

**Strengthening and Developing
Regional Economic Partnerships**

31st August 2012

A conference hosted by

Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Wexford County Council

The Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies at

The School of Business

of

Waterford Institute of Technology

Prepared by

John Maher,

Centre for Newfoundland & Labrador Studies, Department of Accounting and Economics

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Foreword

Wexford County Council welcomes the opportunity to work purposefully with other stakeholders to promote economic and development across the South East. We appreciate the initiative taken by Ireland Newfoundland Connections in organising this conference in conjunction with the Business School in Waterford Institute of Technology. We acknowledge the contributions made by the individual presenters and their organisations in framing our understanding of the challenges, choices, mechanisms and metrics associated with regional development. Together we have a responsibility to translate this understanding into projects that have velocity like qualities: magnitude, speed and direction.

Wexford as the most populous county in the region has a rich history of adapting to change, engaging with outside influences, harnessing its geographical features and developing models of practice that are fit for purpose. The community has an appetite for reinvigorating our creative and execution efforts as we respond to the present economic circumstances. Our people have maintained their connection with Newfoundland and Labrador. Like our neighbours, we value the richness of those links and the levers they provide as we plot viable pathways for economic renewal.

The conference to which this report relates offered firm insights to the economic profiles of both Regions and to the variables which must be the focus of policy planning and action. By combining the experiences across the respective Regions and from public, private and community actors, we can devise better ways to work together towards goals that will yield desired results for innovation, trade, jobs, and sustainable communities. Let us acknowledge that we will be required to apply ourselves diligently in this process, as the saying goes *Tada gan iarracht* – nothing without effort. We hope that all who participated have secured benefits from their involvement. May one of those benefits be the factoring of these ideas and perspectives into live strategies and plans. This absorption in turn can strengthen our networks and increase their effectiveness and impact.

Rath Dé ar an obair

Eddie Breen

Wexford County Manager

Contents

Part	Description	Page
Part 1	Foreword	1
	Contents	2
Part 2	Executive Summary	3
Part 3	Conference opening	5
Part 4	Individual Presentations	7
Part 5	Workshop Discussions	12
Appendix 1	Acknowledgements	17
Appendix 2	Schedule of Attendees	18
Appendix 3	Schedule of Presenters	19
Appendix 4	Ireland Newfoundland Connections	22
Appendix 5	Some Bibliography	24

Executive Summary

This conference is part of a series of conferences held in Newfoundland and Ireland during the annual exchange between communities in the two jurisdictions. The focus of the 2012 conference was to explore and examine the profile of the South East region and to interpret it in the context national and economic policy frameworks. The contrast with Newfoundland and Labrador also served as a comparator for the issues being addressed here in Ireland. The proceedings involved formal presentations which were followed by an interactive workshop that provided further insight to the economic partnership process.

The principal findings from the conference were as follows:

- The South East needs to develop some specialisations which will serve as a magnet and cluster for indigenous start ups and for inward investment.
- The South East requires stronger cooperation between stakeholders in order to present to its people and to external parties, a more coherent and cohesive proposition regarding what the potential benefits are from locating and conducting business here.
- The incentives for stakeholders should reinforce cooperation rather than dilute it, bearing in mind the manner in which revenue and capital is allocated and obtained by local government within the Region.
- The Region requires a planning framework which will provide for the setting of objectives that can form the basis for meaningful measurement of progress towards desired socioeconomic outcomes.
- The Region needs to learn from international practice and experience in pursuing socioeconomic goals, thereby increasing the chances of success in policy initiatives.
- The Region need to confront the realities of intellectual capital outflows that occur when graduates and school leavers leave the South East for other parts of the country and overseas in large numbers without compensating inflows. This constrains the propensity for innovation and enterprise.
- The Region should select areas for specialisation.

- The Region should mark carefully the configuration of higher education so that its socio-economic development needs can be met to an acceptable degree.
- The Region should craft a platform for economic and other cooperation with Newfoundland and Labrador, and in doing so, leverage the existing linkages and resources.
- Regional leaders should consider the scope for regional cooperation with other regions in order to enter such relationships with critical mass that involves depth and breadth of engagement and with a more assured promise of economic impact.

Stakeholders are invited to consider the contents of this report and to continue the engagement with its contributors. The exchange with Newfoundland and Labrador provides a vehicle for Stakeholders to develop and present their contribution to the advancement of the community's economic and social interests. The platform to provide such updated analysis will be central to this series prospectively and will serve as an integral element of the democratic and intellectual discourse that unites the interests of the communities with the agents that lead and serve them. It also acts as an additional tool for framing and refining policy proposals and solutions, in conjunction with other essential aspects of socio-economic advancement.

Conference Opening

Participants

His Excellency Ambassador Loyola Hearn

Councillor Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Cathaoirleach Wexford County Council

Dr Thomas O'Toole, Head of School of Business Waterford Institute of Technology

Opening Remarks

Ambassador Hearn welcomed the opportunity to express support for joint examination of the challenges involved in regional development and in availing of the resources, cultural, creative, economic and political, that lie within networks. He drew attention to the ongoing cooperation in trade and investment between Canada and Ireland. The opportunities for young Irish people to avail of visas for 1 & 2 years in Canada provide a window for broadening perspectives, acquiring skills and utilising talents which could prove quite attractive in the present climate. He looked forward to further opportunities arising under the revised European Union- Canada trade agreement which has been under negotiation for some time now. As a Newfoundlander he endorsed the initiative between the communities in Ireland and Newfoundland and he wished to affirm its value by attendance at this and other events during the week. Collectively these events crystallise the bonds of friendship between our peoples and reveal ways in which further valuable projects can be undertaken.

Councillor Nolan welcomed the Ambassador, the Chair, the speakers and the conference participants to Wexford on behalf of the Council which is hosting the event. She thanked Department of the Environment for the use of their facilities. She looked forward to the presentation of ideas and evidence, and their discussion by the participants. She expressed appreciation to the conference organisers and to all the speakers who had come from near and far. The link between Wexford and Newfoundland is a strong one and becoming stronger as more people on both sides forging links that are enabled by technology and transport.

Dr Tom O'Toole introduced Ambassador Hearn and Councillor Codd-Nolan and welcomed all the participants to the conference. He endorsed the existence of a public forum for considering issues of regional development and welcome the speaker and guests from Newfoundland who would offer further perspectives on our shared challenges. He emphasised the value of policy exchanges between higher education institutes and stakeholders in the region. Collectively they seek to advance regional development through the generation and examination of evidence, by the application of selected knowledge and frameworks and by participation in regional structures designed to pursue policy goals.

Individual Presentations

Dr Proinnsias Breathnach

Dr Breathnach presentation reviewed data on relative income levels and employment levels in the South east region. It examined the policy promise contained in the National spatial Strategy and the reasons why that promise had not been achieved. These included inadequate regional structures, the manner of designation of hubs and gateways, the maintenance of control of resources with central government. He argued for a form of regional planning that took account of regional needs, capacities, and population distribution. The attractiveness of other urban centres based on sectoral concentration was noted and the effect this has as a magnet or snowball for further economic development. The sectoral concentration in the South East is in traditional areas and the region has room to improve its performance in more creative service areas.

The challenge for the Region now is to acquire greater responsibility for delivering public services in the region, to devise meaningful regional structures that link far more effectively the five urban areas and their hinterlands and adopting a degree of specialisation in its activity and knowledge base that can compete in a global market place.

Mr John Maher

Mr Maher examined the elements and processes of partnership that can be adopted in the South East. He looked at who the potential partners are and what such partnerships have delivered in purely financial terms for higher education. He emphasised the significance of human capital and what it means in terms of capacity. The presentation highlighted the Region's relative scale in an international context and the impact this has on engagement with third parties. It reviewed the market where exchanges are undertaken using smaller units within the Region rather than having a more collective and larger scale interaction. Specific reference was made to the concept of regional twinning, particularly with overseas regions that offered the potential for rich and deep trade, research and social connections. He suggested that Regional leadership would be significant in framing objectives and in

designing governance mechanisms to pursue them. He also highlighted the need to identify the skills and competence necessary for greater collaboration. He underlined the significance of identifying actions and outcomes with nominated responsible players and having a means to calibrate progress from individual policy programmes. The areas in which higher education can contribute to regional collaboration were reviewed and some ideas for future collaboration were offered for consideration.

The role of supportive socioeconomic ecosystems was analysed and participants were asked to consider how such systems could be nurtured and indeed located. Proximity to a range of phenomena – knowledge, markets, capital, physical infrastructure, and a suitably skilled workforce are examples of what such ecosystems involve. He advised that greater creativity was imperative to conceive the appropriate structures, mechanisms and goals to fashion a fruitful set of alliances for the South East.

Mr Brian Ogilvie

Mr Ogilvie examined the approach in IT Carlow to developing ideas from their conceptualisation stage through to full commercialisation. This involves connecting a variety of elements which drive projects and facilitate their development. Projects are built around four themes involving security, interactive applications software & networks, industrial design & product innovation and bio-environmental technologies. The Enterprise Ireland supported New Frontiers programme is an important platform in the commercialisation opportunities offered by the Institute. Projects and ideas are framed in terms of their position within a development cycle and the higher education seeks to offer tailored supports appropriate to the stage of the project, be it technical support, mentoring, incubation, access to finance, networking etc with market endorsement being the ultimate goal. A number of case studies were examined involving live businesses in commercial operation and these illustrated the road map to market validation.

Mr Craig Pollett

Mr Pollett reviewed the themes evident in a historical review of development policy in Newfoundland and Labrador. He identified the principal agencies involved in this process which include trans-provincial, provincial, and regional bodies of varying levels of resources, capacities and areas of responsibility. He noted the restructuring that is currently underway in this domain. He portrayed the demographic position of the Provincial population and the demands this would place on the labour market and the provision of services. The issue of water and waste infrastructure was underlined with significant capital expenditure envisaged under both headings arising from the need to meet national standards for both. Advance planning would be needed to meet objectives which cover these areas and also tourism, the environment, wellness and economic development. The concept of a functional region was introduced: the areas in which people moved to work, shop, play, and do other day to day activities. Such regions are properly the focus of effective planning and can cross existing administrative and other boundaries. Attention to governance mechanisms was prioritised along with building appropriate communication channels to learn from experience and performance and to transmit good practice. Reference was made also to a *Regional Economic Capacity Index* which would inform the harnessing of the potential that exists within communities and their surroundings. He proposed that coalitions would be important for rural communities as only urban areas had sufficient independent capacity with respect to development. A bottoms-up development model would have greater traction and commitment than its top down equivalent, so crafting the regional levers should be a policy priority. Feedback from communities was that they were ready for such collaboration and there was a good appreciation of the prerequisites for success in regional development processes. Getting things done could shape the structures and also give confidence in tackling further issues while also providing a good testing ground for emergent structures.

Mr Ed Hendrick

Mr Hendrick presented a narrative regarding the growth of the Sonru business and outlined his own education and career background which provided the launch pad for it. He

mentioned the Enterprise Platform Programme in WIT which had provided the incubation opportunity for launch and refinement as well as bringing together like minded individuals, some of whom were now part of the www.sonru.com team. The feedback from the market was critical to product development and fundamentally resulted in a repositioning of the offerings. He referred to Edward de Bono's six thinking hats in terms of adopting multiple perspectives and multiple roles in the course of the commercialisation process. He stressed how critical it was to have a cluster of firms in the software sector located in a region in order to provide a flow of recruitable staff and also to facilitate technology transfer as individuals moved between firms at different stages of development. Where better to get staff than from a similar company that is few stages further along the development curve? Having a community of workers with shared interests and tastes makes it easier to retain staff in start-ups and SMEs. This is part of the development challenge that exists for firms and for development stakeholders: nurturing and enriching the social tapestry linked to economic progress.

Ms Deirdre Leacy

Ms Leacy discussed the rationale for locating part of the Zurich Insurance Irish operation in Wexford which included good infrastructure, available skilled workforce from Waterford and Carlow IT, proximity to Dublin, cost. Being a leading employer in a community enables the company to have deep roots and reinforces the brand as a financial service company that publicly serves where it locates. The workforce had expanded because of the good performance and it served as a benchmark site within the Zurich group. She spoke about the qualities sought in graduates and the necessity for appropriate professional preparation in advance of engaging with an employer such as Zurich. Numerical and verbal reasoning were core skills and behavioural dispositions would also be assessed. Once recruited, an employee had access to well defined training and development programmes and this opportunity for personal improvement and career progression served to attract and retain high calibre staff. These programmes had a change and adaptability orientation, mindful of what was happening in the sector and in the wider society in which the company trades. She reviewed some of the patterns that can be observed in the environment that affect

regulation, claims, and distribution. The company also placed a value on external rankings of Zurich within the sector and within Irish business generally and its performance in service excellence ratings is testament to the standards being achieved in Wexford. Such ratings also improve its competitive position in tendering for further work.

Mr Paddy Browne,

Mr Browne provided an analysis from Teagasc of the agriculture industry in Ireland, its parameters and composition. An emphasis is placed on science based innovation and the concept of the bio-economy was mentioned. Three attributes were highlighted: competitiveness, sustainability and profitability. In fulfilling its remit, it has three planks to its operation: advice, research and education and these are interconnected. Delivery involves a network of highly educated professionals located at centres across the country, with knowledge transfer being key dimension of each activity. Effective knowledge translates into improved performance by producers in the market. Policy is shaped by a view of where the industry should be in 2020 and it has targets and milestones to assess the extent of progress made towards the goals in 2020. They have a standard profile for what a researcher is, does and achieves and Teagasc. The networks with higher education institutes, funders and policy bodies at home and abroad are integral to the performance of Teagasc and to the value that can be added to agriculture. This is evidenced in other countries also. Hence they have core research themes across the major industry categories where there is believed to be the greatest potential for a positive impact from the application of knowledge to what agriculture achieves for producers and for Ireland.

In essence, the presentation offered a template that has relevance for other sectors in terms of clarity of purpose, integration, calibration, internationalisation, natural resource utilisation, core values, and knowledge creation and application.

Workshop Summary

The participants discussed where the region is in terms of structure, mechanisms, tools, legitimacy, market orientation, and comparative dimensions.

Action on Regional Development

Several calls for action were expressed because of the urgency that exists in communities both in Ireland and Newfoundland. Demographics, unemployment, competitiveness and resource rationing were all reasons why actions on development prioritisation and implementation were sought. There was a hunger for purposeful initiative.

Leadership

In the first instance, this must come from the region and those who have been given leadership roles in public organisations and in political office in the region. They can provide this leadership for their service organisations and for their stakeholder communities. The private sector can also provide leadership by participating in the goal setting process and by hardwiring regional initiatives into the economic activity conducted by the private sector. Some collaborative work is underway in the Region and it needs to be accelerated, made more transparent and fashioned in a more connected way with the wider community.

Development Practice.

This should be informed by evidence from other jurisdictions and by frameworks or models that have been applied elsewhere. We can have regard to the successes or failures within those cases, as lessons can be learned from both sets of outcomes. By having a route map and a development vehicle that is fit for purpose, a region can pursue its desired destination, with greater likelihood of successful arrival, with the appropriate speed, with

the required resources, with sufficient capacity to bring the community and with adequate flexibility and agility to recover from the inevitable obstacles, breakdowns and minor diversions that will be encountered along the way. Disregarding such knowledge and understanding increases the risk of unsatisfactory outcomes and should be avoided.

Regional Identity

Strengthening this could increase community and business support. There are different boundaries to the region for different purposes and this weakens regional identity. Examples include education, local government, health, and policing, and fishery promotion.

Determining who exactly is included in the collective regional effort is important so that there is clarity as to who will contribute to and benefit from regional development.

Currently the population first identifies with a smaller unit of analysis such as a parish or community and then with a larger one which might be the county or the province in Newfoundland. An intermediate unit such as a functional region is not the object of loyalty and commitment. Yet it is at this level that people's daily lives and life chances are most determined by activities events, resources and interactions.

Centralisation and Regionalisation

The capacity of a region to deliver favourable socioeconomic outcomes is linked to the degree of autonomy it enjoys with respect to controlling its destiny. National policy can determine the extent of such control. In all political processes, there is a natural tendency for agents who have power to seek to retain or increase it. In a democracy, it is desirable that there exist checks and balances that temper such desires. Regions are limited at present in the level of influence they have on resources and policy levers with respect to development and if this does not change, then a continuation of present unacceptable patterns of employment, economic activity, educational opportunity, and social fulfilment is more probable.

Regional Networks

These need to be identified and documented to serve as models for development. Local Chambers of Commerce already work together on various initiatives and there has some reporting that leaders in the health care field are also developing a shared vision for service delivery platforms. Within each of the counties in Ireland and municipalities in NL there are many examples of public, private and community partnerships for tourism, sport, housing, and water and there is scope to build systemically on these partnerships and models of cooperation in the economic domain and on a wider geographical and sectoral footing in the future.

Enterprise Development

Policymakers and local decision makers must examine carefully the balance in resourcing and effort devoted to FDI, start ups and growth of existing firms, particularly internationalisation.

Policy Continuity

There is a need for political continuity in terms of elected local leadership and perhaps there should be examination of ways to achieve this such as are operated in other bodies e.g. – incoming, current and outgoing leaders share some responsibilities to that projects can be initiated and followed through with a three year time horizon rather than a one year one.

Knowledge, Skills and Intellectual Capital

Regions require a mix of graduates with practical and conceptual skills and it needs institutions with research and teaching capability commensurate with a knowledge based economy and a technically equipped labour supply. Both facets are critical for generating and sustaining economic activity and for providing employment opportunity across the social and educational spectrum. Stakeholders in the Region need to ensure that the higher

education reconfiguration will be sufficient to meet the community’s needs in the medium term on both of these fronts. It would be naive to assume that national decision makers will automatically make such provision without being appropriately informed by the community and its leaders. There should be as much overlap as possible between the national/federal, provincial and regional interests and securing and making this overlap is a political, conceptual, performance and communication task.

Communication

Even though Newfoundlanders and Irish people have a positive reputation for communication and dialogue, there was some sense that they may undervalue what their offering is in the widest sense to the population at home and abroad. We need to reflect deeply on the coherence of our message, on its substance, on channels for dissemination, on the mix of sensual engagement (what you hear, taste, see, touch, feel) with respect to our communities. These sensory experiences will shape decisions on purchasing, locating, visiting, recommending, choosing etc.

Links between NL and the South East

Possibilities here lie in sharing expertise and business models with respect to agriculture, tourism, water treatment, community care, economic planning, volunteerism, and the recurring issue of transport links between our two regions.

Acknowledgements

Mr Eddie Breen, County Manager, Wexford County Council

Ms Amanda Byrne, Ms Edwina Colfer and Ms Geraldine Berry of the Community Enterprise Unit in Wexford County Council.

Dr Sean Byrne, Dept of Accounting & Economics, Waterford Institute of Technology

Cllr Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Chair, Wexford County Council.

Dr Senan Cooke, Committee Member, Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Dr Anthony Foley, Dept of Management and Organisation, Waterford Institute of Technology

Ms Sherry Gambin-Walsh, Newfoundland, Labrador and Ireland Connections

Ambassador Loyola Hearn, Embassy of Canada

Dr Wally Kirwan, Committee member, Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Mr Éamonn Murphy, Chair, Ireland Newfoundland Connections.

Dr Ruaidhrí Neavyn, Director Waterford Institute of Technology,

Ms Margaret Moore, Committee member, Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Mr Lar Power, Director of Services, Waterford City Council

Dr Thomas O'Toole, Head of School of Business, Waterford Institute of Technology

The staff of the Canadian Embassy

The Department of the Environment, Wexford.

Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies at Waterford Institute of Technology

Centre for Newfoundland Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

South East Radio

The Wexford People newspaper

The Wexford Echo newspaper

All the conference presenters

Schedule of Attendees

Names & Organisation where relevant

1	Cllr Lorcan Allen	Gorey Town Council
2	Mr Tom Banville	Wexford County Enterprise Board
3	Mr Eddie Breen	Wexford County council
4	Mr Stephen Blair	South East Regional Assembly
5	Dr Proinnsias Breathnach	NUI Maynooth
6	Cllr Tomas Breathnach	Kilkenny County Council
7	Mr Paddy Browne	Teagasc
8	Ms Amanda Byrne	Wexford County Council
9	Dr Sean Byrne	Waterford Institute of Technology
10	Mr Marius Cassidy	FAS
11	Cllr Pat Codd	Wexford County Council
12	Cllr Kathleen Codd Nolan	Wexford County Council.
13	Cllr Pat Cody	Wexford County Council
14	Ms Edwina Colfer	Wexford County Council
15	Dr Senan Cooke	Dunhill Enterprise Centre
16	Mr Michael Doran	Carlow County Council
17	Mr Michael Delaney	Cork Institute of Technology
18	Dr Anthony Foley	Waterford Institute of Technology
19	Ambassador Loyola Hearn	Canadian Embassy
20	Mr Ed Hendrick	Sonru
21	Mr John Hickey	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
22	Dr Walter Kirwan	Ireland Newfoundland Partnership
23	Ms Deirdre Leacy	Zurich Insurance

24	Ms Sheila Lee	Newfoundland
25	Cllr Jerry Lodge	County Laois
26	Mr Éamonn Murphy	Ireland Newfoundland Connections
27	Cllr Marie Murphy	South Tipperary County council
28	Cllr Pat McCarthy	Kerry County Council
29	Mr John Maher	Waterford Institute of Technology
30	Ms Mary Moylan	Newfoundland
31	Mr John O'Connor	Enniscorthy Enterprise & Technology Centre
32	Mr Seamus O'Connor	Carlow County Council
33	Mr Brian Ogilvie	Carlow Institute of Technology
34	Mr Craig Pollet	Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador
35	Ms Florence Power	Newfoundland
36	Mr George Power	Newfoundland
37	Ms Madeline Quirke	Wexford Chamber of Commerce
38	Mr Fergal Reidy	Waterford County Council
39	Ms Margaret Walsh	Newfoundland

Schedule of Presenters

Brief Pen Portraits

Dr Proinnsias Breathnach is a senior lecturer in the Department of Geography at NUI Maynooth which he originally joined in 1972. His principal research interests are in the areas of national and regional economic development, transnational investment and the informational economy. He has published widely in these areas. He teaches modules in Economic Geography, The Geography of the Informational Economy and Regional Development & Planning at undergraduate and postgraduate level. He is also actively involved as an Associate of the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at NUI Maynooth and in generic skills training for PhD students in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

His research Interests include

- Economic and Industrial Development
- Regional Development
- Transnational Investment
- The Information Economy

Mr Paddy Browne graduated from the NUI (UCD) in 1976 with a BAgrSc. He received a MagrSc (Hons) in 1982. In 1987 he was awarded a Diploma in Adult and Community Education by the NUI (Maynooth). In 2000 he was awarded a Masters in Business Administration from WIT.

He started his career as an Adviser and Education Officer with Teagasc in County Carlow. In 1994 he was appointed Chief Tillage Adviser based in Oak Park. In 2001, he was appointed Head of Education with Teagasc and in 2012 was appointed Head of Teagasc's Crops, Environment and land Use Programme. In this capacity, he has responsibility for Teagasc's Crops research Programme at Oak Park, Carlow and also for Teagasc's Environment Programme at Johnstown Castle, Wexford.

In 2006, Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education and Science, appointed him as Chairman of the Governing Body of Institute of Technology Carlow. He is also a former Council member of FETAC.

Mr Edward Hendrick is Founder and Chairman of Sonru based in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. This company provides software services to support recruitment and interview processes in organisations across the public and private sectors in international markets. He is an agricultural science graduate from UCD and holds a graduate diploma in Enterprise Development from Waterford IT.

Edward was named as one of the top 40 under 40 entrepreneurs in Ireland by the Irish Independent and Business Plus magazine in 2012. He was also awarded a Net Visionary Award for innovation by the Irish Internet Association in 2010.

Ms Deirdre Leacy is a Manager with Zurich Insurance in Wexford. Her responsibilities include a role as a sales and performance manager managing its field sales team across Ireland. She has worked in both life and general insurance over the last 9 years. She holds a BA in Financial Services from Waterford IT.

Mr John Maher is a Chartered Accountant and a Member of Taxation Ireland. He has lectured in the Department of Accounting and Economics in Waterford Institute of Technology since 1995 and previously worked with Irish Life Assurance and Coopers and Lybrand. He is a committee member of Ireland Newfoundland Connections, chair of the WIT Centre for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies and a Board Member of Waterford Credit Union. He has served as Chair of the Irish Accounting and Finance Association, as a member of the Consumer Consultative Panel of the Financial Regulator and as a staff representative on the Governing Body of Waterford IT.

He holds a BComm from UCD, a MComm from UCC and a Certificate in Quality Assurance from Excellence Ireland.

Mr Brian Ogilvie is External Services Manager with the Institute of Technology Carlow where he is responsible for the business development planning and management of the Institute's Enterprise & Research Incubation Centre and commercial training programmes for entrepreneurs and start-up companies.

A senior industry professional with 18 years experience in product development & commercialization, innovation, technical and business management, Brian combines strong analytical, strategic and operational skills with the practice of successfully managing people and projects in both SME and Multinational Organisations.

He holds a BSc degree from NUIG, MSc in Technology Management from UCD and MBA from Smurfit Graduate Business School, UCD.

Mr Craig Pollett is the Executive Director of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. Craig has a Bachelor of Commerce from Memorial University in Newfoundland and a Masters of Development Economics from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. Before joining MNL he was the Senior Policy Analyst with the provincial government's Department of Development and Rural Renewal.

Since joining MNL he has led a significant modernization of their advocacy and research activities as well as strengthening the organization's financial capacity. Craig also developed two new core programs for MNL: one designed to encourage the municipal role in economic development which has been recognized by the OECD as a best practice; and one designed to encourage inter-municipal collaboration and service sharing.

Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Ireland Newfoundland Connections (INC) is a community based organisation which exists to further the development of social cultural and economic links between the South East of Ireland and Newfoundland and Labrador. It has worked closely with its counterpart in Newfoundland and Labrador since 2005 and has drawn support nationally from the Ireland Newfoundland partnership, the Canadian Embassy in Dublin. Regionally it has drawn extensively on the help and cooperation of Waterford, Wexford, South Tipperary, Carlow and Kilkenny local authorities, regionally based state agencies, civic leaders and voluntary organisations.

It has an entirely voluntary committee drawn from across the region with a national associate and in 2012 this consisted of

<p>Waterford</p> <p>Éamonn Murphy (Chair)</p> <p>Senan Cooke, Margaret Moore</p> <p>John Maher, Pat Nugent</p> <p>Paula Ui Ullachain</p>	<p>South Tipperary</p> <p>Margaret Doyle</p> <p>Sylvia Cooney Sheehan</p> <p>Tom Nealon</p>
<p>Wexford</p> <p>Mick Casey</p>	<p>Kilkenny</p> <p>Mary Murphy</p> <p>Michael Murphy</p>
<p>National Coordination</p> <p>Walter Kirwan</p>	

Ireland Newfoundland Connections

Is cumann pobail é Ireland Newfoundland Connections (INC) a chuireann forbairt na nascanna stairiúla, sóisialta, cultúrtha, oideachais agus eacnamaíochta idir Oirdheisceart na hÉireann agus Talamh an Éisc agus Labrador chun cinn. Tá sé tar éis oibriú cóngarach lena chontrapháirt Newfoundland Labrador Irish Connections i dTalamh an Éisc agus Labrador ó 2005 agus tá sé tar éis tacaíocht a fháil go náisiúnta ón Ireland Newfoundland Partnership agus Ambasáid Cheanada i mBaile Átha Cliath. Go réigiúnach, tá cabhair agus comhoibriú faighte ó údaráis áitiúla i bPort Láirge, Loch Garman, Tiobraid Árann Theas, Ceatharlach agus Cill Chainnigh, gníomhaireachtaí stáit réigiúnacha, ceannairí cathartha agus eagraíochtaí deonacha.

Tá coiste iomlán deonach ann le comhlach náisiúnta, ó thrasna an réigiúin, agus seo a leanas a bhí ann i 2012

<p>Waterford</p> <p>Eamonn Murphy (Chair)</p> <p>Senan Cooke, Margaret Moore</p> <p>John Maher, Pat Nugent</p> <p>Paula Uí Uallacháin</p>	<p>South Tipperary</p> <p>Margaret Doyle</p> <p>Sylvia Cooney Sheehan</p> <p>Tom Nealon</p>
<p>Wexford</p> <p>Mick Casey</p>	<p>Kilkenny</p> <p>Mary Murphy</p> <p>Michael Murphy</p>
<p>National Coordination</p> <p>Walter Kirwan</p>	

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US Council on Competitiveness <http://www.compete.org/about-us/initiatives/rii>

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development resources and reports <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regionaldevelopment/>
