### G9: Regional Growth and International Potential – Actions

Co. Kilkenny is already involved in a significant number of regional initiatives that have a direct bearing on the economic development of the region. These will be reinforced through this goal, which will seek to initialise and capitalise on regional activity, particularly where this is focussed on realising new and emerging international opportunities.

From an economic perspective, the development of international linkages that result in access to international markets in terms of tourism and export potential for local business will be facilitated.

It is recognised that Local Authorities in Ireland have not been accessing and availing of EU funding opportunities to the same extent as other European municipalities. This goal will be used to enable the county to develop a more coherent and successful mechanism for pursuing additional funding and resource opportunities, and in developing innovative engagement models that seek to scale-up local actions to identify and secure funding opportunities. Focus will be given to INTERREG funding and the new ERDF Urban Development Fund, and also enabling actions related to relevant initiatives of investment programmes such as the SFI.

The South East BIC is actively involved in EU projects. Through its EBN connection and membership of Special Interest Groups the BIC can assist suitable companies to be engaged / participate in suitable Horizon 2020 projects. In particular South East BIC is involved in the BIO Economy Group which is heavily orientated towards agriculture and ICT. LEO Kilkenny will work with South East BIC to ensure that these opportunities can be maximised for businesses in County Kilkenny. It is expected that Goal G9 will result in more local companies participating in EU projects and benefitting from greater transference of ideas, processes and project funding opportunities.

#### G9: Actions Summary

**A47:** Support industry-led fora and strategic collaborations at regional level, with a view to contributing to the overall development of the South East Region. In particular, Kilkenny County Council will proactively support the implementation of the South East Enterprise Action Plan for Jobs. This will include collating baseline data to contribute to the actions in the South East Action Plan for Jobs.

**A48:** Support the participation of Kilkenny based enterprises in best practice events across the South East Region, including participation in EU funded programmes and initiatives.

**A49:** Further advance the proposal for a European centre of excellence for ICT in Agriculture in Kilkenny.

**A50:** Participate in the eDIGIREGION Project and assist in the development of smart specialisation strategies for the South East Region.

**A51:** Proactively work with other local authorities to promote the region and advance regional opportunities, including the implementation of the South East Region - Action Plan for Jobs. This will also include collaborating to develop the South East as an agri-tech centre of excellence.

**A52:** Assist in the development of a showcase of the region's manufacturing base with a dual focus on: attracting young people to careers in manufacturing; and facilitating manufacturing companies to promote more STEM participation in schools.

**A53:** Exploit the potential of convergence opportunities in the South East, linking life-sciences with pharma/medical devices, engineering, ICT, and Telecoms.

**A54:** Contribute to a regional assessment of the economic value added potential of the forestry sector.

**A55:** Establish a programme on a regional level for large employers to collaborate to brand the region as a tourist destination and promote the Ancient East theme.

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| **High-Level Goal** | **High-Level Outcome** | **Objective** | **Co-Ordinating Body** | **Key Partner Organisations** | **Timeframe** | **Project Milestones** | **Actions** |
| **G9:** Regional Growth and International Potential | The development of international linkages resulting in potential export market access for local business.  Enable the county to develop a more coherent and successful mechanism for pursuing additional funding and resource opportunities. | **O11:** Contribute to the growth of the region and expand international reach | KCC  KLEO | RA; Neighbouring local Authorities | 2016-2021 | No. of fora established. Strategy agreed and progressed | **A47:** Support industry-led fora and strategic collaborations at regional level, with a view to contributing to the overall development of the South East Region. |
| RA; Neighbouring LEOs; SEBIC | 2016-2021 | No. of enterprises participating. Take up of EU funding | **A48:** Support the participation of Kilkenny based enterprises in best practice events across the South East Region, including participation in EU funded programmes and initiatives. |
| Farming Organisations; Teagasc; WIT | 2016-2021 | Phased development plan agreed. Engagement of key players. Centre of Excellence established. | **A49:** Further advance the proposal for a European Centre of Excellence for ICT in Agriculture in Kilkenny. |
| WIT; Neighbouring LEOs | 2016-2021 | Agreement and progression of strategy. | **A50:** Participate in the eDIGIREGION Project and assist in the development of smart specialisation strategies for the South East Region. |
| RA; Neighbouring local Authorities; Institutes of Technology; EI; IDA | 2016-2017 | Particiapte in regional Forum for South East Action Plan for Jobs  Centre of Excellence strategy agreed and progressed. | **A51:** Proactively work with other local authorities to promote the region and advance regional opportunities, including the implementation of the South East Region - Action Plan for Jobs. This will also include collaborating to develop the South East as an agri-tech centre of excellence. |
| RA; Neighbouring local Authorities; EI; IBEC | 2016-2021 | No. of businesses engaged.  No. of jobs created.  No. of participating schools. | **A52:** Assist in the development of a showcase of the region's manufacturing base with a dual focus on: attracting young people to careers in manufacturing; and facilitating manufacturing companies to promote more STEM participation in schools. |
| IBEC; 3rd Level Institutes; Neighbouring local Authorities | 2016-2021 | Engagement of key players.  Strategy agreed and progressed. | **A53:** Exploit the potential of convergence opportunities in the South East, linking life-sciences with pharma/medical devices, engineering, ICT, and Telecoms. |
| Coillte; Neighbouring local Authorities | 2016-2021 | Report produced.  Actions progressed. | **A54:** Contribute to a regional assessment of the economic value added potential of the forestry sector. |
| Failte Ireland; Kilkenny Tourism; Heritage Council; Design & Crafts Council; IBEC; Connect Ireland; Local Industry; Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce; Neighbouring local Authorities | 2016-2021 | Engagement of industry.  Strategy agreed.  Engagement of tourism stakeholders.  Increase in visitor numbers. | **A55:** Establish a programme on a regional level for large employers to collaborate to brand the region as a tourist destination and promote the Ancient East theme. |