retired from the labour force and have received Jobseekers Allowance/Benefit for at least 15 months.

Qualifying Conditions

To qualify for payment of Pre-retirement Allowance (PRETA) a person must:

- be retired
- be aged between 55 and 66
- be in receipt of Jobseekers payments for 390 days

OR

- have been in receipt of Pre-Retirement Allowance in the past 52 weeks

OR

- cease to be entitled to One Parent Family Payment or Carer's Allowance

OR

- be a separated spouse who has not engaged in employment for the preceding 15 months.
- satisfy a means test
- be living in the State

You may also qualify for

- Medical Card
- Rent or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance
- School Book Scheme

Farm Assist

Scheme calculations are based on the rates below - These figures may change subject to personal circumstances

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Maximum Personal Rate	€197.80	€204.30
Maximum Extra payment for dependant Spouse/Partner	€131.30	€135.60
Extra payment for each Dependant Child	€24.00	€ 26.00

If you or an adult dependent are providing full time care to another person you or your dependent may also qualify for half rate Carers Allowance.

Farm Assist is a Social Assistance means-tested scheme for low-income farmers.

Qualifying Conditions

There are only three eligibility conditions for receipt of Farm Assist.

A person must:

1. be aged between 18 and 66 years
2. be engaged in farming
3. satisfy a means test.

"Farmer/farming" means a person engaged in farming land, including commonage, which is owned or leased and used by the farmer for the purposes of husbandry.

You may also qualify for

- Medical Card
- Rent or Mortgage Interest Supplement
- Fuel Allowance
- Back to School Clothing and Footwear
- Allowance Assistance under the Supplementary Allowance Scheme
- School Book Scheme