



Údarás na
Gaeltachta

2018–2020 Strategy Review Report



Riailas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Mission Statement and Vision

Mission Statement

To develop a vibrant, successful and sustainable Gaeltacht community and economy, and thus strengthen and maintain the use of Irish as the main language of the Gaeltacht community so that the Gaeltacht is a region of excellence on a global level.

Vision

That the Gaeltacht will be a viable and sustainable community in which Irish is the predominant language with a vibrant economy making best use of all of its resources and with access to an excellent quality of life.



Cnoc Leitir Móir



Údarás na Gaeltachta Board, 2018-2020

Back row (from left): Debra Ní Shuilleabháin (Kerry), John Shéamuis Ó Fearraigh (Donegal), Séamus Cosáí Mac Gearailt (Kerry), Siobhán Seoighe (Meath), Seán Mac Congamhna (Mayo), Seosamh Ó Laoi (Galway)
Front row (from left): Séamus Breathnach (Galway), Máire Seo Breathnach (Waterford), Eunan Mac Cuinneagáin (Donegal), Anna Ní Ghallachair (Chairperson, Donegal), Ian Mac Aindriú (Mayo), Mary Uí Chadhain (Galway), Cathal Seoighe (Meath, not in photo)



A Word from the Chairperson

There are many twists and turns in life, but few people could have predicted in 2018, when Údarás na Gaeltachta launched its 2018-2020 Strategy, where we would be as a Gaeltacht, as a country and as a world in fact, by the time those three years had passed.

It is easy in the midst of a pandemic to focus on the constraints that we face and what cannot be done, but this strategy summary is a positive reminder of what has been achieved between 2018-2020, despite international challenges such as Brexit and Covid-19.

Some of the strategic proposals we identified reflected the innovation and far-sightedness of the Údarás as an organisation. There was no mention of the gteic concept at the beginning of this strategy period and yet these digital workplaces have very much captured the attention of the Gaeltacht communities, with a bigger emphasis on remote working and rural employment opportunities.

Údarás na Gaeltachta also placed particular emphasis on tourism in the strategy – which greatly benefited the Irish public during the summer of 2020 – and on domestic tourism in the context of Covid-19. We hope to build on this in the years to come.





A Word from the Chairperson

The Covid-19 support provided by Údarás to Gaeltacht companies has led to a significant increase in the number of companies now doing business on the internet, thanks to the Online Trading Scheme.

The period between 2018 and 2020 also saw significant progress in the language planning process and the employment of Language Planning Officers to strengthen the Irish language in 18 different Language Planning Areas throughout the Gaeltacht.

Traditionally, of course, Údarás na Gaeltachta is recognised for employment matters. The organisation was ahead of the target of 7,500 jobs in Gaeltacht client companies until the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted employment. However, it is hoped that employment restrictions will be further enhanced once the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

Particular recognition is due to the business owners and company heads that created and sustained employment in the Gaeltacht between 2018 and 2020, and for the sacrifices they made for the benefit of their businesses and their employees.

As Chairperson of the Board of Údarás na Gaeltachta, I would like to acknowledge the staff at the Údarás for their hard work in achieving the goals of the strategy, and I would also like to acknowledge the Board itself, for the commitment, guidance and advice that they provide to the organisation.

Anna Ní Ghallachair
Chairperson, Údarás na Gaeltachta



A Word from the Chief Executive Officer

The 2018-2020 Údarás na Gaeltachta Strategy was implemented during one of the most tumultuous and interesting periods in recent history, a period that also happened to be one of the most fruitful in the development and advancement of the Gaeltacht.

As an organisation, we decided in 2018 to take on a new approach, recognising that the future lay in new ways of working, sustainable development and in empowering the Gaeltacht community.

With the Údarás 2018-2020 Strategy now complete, the result of that foresight can be seen in the gteic remote working network, in the substantial increase in innovation-driven employment, the development of a Gaeltacht brand and the building of a Gaeltacht tourism infrastructure, among many other achievements laid out in this Strategy Review.

I would like to thank the Údarás Bord and staff for their work in achieving the aims set out in the Strategy, as well as all of the stakeholders who aided us in fulfilling the strategy on behalf of the Gaeltacht community.



Mícheál Ó hÉanaigh
CEO, Údarás na Gaeltachta



The Heart of the Gaeltacht

Language Planning

FIGURES

€2.28M

Investment of €2.28 million made into language planning between 2018-2020

21

21 plans from 26 Language Planning Areas approved

3

3 Gaeltacht service towns identified – An Clochán Liath, Béal an Mhuirthead agus Daingean Uí Chúis

18

18 Language Planning Officers and 4 Language Planning Assistant Officers employed

There is no point in Údarás na Gaeltachta building a vision without the language – the heart of the Gaeltacht – being at its centre. It is through strengthening the Irish language that we will strengthen the Gaeltacht.

When the Údarás 2018-2020 strategy began, there was no language plan in place in the Gaeltacht. By the end of the strategy there were 20 plans approved and 22 people employed to implement them.

Údarás na Gaeltachta believes that it is best to work from the ground up, in partnership with the communities, rather than from the top down, in order to strengthen the most valuable treasure we have, the Irish language, throughout each and every Gaeltacht.



Language Planning Officers in Dublin with then Taoiseach, 2019



The Heart of the Gaeltacht

Language Planning

FIGURES

20

Language Plans approved

5

Plans under consideration by the Department of Tourism, Sport, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

18

Language Planning Officers & 4 Assistant Officers employed

100%

The process has begun in 100% of the LPA's

2/3

The process has begun in two thirds of the service towns



Féile Bídih Tobar Dhuibhne



Pobal Rua's running challenge, An Cheathrú Rua



The 'Gaeilge & Fáilte' sign is proudly displayed at Donegal Airport



Féile Bídih Tobar Dhuibhne



The launch of Plean Teanga na Mí



A Digital Gaeltacht

gteic

There was little talk of digital hubs, especially in rural areas, when Údarás na Gaeltachta launched the gteic network in 2018. Today, throughout the Gaeltacht, we have developed the largest such network in Ireland.

The Covid-19 pandemic has given particular focus to this approach, in which individuals can have good employment opportunities in Gaeltacht areas, and in which international companies can offer their staff the opportunity to work remotely.

“Gteic@GaothDobhair is a valuable place for Glór na nGael to work in-house. The choice of workspaces and the flexibility of independent offices, temporary desks and meeting rooms suits us.”

**Dara Ó Baoill – Glór na nGael –
gteic@GaothDobhair**



“The space in the gteic in An Cheathrú Rua is great – super-fast broadband and a great atmosphere to work in.”

Ciara Ferguson, MeasMedia – gteic@An Cheathrú Rua





gteic

Gaeltacht Digital Networks

FIGURES

16

16 gteic digital hubs opened

450

Up to 450 spaces available during the Covid-19 lockdown

200

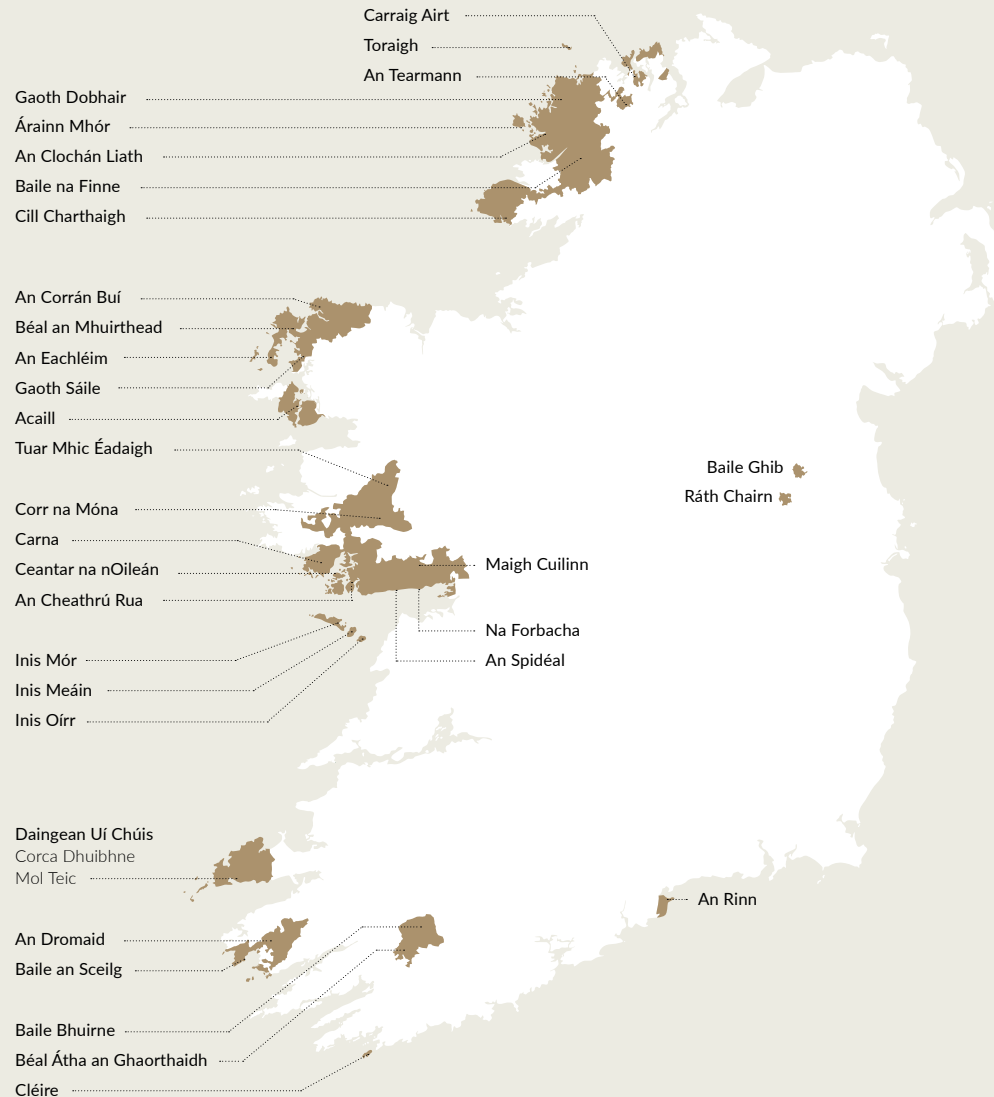
Up to 200 people working in gteic centres by the end of 2020 – Covid restrictions taken into account

660+

660+ spaces developed, up to 700 spaces expected by the end of 2021

15

15 more in development



gteic Arainn Mhór



A Digital Gaeltacht

ERNACT

It was announced at the beginning of September 2020 that Údarás na Gaeltachta is now a full member of ERNACT (European Regions Network for the Application of Communications Technology). It is hoped that membership of ERNACT will greatly benefit the digital economy of the Irish Gaeltacht. Gaeltacht areas in Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Meath, Kerry, Cork and Waterford will now have the opportunity to share knowledge and best practice and to strategise and implement transnational collaborative initiatives with a network of 9 other ERNACT regions in 7 countries across Europe, Scandinavia and Canada.



Delegation from Scottish Chambers with Micheál Ó hÉanaigh and Dr. Aodhán Mac Cormaic, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media



The opening of Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh gteic



A Global Gaeltacht

The Gaeltacht Diaspora

We saw in 2018 that there was an opportunity to connect with the Gaeltacht Diaspora community, spread all over the world, but who still have a strong connection with home.

By creating events and building stronger connections, we recognised that there was an opportunity to attract the Gaeltacht communities home and to help open doors for the Gaeltacht in terms of sources of investment and employment.



The Ireland's Gaeltacht Experience in Boston

ACHIEVED

The *Cairde na Gaeltachta* newsletter is being sent to over 400 members of the Gaeltacht Diaspora.

Participated in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Boston and hosted the *Ireland's Gaeltacht Experience* event for the South Boston community.

The Údarás has strengthened its connection with the Gaeltacht Diaspora in the United States in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles.

A campaign is underway on social media using the hashtag **#diasporagaeltachta**



A Global Gaeltacht

Connection with Scotland



Scotland's Finance Minister, Kate Forbes, with Micheál Ó hÉanaigh at a Scotland/Ireland event held for the Gaeltacht delegation in Edinburgh Castle.

Údarás na Gaeltachta was invited to submit proposals regarding a new Bilateral Review being developed between Ireland and Scotland in 2020. Údarás received the invitation, not only because of the close historical linguistic, cultural and musical connections between the Gaeltacht and Scotland, particularly the Donegal Gaeltacht, but also through recent connections such as trade missions, cultural events, aquaculture and the arts. The Bilateral Review includes areas of interest for the Gaeltacht such as renewable energy, particularly marine-based projects, the gteic network, language and culture, and maritime resources.

ACHIEVED

In 2018, the Údarás welcomed a delegation from the Scottish Chamber of Commerce to the gteic in Gaoth Dobhair.

A new agreement was announced between Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Scottish Chamber of Commerce to facilitate investment and trade opportunities.

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a key party at the heart of a new Bilateral Policy link between Ireland and Scotland.



Strengthening the Gaeltacht Community Development

YOUTH, EDUCATION AND TRAINING SERVICES IN THE GAELTACHT

€1.875M

An allocation of €1.875m has been provided to Muintearas for the period 2018-2020

€1.605M

An allocation of €1.605m has been provided to Comhar Naíonraí for the period 2018-2020 to support pre-school education in the Gaeltacht

1,627

number attending naíonraí

62

number of naíonraí

199

people employed by Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta

13 | 2018-2020 Strategy

In years gone by, there has been a common view that strengthening and shaping a community is best from the top down – by means of State policies or government rules.

Today, however, Údarás na Gaeltachta believes otherwise. Communities need to be central to any changes in their area if they are to succeed. The 2018-2020 Strategy addressed the growth of our vision for the strengthening the Gaeltacht.

We envisioned a Gaeltacht in which the communities themselves were active, skilled and strong in taking a leadership role in their future. To this end, the development of community-based organisations has been, and will continue to be, a major priority for Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Údarás funds a network of 33 community development organisations and these organisations – both co-operative and community based – are central to tourism projects, language planning, renewable energy and the tech network to name but a few.

New cycleways and walkways developed in Seanamhach, Connemara



We supported co-operatives like the Comharchumann Chléire to develop new businesses such as distilleries.





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Community Development Unit

The Údarás established a Community Development Unit in 2019, which is focused on providing assistance and support for community development organisations to help them achieve their development goals for the benefit of the Gaeltacht communities.

Údarás na Gaeltachta launched a comprehensive governance and best practice manual to support Gaeltacht community development organisations, and organised online workshops to help them achieve their goals.

The Gaeltacht Social Entrepreneurship Programme was established in 2020. This is a training and mentoring programme to help Gaeltacht community development organisations improve their business development skills.

Cooperative managers at the launch of Údarás na Gaeltachta's Community Development Unit Handbook.





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Community Development – Green Energy

FIGURES

€6.7M

Administration Grants of €6.7m were provided to Co-operatives and community based organisations over the strategy period.

Study at Ros an Mhíl Port

Údarás began a process to develop the Port of Ros an Mhíl as a service and logistics hub for the renewable energy sector, in order to maximise the potential of marine energy.

Gaoth Dobhair Business Park Photovoltaic Study

With sustainability as an ongoing priority for Údarás na Gaeltachta, a feasibility study for the development of a Photovoltaic Park at the Gaoth Dobhair Business Park commenced in 2020.

Photovoltaic Initiative in An Cheathrú Rua

A community photovoltaic project was undertaken, in conjunction with Comharchumann Mhic Dara Teo, at the An Cheathrú Rua Business Park, creating a model for other Gaeltacht community development organisations that wish to do the same.



Gaoth Dobhair Business Park



Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Community Development – Green Energy

LAN CTR/Cill Ulta

LAN CTR have begun creating a Centre for Renewable Sustainability and Circular economics with the support of Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Aran Islands Energy Co-operative

Údarás na Gaeltachta is supporting a feasibility study in conjunction with SEAI and the Aran Islands Energy Co-operative on the challenges and possibilities of communities creating their own energy through the use of wind.

LECo Proposal

With a budget of €1.9m, this project was run until July 2020. The objective of the project was to make the Local Sustainable Energy Communities (LECo) – established during the project itself – self-sufficient in terms of energy, with a view to them using local renewable sources.

LAN CTR Cill Ulta



Inis Oirr



Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Community Employment Schemes

FIGURES

2018

1093 participants in the Gaeltacht Social Employment Schemes and 49 supervisors employed throughout the Gaeltacht.

2019

1032 participants in the Gaeltacht Social Employment Schemes and 49 supervisors employed throughout the Gaeltacht.

2020

972 participants and 49 supervisors employed on 47 schemes throughout the Gaeltacht.

1,032

Average Participants for the strategy period

€17,000,000

Annual budget for Social Employment Schemes

Údarás na Gaeltachta manages €17 million worth of Community Employment Schemes in the Gaeltacht, with 1,000 participants contributing to Gaeltacht services and facilities. The Community Employment Schemes play a vital role in the development and enhancement of community facilities, sport and the provision of services such as Meals on Wheels.

Sensory Garden, Scoil Cholmille, Rosaveel

As part of the fiftieth anniversary of Scoil Cholmille in Ros an Mhíl, Conamara, a new sensory garden was opened at the rear of the school. This work was undertaken as part of the Community Employment Schemes, in conjunction with school staff and local people.





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Community Employment Schemes

FIGURES

33

Community development organisations being funded by Údarás na Gaeltachta

Slí Chonamara

Under the auspices of the Údarás, Community Employment Schemes have done a huge amount of work in maintaining *Slí Chonamara*. *Slí Chonamara* was launched in 2007 as one of the country's recognised way-marked walks, but it fell into disrepair over time. The Schemes maintained the walk, with the aim of repairing and re-registering the section of the coastal walk that runs from Spiddal to Rosaveel. It is our vision that the walk will be a recreational facility for the local community and a tourist resource in the area.





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

LEADER

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a partner in the implementation of the LEADER programme in the Donegal and Cork Gaeltachts. The current LEADER Programme 2016 – 2020 was completed at the end of the year and a total grant budget of €1.764m was approved, investing in 49 projects under the themes of: Broadband, Rural Tourism, Peripheral Community Focused Services, Environment, Enterprise Development and Rural Towns.

All-weather pitch, An Fál Carrach





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Sub-Regional Development

Údarás na Gaeltachta undertook specific sub-regional development priorities during 2018-2020, to explore opportunities to increase employment, tourism and services, among other things in specific Gaeltacht areas: these are the Uíbh Ráthach Task Force, the Ráth Chairn Task Force, the Iorras Aithneach Action Plan and the An Cheathrú Rua Action Plan.

Meeting of Uíbh Ráthach taskforce



The launch of the Iorras Aithneach plan generated a lot of engagement.



Launch of the Iorras Aithneach plan





Strengthening the Gaeltacht

Strategic Projects

Coláiste Íosagáin

In 2019 €180,000 was approved under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund for Údarás na Gaeltachta to prepare a master plan for the Coláiste Íosagáin site with a view to ensuring that there would be a positive social, cultural and economic impact on the local area and on the region in general. In addition, €2.7m was approved under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund (REDF) to establish a Regional Development Hub. The Regional Development Hub will create additional employment opportunities and expand and strengthen the local enterprise base. The funding approved under the Regional Enterprise Development Fund is being delivered through Enterprise Ireland, and Údarás na Gaeltachta will also provide funding of €1m for the project.

Old Dingle Hospital

The Údarás has secured external funding of €415,000 under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to develop a masterplan for the Old Dingle Hospital Project.



Old Dingle Hospital



Coláiste Íosagáin prior to redevelopment



European Projects

Údarás na Gaeltachta has been involved in various European projects for many years as a lead partner, partner and sub-partner.

SAFER

Údarás na Gaeltachta, in conjunction with other European partners, is involved in the SAFER project, a development programme aimed at creating efficiencies, new processes and growth opportunities in the seafood sector.

Digi2Market

The aim of the project is to use immersive technology with fifty companies across the partnership to help them develop their marketing and sales outside the region.

RegEnergy

The RegEnergy project aims to supply the high demand for energy in European towns and cities with energy generated in rural areas.

REACT

Islands along the coast of Europe are heavily dependent on the mainland energy market. This project focuses on three islands, one in Italy, one in Spain and Inis Mór in the Aran Islands.

Access2Sea

Access2Sea enhances the attractiveness of the coast in the Atlantic area for small and medium-sized enterprises by facilitating new business opportunities and providing more sustainable and easier access.

Emporia4KT

EMPORIA4KT will enhance transnational co-operation and synergy between the academic, business and government triple helix activists in order to foster innovation and competitiveness by supporting the Blue Economy in the Atlantic Area.

SW-Grow

The aim of the project is to increase economic opportunities in the seaweed industry by developing innovative work practices among the SMEs involved in this project.

Erasmus+

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a partner in the Erasmus + project entitled 'Teaching language innovation in a bilingual country'. This project will run for 3 years (01/09/2019 – 31/08/2022) with the aim of promoting good practice in second language teaching.

Project LIFE Atlantic CREX

Údarás na Gaeltachta is in partnership with the European Life Atlantic Crex project which aims to improve the conservation status of corncrakes in Ireland through the enhancement of certain Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and the surrounding farmlands.



European Projects

AER – Assembly of European Regions

Údarás na Gaeltachta is a member of the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and during the period of the Strategy, worked in conjunction with other regional organisations across Europe in developing projects, exchanging knowledge and building networks.



Údarás na Gaeltachta Director, Rónán Mac Con Iomaire (left) speaking at an AER event



The Pulse of the Gaeltacht

Business and Employment

FIGURES

€20.169M

During the strategy period Údarás na Gaeltachta invested €20.169m in a property portfolio and in the development of new buildings to support the encouragement of enterprise and the creation of employment in the Gaeltacht.

Údarás na Gaeltachta assists a wide range of businesses – large and small, modern and traditional. This is the pulse of the Gaeltacht and it is through nurturing and strengthening businesses that we will ensure a viable community and from this a healthy Gaeltacht.

The Gaeltacht itself is attractive to large companies – such as Randox in Donegal and Mylan in Galway – because they understand that skilled employees are available and that the areas themselves are attractive in terms of life style.

That said, in recent years we have placed a strong emphasis on encouraging businesses that are rooted in the local language, culture or environment.

Údarás na Gaeltachta supports all our client companies in using and promoting the Irish language as part of their business, agreeing a language plan with them and assisting them in implementing it.

Louis Mulcahy and the Gaeltacht na hÉireann brand





The Pulse of the Gaeltacht

Business and Employment

€17.6M

During the period 2018-2020 Údarás na Gaeltachta approved financial support grants of €17.6m and shares for businesses to create and sustain employment in the Gaeltacht.

Údarás na Gaeltachta Job Creation and Investment Figures

2018

New jobs created: 589

Newly approved jobs: 525

Investment in Newly Approved Job projects: €42 million

2019

New jobs created: 593

Newly approved jobs: 480

Investment in Newly Approved Job projects: €33 million

2020

New jobs created: 427

Newly approved jobs: 258

Investment in Newly Approved Job projects: €13 million





Economic Impact of Údarás Client Companies 2018–2020



€1.297B

Direct Spend in Irish Economy



€568M

Payroll Expenditure



€2.629B

Total Sales



€1.579B

Export Sales (60% of total sales)



The Pulse of the Gaeltacht

Client Companies

FIGURES

€88M

Amount of investment approved over the duration of the strategy





Ongoing Support

Údarás na Gaeltachta provided ongoing support to its client companies over the duration of the strategy, in addition to grant and property supports. Examples of such support include mentoring, consultancy and also using Údarás' social media platforms to showcase their work and products.

For example, Údarás organised online Crafts Expos and Food and Drink Expos, working with crafts folk and producers in shining a light on their output and adding to their sales opportunities.

EXPO Bia & Deoch



EXPO Ceardaíochta





Impact of Covid-19 and Brexit

There is no doubt that Covid-19 had a negative impact on the progress we have made in terms of strengthening business and employment.

Údarás na Gaeltachta was ahead of the target set out in the strategy – to have 7,500 Gaeltacht jobs in place by the end of 2020. That is, until the pandemic threw the economy of the Gaeltacht and the entire world into turmoil.

We saw, from the outset of the crisis, that it was our responsibility to support our client companies in order to give them every opportunity to maintain their workforces and to develop and strengthen their digital infrastructures in the face of such a crisis.

Covid-19 Approach and Údarás na Gaeltachta's Brexit

The Údarás launched a support and information plan at the start of the Covid-19 crisis in March 2020 in order to support Gaeltacht communities and businesses. Between these supports and those related to preparing Gaeltacht companies for Brexit, over €7.4 million was approved for Gaeltacht projects and companies.

Figures

€8m

in the provision of approved capital for the development of Gaeltacht business infrastructure

€7.4m

in approved COVID-19 supports for Gaeltacht bodies

413

Gaeltacht companies under the Online Trading Scheme and Business Continuity Voucher

€6.4m

of support approved by Údarás na Gaeltachta in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland for Gaeltacht bases companies focusing on business continuity, training, research and financial planning.



A Creative Gaeltacht

Ealaín na Gaeltachta

Ealaín na Gaeltachta was at the heart of Údarás na Gaeltachta's strategy for the promotion of the arts in the Gaeltacht in the period between 2018 and 2020.

Aisling?

Aisling?, a major arts production that culminated in the 'An Teanga Bheo' programme for the National Commemorations in 2016, was revived in 2018 with a national tour as part of 'Bliain na Gaeilge'. With the support of the Arts Council and Foras na Gaeilge, it was performed in Galway, Dublin, Waterford, Belfast, Derry and Rathcairn in Co. Meath.

Figures

€2.2 million

Ealaín na Gaeltachta was co-funded by Údarás na Gaeltachta and the Arts Council providing the company with a total budget of €2.2 million.

€325,000

In 2018 the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media made €325,000 available so that Údarás na Gaeltachta, through its subsidiary Ealaín na Gaeltachta, could focus on a systematic development of indigenous youth activities in the Gaeltacht areas. This was extended by an allocation of €425,000 per annum in 2019.



A Creative Gaeltacht

Ealaín na Gaeltachta

Óró

Despite Covid-19 restrictions, Ealaín na Gaeltachta succeeded in bringing its joint project with Galway 2020 to fruition. Óró, a new major performing art work, was a project which celebrated minority language culture in conjunction with our Celtic neighbours.

Other Projects

A series of events and activities by the likes of Fíbín Teo, An Gailearaí in Gaoth Dobhair, Áras Éanna in Inis Oirr and the Dr. Ó Loinsigh Cultural Centre in Baile Bhuirne, received funding from Ealaín na Gaeltachta.

Figures

€700,000

Cothú Scheme:

Support was approved for 24 projects with a budget of €700,000

€400,000

Bursaries:

Bursaries were awarded to 105 artists from a budget of €400,000

€256,000

Arts Development Scheme:

30 community projects were supported under this scheme from a budget of €256,000

€94,000

Síol Scheme:

Development opportunities were provided for 171 artists under the Seed Scheme, from a budget worth €94,000.





A Creative Gaeltacht Ealaín na Gaeltachta

Teach Damhsa

Teach Damhsa (Fabulous Beast Dance Company) in Glaise Bheag has received planning permission to carry out works to the building, which will make the old factory a satisfactory and comfortable space. Consultancy work has progressed and the tender process has commenced to undertake the refurbishment work. The roof of this factory was refurbished earlier in 2020.

Cuan Cultural Centre

Údarás na Gaeltachta is working with Cuan Studio in An Spidéal to develop the strategic project, Cuan Cultural Centre, which will provide world-class cultural performances for the cultural tourism market and the diaspora, but which will also appeal to the local community.



An Alluring Gaeltacht

Tourism

The tourism sector has certainly change because of Covid-19. However, despite past and future challenges, we believe and have always believed that there are great opportunities in terms of tourism for the Gaeltacht.

We have valuable resources that are attractive to tourists: our culture and language, marine resources, our heritage, and our people.

To this end, we have made developments over the last three years to develop tourism infrastructure and to provide appropriate training for those operating in the tourism sector.

Image: Slí Gaeltacht Mhúscraí – Ultra46





An Alluring Gaeltacht

Tourism

Strategic Tourism Projects

As part of a partnership with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, we promoted five recognised tourism projects in 2018.

These projects are being developed in conjunction with the local communities, and with a central role being played by the Gaeltacht co-operatives. They are also working with other relevant bodies, such as Fáilte Ireland, Bord Iascaigh Mhara and various local authorities.

The five projects identified and agreed with the Department for further development are:

- Áras Scéalta an Atlantaigh, An Eachléim
- Ionad Míniúcháin na nImirceach, Carna
- Ionad Feamainne/Oileánra Leitir Mealláin
- Ionad Árains, Inis Mór
- Áras Éanna, Inis Oírr

An Fód Dubh
lighthouse



Ionad na
nImirceach



Leitir
Mealláin
Seaweed
and Heritage
centre





Tourism Projects

Teach Solais Cheann Fhánada

Gailearaí Thóraigh

Drioglann Chroithlí

Togra na hEaragaille

Sliabh Liag

Áras Scéalta an Atlantaigh

Drioglann Acla

Tionscadal Geopháirc

Ionad na h-Imirceadh

Ionad Feamainn & Oidhreacht

Ionad Oidhreacht Árainn

Ionad Ealaín & Cultúr Áras Éanna

Turasóireacht Chorca Dhuibhne

Teach Damhsa

Slí Chorca Dhuibhne

Uisceadán Mara Beo

Ionad Turasóireacht Sean Ospidéal an Daingin

Bun Ionad Chlochán Bhréanáin

Ionad Cultúrtha Coláiste Íosagáin

Cartlann Oidhreacht Ráth Chairn

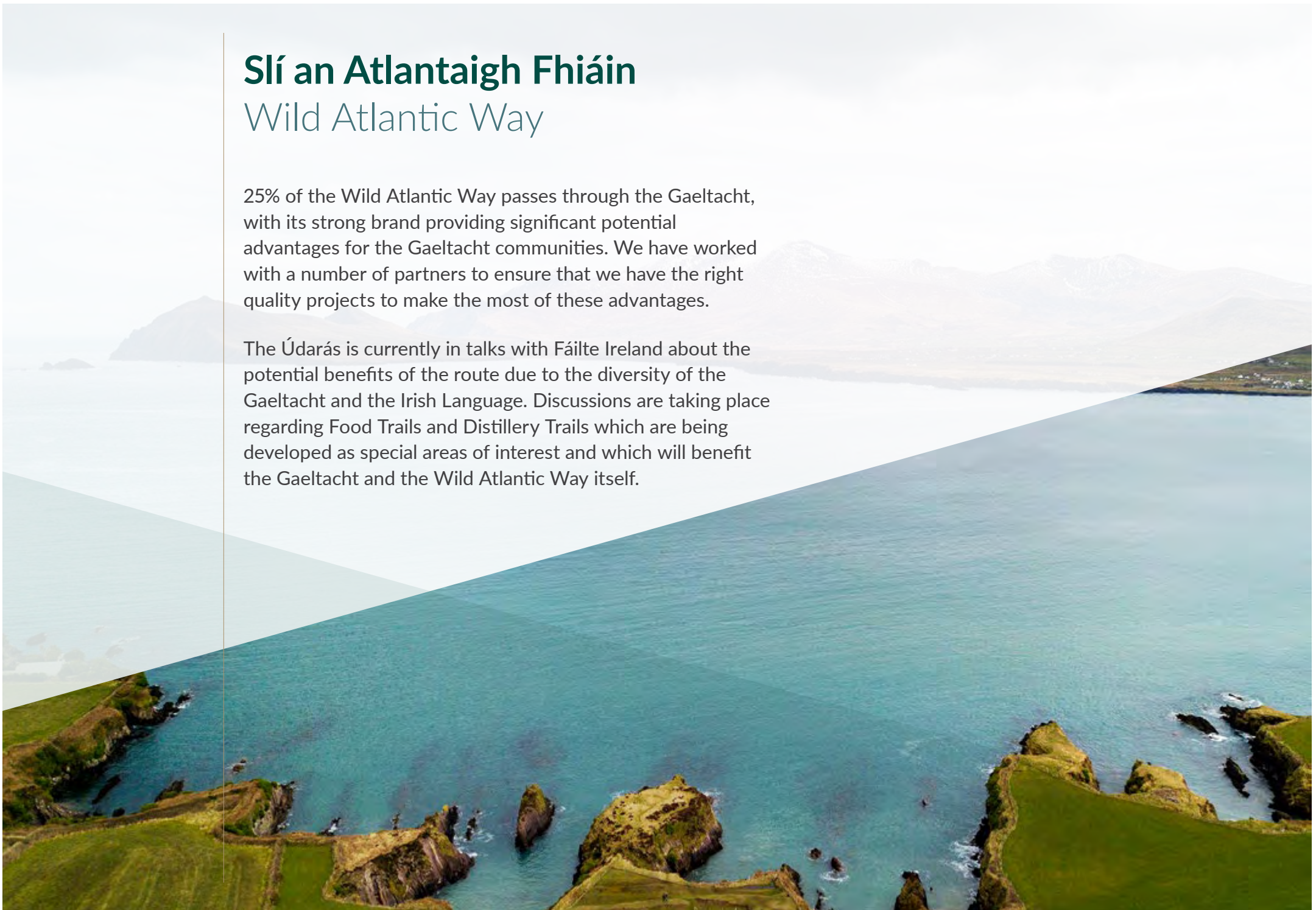


Slí an Atlantaigh Fhiáin

Wild Atlantic Way

25% of the Wild Atlantic Way passes through the Gaeltacht, with its strong brand providing significant potential advantages for the Gaeltacht communities. We have worked with a number of partners to ensure that we have the right quality projects to make the most of these advantages.

The Údarás is currently in talks with Fáilte Ireland about the potential benefits of the route due to the diversity of the Gaeltacht and the Irish Language. Discussions are taking place regarding Food Trails and Distillery Trails which are being developed as special areas of interest and which will benefit the Gaeltacht and the Wild Atlantic Way itself.





Tourism

The Distilleries

The Distillery sector is one of the areas that Údarás na Gaeltachta developed significantly between 2018-2020, with the tourism benefits in terms of visitor centres having a knock-on effect in terms of employment benefits.

It is now possible to travel from the southernmost Gaeltacht in Cork, where you will find the Cape Clear Distillery to the Dingle Distillery in Kerry, to the Lough Mask and Achill Island distilleries in Mayo and on to the Sliabh Liag and Croithlí Distilleries in Donegal – with many more in the pipeline.



Údarás na Gaeltachta announced a support package for Drioglann Thír Chonail to establish and develop a distillery business and visitor centre



Tourism Management Development Scheme

Through the Tourism Management Development Scheme, a wide range of strategic Gaeltacht tourism projects were supported in order to help these projects enhance their management, marketing, development and operational capabilities.

It is important for the tourism sector in the Gaeltacht that the language, culture, environment and rich heritage of the Gaeltacht be central to any developments in terms of products, services and resources. It is also essential that the appropriate and relevant management skills are available in the Gaeltacht in order to make the most of the valuable tourism resource that exists.

Teach Solais Cheann Fhánada

Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair

Ionad Cois Locha

Turasóireacht Dhún na nGall

Sliabh Liag

Áras Scéalta an Atlantaigh

Costa Gaelach Chonamara & Arann

Ionad na h-Imirceadh

Ionad Feamainn & Oidhreacht

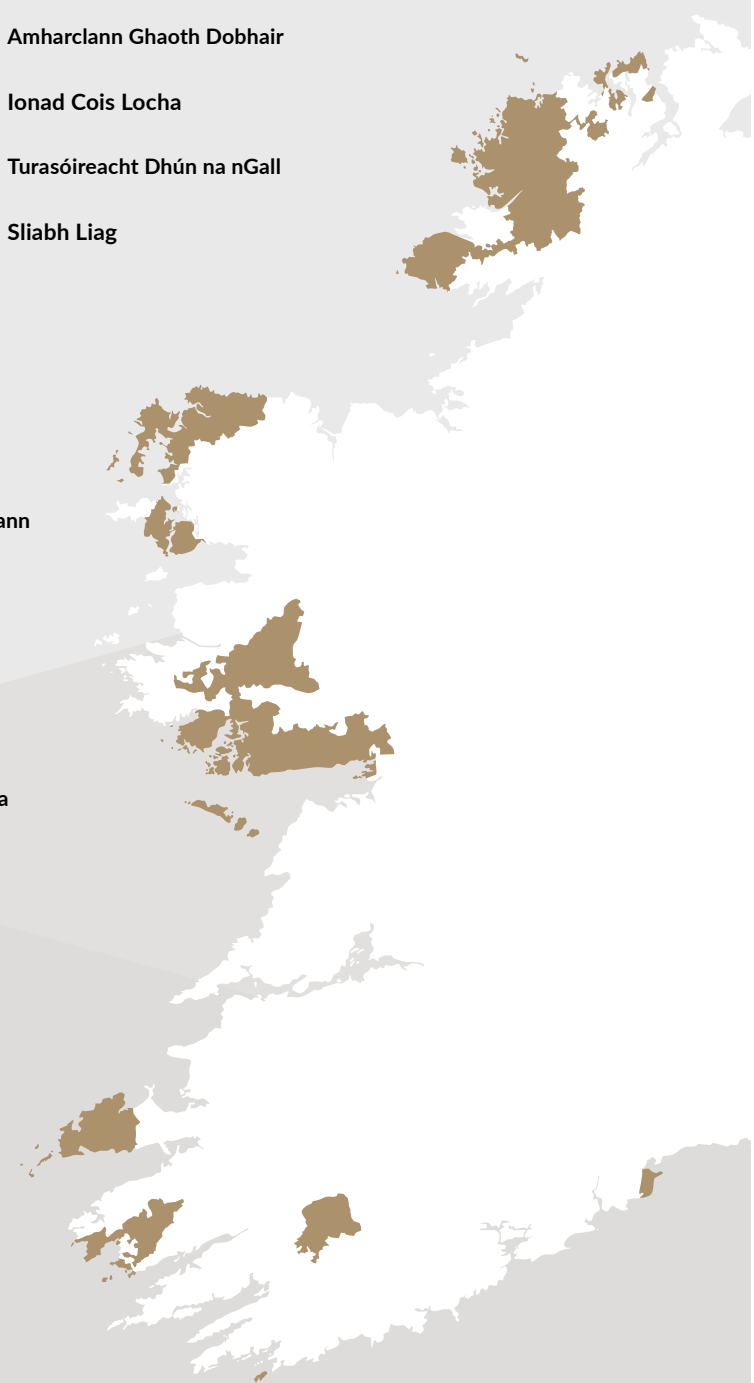
Ionad Oidhreacht Árainn

Ionad Ealaín & Cultúr Áras Éanna

Slí Chorca Dhuibhne

Turasóireacht Chorca Dhuibhne

Cósta na Sceilge





Empowering the Gaeltacht Training

The Údarás believes strongly in providing training and education for the Gaeltacht community, which in turn empowers them to make the most of employment, cultural and social developments.

We also believe that a strong training programme contributes significantly to our efforts to develop indigenous businesses as well as attracting outside businesses to the Gaeltacht.

“I was able to move back home without having to sacrifice the area I wished to pursue a career in. This would not have been possible without the Scéim na gCéimithe which I am very grateful for.”
Eoin Mc Hugh, Eolas na Mara

Some of Údarás's Scéim Forbartha Bainistíochta interns at NUI Galway's Careers Day





Empowering the Gaeltacht

Training

Graduate Scheme

Under this scheme we gave Gaeltacht graduates the opportunity to work for a while in a Gaeltacht company while focusing on specific projects.

The Community Development Sector Graduate Development Scheme

The Community Development Sector Graduate Development Scheme was introduced and this programme is focused on the area of community development. A grant of up to €30k is paid over two years at a rate of 50%.

Third Level Courses in association with Third Level Institutions

In partnership with the following Third Level Institutions, the Údarás is providing funding for the following courses:

- Higher Diploma in Applied Irish and Translation (Quality Assurance & Qualification Ireland Level 8)/ Msc (Quality Assurance & Qualification Ireland Level 9)/ Msc course administered by the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology in partnership with the Gaeltacht translation company, Europus.
- Waterford Institute in conjunction with the Gaeltacht television production company, Nemeton, has a Higher Diploma in Television Production and Digital Media course (Quality Assurance & Qualification Ireland Level 8)



Higher Diploma in Television Production



Empowering the Gaeltacht

Training

Partnership with TG4

A trainee officer is employed in ten companies that provide production material for TG4 due to a special partnership created between Údarás na Gaeltachta and TG4.

Apprenticeships

As part of the training strategy Údarás na Gaeltachta highlighted two categories of apprenticeships:

- Vocational Apprenticeships: (these include carpentry, plumbing, mechanics, hairdressing etc),
- Modern Apprenticeships: (these include laboratory technician, insurance practitioner, auctioneering and property services etc)

The scheme covers 12 different sectors and 59 apprenticeships, all of which are recognised by SOLAS. These scholarships are worth over €2000 each.

Apprentice, Jack Ó Domhnaill



Launch of partnership with TG4



FIGURES

€4.7M

During the period 2018-2020 Údarás na Gaeltachta approved €4.7m towards training, empowerment and skills development priorities in the Gaeltacht

Empowering the Gaeltacht

Training

Partnership with the Training and Education Boards

Údarás na Gaeltachta recognises the Training and Education Boards in the Gaeltacht counties as strategic partners in advancing the Údarás' work programme. This partnership was built on in the period between 2018-2020.

Marine Courses in Carna

Training courses in the marine sector – QQI Level 5 Aquaculture Course – began in 2020 in the Carna area.

Clár na gComhlachtaí

Over the period of the strategy, over 2,200 transition year students from 21 Gaeltacht schools participated in Clár na gComhlachtaí (Junior Achievement) which aims at fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among young people.

Management Development Scheme

During the strategy period, 23 graduates were awarded scholarships to gain work experience and qualifications in the areas of Finance, Engineering, Marketing, Public Relations, Legal, Corporate, Business Development and Community Development.

Pobal Scoil Ghaoth Dobhair, winners of the Clár na gComhlachtaí JAI 2018



Clár na gComhlachtaí 2018 – Minister Seán Kyne with students from Colaiste na Coiribe



Clár na gComhlachtaí 2019 – Miriam Ní Néill, Údarás na Gaeltachta, with the winning team from Colaiste Cholmille.





Empowering the Gaeltacht

Training

Boat Building Course in Ceantar na nOileán

The Wooden Boat Building course in the Ceantar na nOileán, Conamara, began in 2020 and is proving to be a great success.

Gardening Project

The Education and Training Board is providing gardening courses in the Iorras Aithneach area in conjunction with the local Co-operative.

Media Course

A full-time training course called the 'Media Training Course' has been running in the Manor House in Spiddal since 2019. The Training and Education Board has leased this space from the Údarás to support the provision of education services to the public.

Software Training Course in association with the Donegal ETB

A new Automated Software Testing training course has been developed in Gaoth Dobhair in partnership with Pramerica and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The course was delivered in the Gaoth Dobhair gteic in order to develop employment opportunities for the Gaeltacht community within the Pramerica company.



The Launch of a new partnership between Údarás na Gaeltachta, BOO Donegal and Pramerica.



An Exemplary Gaeltacht

Páirc na Mara

There is no better example of the ambition of the Údarás for the Gaeltacht than the Páirc na Mara (Marine Park) project. This is a huge project that will bring high quality, permanent jobs to the Gaeltacht area.

Not only that, but this project is fully in line with Údarás na Gaeltachta's vision to create jobs that are closely linked to the area in which they are located – whether they are language-centred projects, or projects based on natural resources, as evidenced by the Páirc na Mara project.





An Exemplary Gaeltacht

Marine Park

The vision for Páirc na Mara was set out in the 2018-2020 strategy and a planning application has now been lodged for the project – a large scale project in the context of this country's rural areas and a project that will create hundreds of valuable jobs in the Iorras Aithneach area for many years to come.

Significant progress was made by the securing of €2 million for the development of a Marine Sector Research & Innovation Centre on the Marine Park site and by the approval of the appointment of a manager. Much work has also been done to generate interest among companies to participate in the Research & Innovation Centre and so far there has been strong interest shown.



An Exemplary Gaeltacht Marine Day

Among the events organised by the Údarás in the Iorras Aithneach area associated with the Marine Park were Marine Day 2019 and Community Energy Day. Aspects of the Marine Park, such as food and other seafood products, marine projects and renewable energy, were introduced to the significant crowd that attended the events. Údarás na Gaeltachta's Marine Day was held for the second year in 2020, but virtually due to the pandemic. National and international marine experts brought their expertise and experience in natural resource sustainability and topics discussed included ways in which seafood farming can contribute to climate action and seaweed harvesting standards to ensure sustainability.

Marine Day – Cill Chiaráin 2019





A New Vision A New Brand

In 2018 we recognised that life was changing dramatically in relation to work habits, values in terms of the environment, and the restructuring of power from big to personal brands. This move gave us hope as we could see before us a strong Gaeltacht that would be able to express itself confidently and powerfully. To that end we decided to create a new Brand.

The brand is a resource to promote the Gaeltacht and all aspects of Gaeltacht life for the benefit of the Gaeltacht community and the Irish language. The brand is available for everyone to use – our clients, other Gaeltacht companies, community organisations, the tourism sector, the arts and more.

Anyone based in the Gaeltacht can identify with the Gaeltacht by using the brand signs online and in print marketing materials, on products and packaging, on workplace uniforms, on social media and when communicating with customers and the public.

