

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

HABITAT II

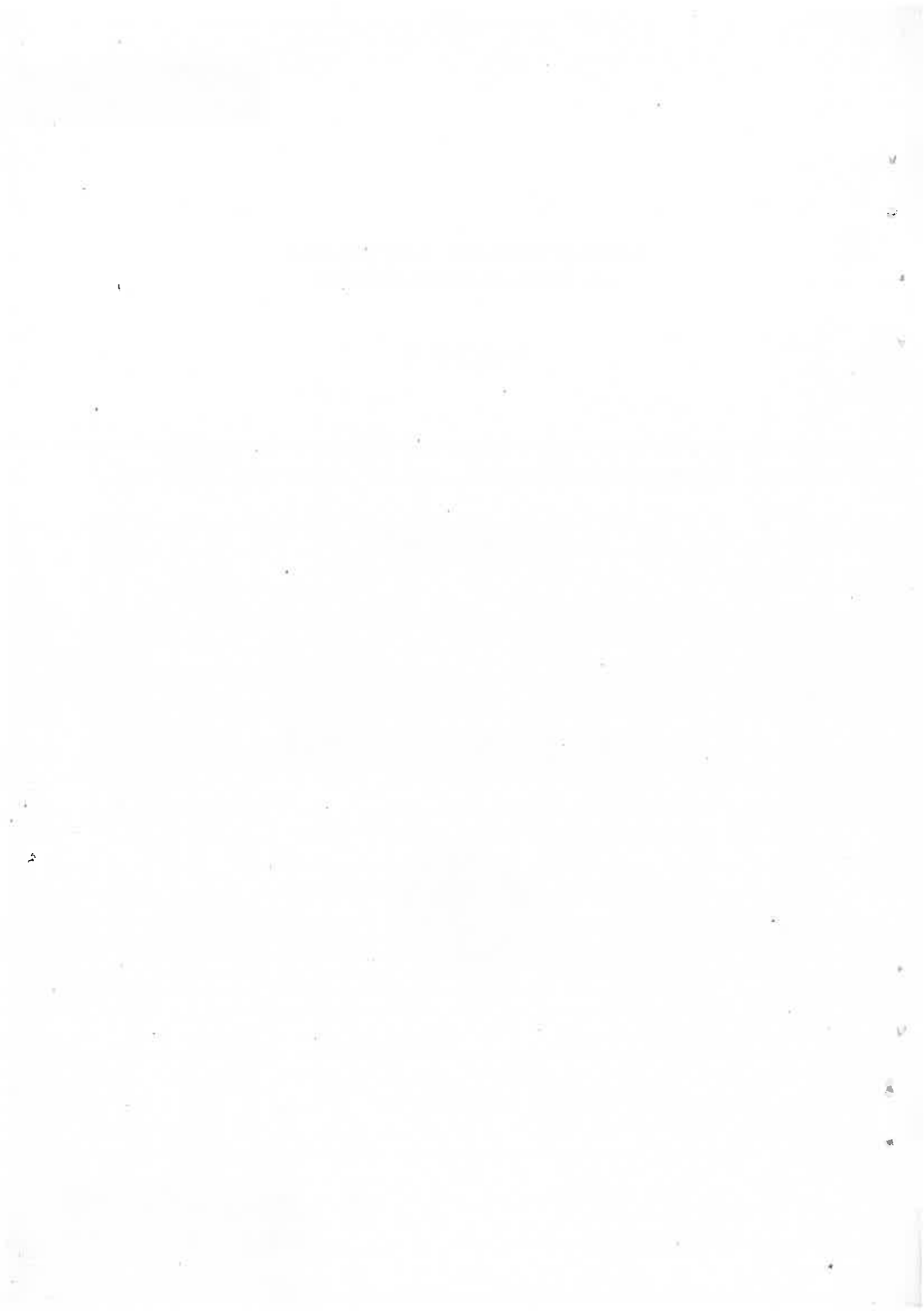
IRELAND

NATIONAL REPORT



JUNE, 1996



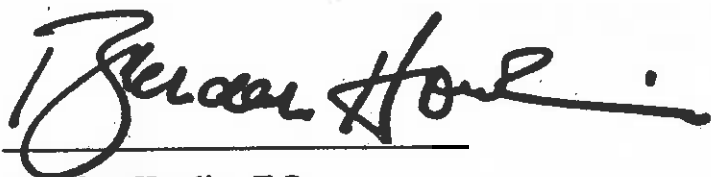


FOREWORD

This National Report has been prepared as part of Ireland's participation in the Second International Conference of the United Nations on Human Settlements (Habitat II) to be held in Istanbul in June, 1996. The role of the Irish National Committee in its preparation is gratefully acknowledged.

The Report sets out a range of policies in a diversity of fields - economic, social and environmental - that relate, in whole or in part, to housing and settlement in Ireland. The challenge of demonstrating to the world our recognition of concerns and responsibilities, and our response to them, has also been of benefit to ourselves since it has required a stock-taking of initiatives - in a sense, a process of self-examination. This has not only highlighted lacunae and shortfalls but indicated possible directions for future policies. We anticipate that these benefits will be enhanced by the outcomes of Habitat II and the opportunities it presents to obtain a fuller knowledge of the achievements of other countries. Equally, we hope that other countries - and especially developing countries - will be able to draw upon elements of Ireland's experience; and adapt and use them to advantage. We value this interchange of knowledge as a very important way of strengthening the bonds of global solidarity.

The Irish Government has committed itself to the preparation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy which will provide a framework within which national environmental, social and economic objectives can be considered together and made consistent. This strategy will provide, inter alia, a means of achieving the integration of housing, land use, urban renewal and environmental policies that is the prerequisite for the attainment of sustainable settlements. This National Report will form an important contribution to the preparation of this strategy.



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United Nations Conference
on Human Settlements (Habitat II)**

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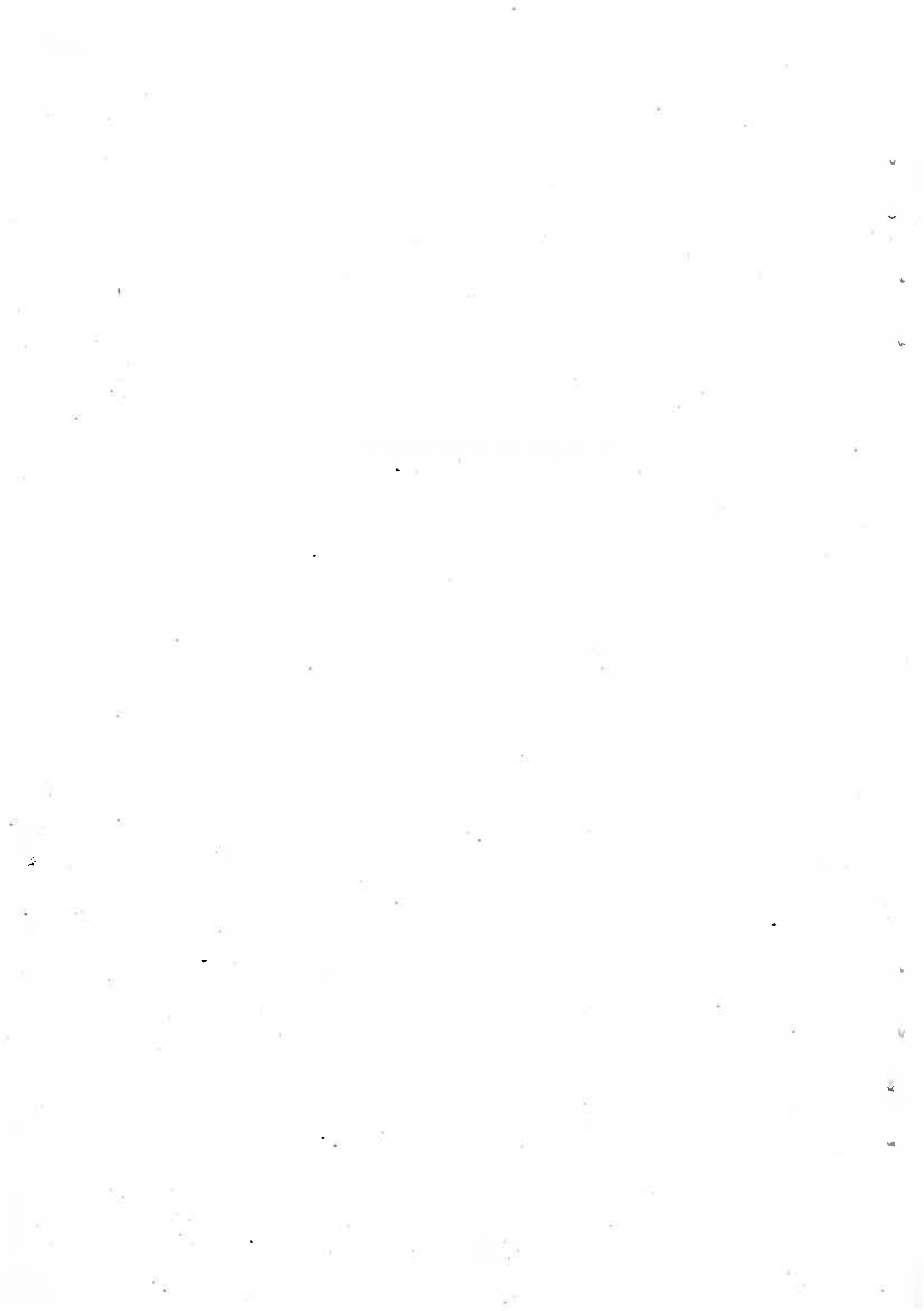
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CONTEXT

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The island of Ireland lies in the Atlantic Ocean, off the north-west coast of the continent of Europe, between longitude $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and $10\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ West and latitude $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and $55\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ North. It is separated from Britain by the Irish Sea and its extensions, St. George's Channel and the North Channel. Its area is 84,421 sq. km. and comprises the Republic of Ireland (70,282 sq. km) and Northern Ireland (14,139 sq. km).

In broad physical terms, Ireland consists of a large central plain with low hills in places, surrounded by several coastal mountain ranges. The River Shannon, which flows through the central plain, is Ireland's largest river (370km) and has a catchment area of 15,500 sq. km. The mountains, though impressive in appearance, rarely rise above 600 metres in height.

At least two general glaciations have left a legacy of distinctive land forms and directly affected both the way soils have developed and the distribution of various types. Other factors such as climate and relief have influenced the nature of Irish soils, but there is a broad distributional pattern of dry mineral soils - and consequently better agricultural land - lying south of a line from Galway to Dundalk and east of a line from Galway to Cork. It is in this part of the Irish State that the most prosperous agriculture has developed, where towns and cities have developed most strongly and where the majority of the population lives.

Influenced by the North Atlantic Drift and the prevailing winds from the south-west, the climate is equable with fairly uniform temperatures over the whole country. The coldest months are January and February (mean daily air temperatures between 4°C and 7°C) and July and August are the warmest (14°C to 16°C). May and June are the sunniest months, averaging 5 to 7 hours of sunshine per day. The average annual rainfall ranges from less than 750mm in some eastern areas to 1,500mm in parts of the west; in mountainous areas it may exceed 2,000mm.

Ireland's renewable water resources are derived from the 1,150mm annual average precipitation. Allowing for evapotranspiration, there is an effective precipitation of approximately 700mm. About 31,000 litres of surface water per capita, per day, are available, four times the amount in the most densely populated European countries. There are, however, wide variations in different parts of the country.

POPULATION

The population of the State was estimated in 1994 to be 3,571,000, a slight increase on the recorded census population of 1991 which was 3,525,719. The demographic history over the last 150 years is marked by two distinct periods:

- (i) the long continuous decline from 1841, when the area comprising the present Irish State had a population 6.5 million, to 1961 when the population was 2.8 million. The causes of the decline were initially, following the Great Famine, starvation, disease and large-scale emigration, with the last remaining the dominant factor in subsequent years.
- (ii) the period of increasing population since 1961 (with a slight reduction between 1986 and 1991) when a combination of natural increase and reduced net migration resulting from growing economic prosperity produced a 25.6 percent increase in population in the twenty-five years between 1961 and 1986. The slight reduction of 0.4 percent between 1986 and 1991 was largely the result of increased emigration.

An important demographic dynamic has been the decline in the number of births annually from 1980 (74,000) to 1993 (50,000). Behind these figures is a longer term reduction in the fertility rate - the TPF_R (total period fertility rate) peaked at 4.07 in 1964, fell to 3.98 in 1971, 2.44 in 1986 and 1.93 in 1993. A population requires a TPF_R at a level of 2.1 over an extended period to replace itself. It has been estimated that if the fertility rates of 1965 were applied to 1991, there would have been 100,000 births compared with the actual 53,000 births in 1991.

There has been a long term improvement in life expectancy for both males and females. Between 1926 and 1991 life expectancy at birth increased from 57.4 years to 72.3 years for males and from 57.9 years to 77.9 years for females. Most of these gains were achieved in the immediate post-World War II period, but average annual gains in life expectancy have continued over the past three decades. Ireland still lags considerably behind other western European countries in terms of life expectancy and it is reasonable to assume that a catching-up process will take place.

The population of Ireland is relatively young, with 26.7 percent in 1991 being less than 15 years old and only 11.4 percent more than 65 years old. Nevertheless, the population as a whole is slowly ageing since these two percentage figures are, respectively, the lowest and highest recorded in any census since the foundation of the State. The size of the young population of Ireland contributes to a high dependency ratio, the number of persons in the 0 to 14 and 65 plus age groups expressed as a ratio of the rest of the population. In 1991, the Irish dependency ratio was 0.616, but this has decreased from a peak of 0.737 in 1966.

ECONOMY

The roots of Ireland's economic development over the last 30 years lie in the decisions taken in the 1950s to achieve economic expansion by stimulating export-based industrial development. Special agencies were established and capital and tax incentives were introduced for the purpose of attaining this goal. The opening of markets was assisted by the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement (1965) and membership of the EEC (1973) which brought tariff-free access to the markets of the Community for Irish goods. In the early 1970s an emphasis was placed upon attracting electronics, engineering and pharmaceutical industries to set up in Ireland.

Economic difficulties in the mid-1980s resulted, in 1987, in a three-year Programme for National Recovery agreed between the Government, employers and trade unions. This emphasised fiscal and monetary stabilisation, tax reform, pay moderation and sectoral development on the basis of consensus. The Programme proved successful and was followed by two others: the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (1991 to 1993) and the Programme for Competitiveness and Work which began in 1994. As a result of these

Programmes economic growth has been over twice the EU average, inflation has fallen to become one of the lowest rates in the EU, and employment in the private non-agricultural sector has shown an annual average growth of about 2.5 percent. Budgetary consolidation measures linked to the Programmes have given Ireland one of the lowest Government deficits in the EU.

Economic development in Ireland is most easily summarised in a few figures. Exports of goods/services amounted to 37 percent of GNP in 1973, 56 percent in 1983, and 79 percent in 1994. The rate of growth in GNP averaged 5.25 percent per annum in real terms in the years 1988 to 1994. Per capita GNP rose from approximately 60 percent of the European average in 1970 to over 70 percent of the European Union average in 1995. An overall picture of the economy is provided by the figures for employment by sector, and for exports and imports, in the following two tables.

Estimated Employment by Main Branches of Activity, 1994

	Numbers	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	140,000	11.9
Manufacturing	231,000	19.6
Commerce, Insurance & Finance	240,000	20.4
Construction	79,000	6.7
Transport & Communications	73,000	6.2
Public Administration & Defence	68,000	5.8
Extraction & Utilities	19,000	1.6
Other	326,000	27.7
TOTAL	1,176,000	100.00

Composition of Exports and Imports, 1993

	Exports Percentage	Imports Percentage
Live Animals and Food	19.6	8.3
Chemicals	19.2	12.3
Computer equipment	18.3	12.1
Manufactures	19.8	24.9
Machinery and various equipment	10.6	24.8
Beverages and Tobacco; Mineral fuels, and other	12.5	17.5
	100.00	100.00

Total exports were worth IR£19.7 billion; and total imports were worth IR£14.8 billion.

AGRICULTURE

Despite the gradual decline in the relative importance of agriculture in the past few decades, the sector still remains important to the economy of the country. Agriculture (including forestry and fishing) accounts for 11.9 percent (1994) of employment, and food and agricultural products for 19.6 percent of exports (1993). Within Ireland there are wide differences in agricultural land use, livestock and levels of specialisation. In the eastern and southern parts of the country farms are larger, specialise in tillage and dairying, and yield the highest gross margins. In the western and northern areas farms are smaller, dependent on cattle and sheep rearing and have relatively much lower gross margins. Overall, it has been estimated that no more than one-third of farms are economically viable: these farms account for two-thirds of gross output, about 70 percent of family farm income, have two-thirds of the national tillage acreage, 70 percent of dairy cows and 50 percent of all grazing livestock.

While there has been a marked growth in productivity and output in agriculture over the last 25 years, the restructuring of the industry that has helped to bring this about has also

brought consequences for the rural economy and levels of rural population. The increased application of technology, factor substitution, enlargement of scale of holdings and specialisation of production have led to a progressive reduction in the number of farms and persons employed in agriculture. Opportunities for alternative employment in rural areas are limited and the result has been a continuing depopulation of much of rural Ireland. Discussion of the problems that arise from rural depopulation and the counteractive initiatives to promote development in these areas falls outside the scope of the present report. It is appropriate, however, to draw attention to the connection between what is happening in rural areas and the economic and social viability of the smaller centres in the settlement hierarchy whose function lies principally in serving rural communities.

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing industry in Ireland has been transformed over the last three decades. The older indigenous industries such as textiles, footwear and timber products have declined and growth has taken place in new sectors, such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, office and data-processing equipment. This sectoral shift has been accompanied by a significant change in the technological capacity of Irish manufacturing - one-sixth of manufacturing industries with more than 20 employees were classified as "high-tech", but they accounted for one-quarter of employment and almost two-fifths of the gross value-added in the manufacturing sector. This share of gross value-added doubled between 1980 and 1990, while the proportion accounted for by "low-tech" sectors declined from 63 percent to 50 percent.

In 1994, an estimated 231,000 persons were employed in manufacturing. Almost 70,000 were employed in the metals and engineering sector, which may be compared with 21,100 in 1958. The electronics industry gives direct employment to over 30,000 persons and accounts for 25 percent of total exports. The computer software industry employs nearly 9,000 persons.

The restructuring and growth of manufacturing industry has had a geographical dimension. The older manufacturing base was small, sectorally limited and concentrated in the main urban areas - County Dublin accounting for 47 percent of all manufacturing employment. Initiatives and policies over the forty years have altered the regional distribution of

of their historic buildings and townscapes (15 towns have been defined in one of the tourism development programmes as Heritage Towns), and their social, cultural and shopping facilities.

UNEMPLOYMENT

A dominant and continuing characteristic of Ireland's economy is the high level of unemployment which has been consistently higher than the EU average: 17.4 percent compared with the EU figure of 10.4 percent in 1986, and 14.8 percent compared with 11.5 percent in 1994. The table below illustrates, in two forms of measurement, the scale and persistence of unemployment over recent years. The figures are derived from the annual Labour Force Surveys and the Live Register, which is a count of the number of persons who sign on for payments or credits within the scope of certain schemes administered by the Department of Social Welfare. The Labour Force Survey figure of 192,000 in 1995 represents 13.5 percent of the labour force.

Numbers unemployed 1987 to 1995

	Live Register (000)	Labour Force Survey PES (000)
1987	251	232
1988	242	218
1989	233	201
1990	221	176
1991	248	209
1992	281	221
1993	295	230
1994	285	218
1995	276	192

Unemployment has stayed at a high level despite a significant improvement in living standards and a marked increase in labour productivity. Losses in employment in agriculture and the older established industries have been offset by new jobs in industry and services,

manufacturing, as the industrial development of areas away from Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford was assisted. At the same time, in the centres with larger concentrations of older industries, major restructuring resulted in severe employment losses.

TOURISM

Tourism is a buoyant and dynamic growth sector of the Irish economy. Total tourism spending (domestic and overseas) is now in excess of IR£2 billion and some 91,000 jobs now depend, directly and indirectly, on tourism. Its growth in recent years has been very marked: foreign exchange earnings from tourism grew by IR£636 million in the period 1988 to 1993 and since 1987 the industry has created almost 30,000 new jobs. These achievements follow on the introduction of a national strategy in 1988 which targeted promotion, competitiveness, improved distribution and product investment. It is the Government's aim to promote and assist further growth in the tourism sector to meet the target of increasing foreign tourism revenue to IR£2.25 billion in 1999 (from IR£1.367 billion in 1993), and thereby create 35,000 additional new jobs.

The attraction of Ireland for tourists derives from many of its environmental, cultural and historical attributes. Amongst these are scenic landscapes, a 'green' unspoilt environment, opportunities for outdoor activities, a distinctive heritage and culture, a friendly welcoming people and a relaxed pace of life. Since tourism is geographically dispersed throughout the country it is an important means of raising income and providing employment in the more remote and poorer regions. It acts naturally as an instrument of regional balance, with some of the major tourism destinations, outside Dublin, being located in the country's less developed areas. The benefits brought by tourism are further enhanced through a significant multiplier effect on the local and national economies as almost all inputs are locally produced, with a low import element. Tourism services are highly labour-intensive, with small, low-technology, enterprises dominant.

Cities and towns play a very important role as centres of tourist activity by providing accommodation and services. One-third of the total approved accommodation stock in the country is located in, or close to, the cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick and the tourist town of Killarney. Towns are also places of attraction in their own right by virtue

but the growth in the latter sector, though substantial, has not increased at the rate of the EU as a whole. An inhibiting factor has been the fact that many of the newly-established, foreign-owned, manufacturing enterprises have relied on their foreign affiliates or suppliers for intermediate input requirements and therefore not generated much employment in the indigenous sector.

Two other sets of circumstances have acted against the substantial reduction of unemployment. The first derives from the demographic structure in which a substantial proportion of the population comprises the younger age groups, much higher than the EU average. To a large extent this is the consequence of returning emigrants and high fertility rates in the 1970s. This, in turn, has meant a considerable flow of new entrants to the labour force each year, a process which will continue into the next century.

At the same time, the transformation of the economy with the contraction in agricultural employment, the change in the nature of the manufacturing industry and the expansion of services has brought about different labour requirements. In particular, higher levels of education, training and skills are being sought - levels that are not available to a sufficient extent in the work force of the older industries, for example. Thus, in male unemployment in 1988 unskilled labour represented the largest group on the live register at 38.1 percent. For both male and female unemployed nearly 30 percent, in the same year, had previously worked in manufacturing.

Unemployment is not equally shared in Ireland. Despite the high rate of unemployment, a 1987 survey showed that over 70 percent of adults had never experienced significant unemployment in their careers and that the vast bulk of career unemployment had been experienced by less than 20 percent of the labour force. Some 4 percent of adults had experienced more than 5 years of unemployment in their working life, with an average unemployment duration of 10 years. The inequalities are increased by the clustering of unemployment, both in families and communities. Partners of unemployed persons are less likely themselves to be in work and unemployment rates in individual districts are as high as 60 percent in some urban and rural areas.

Another facet of unemployment is its duration. Over the decade 1982 to 1992 the percentage of persons unemployed longer than 53 weeks rose from 31 to 44. Of the long-term unemployed in 1992, 19 percent were unemployed for more than 3 years, and 25 percent for 1 to 3 years. Long-term unemployment is closely associated with low skill levels: 84 percent of those with more than five years unemployment had no second level qualifications. Apart from educational disadvantage, those who are long-term unemployed have to overcome other less tangible barriers to successful employment, including personal demotivation and the generally negative perceptions of employers. Long-term unemployment appears to be becoming more resistant to periods of good growth and falling unemployment: for example, it grew by 15,000 between 1992 and 1995 even though participation in Community Employment Schemes increased by 28,500.

Unemployment, and long-term unemployment in particular, is the major dynamic contributing to many of the country's economic and social problems, much as poverty, social deprivation and exclusion, local environmental degradation, crime, vandalism, ill-health, alienation and educational disadvantage. It is strongest and most pervasive in cities and towns; its scale, persistence and distribution in urban areas will be dealt with in the more detail later.

SETTLEMENT

In 1991, over 64 percent of the total population of 3,526,000 lived in the combined town and suburban areas of Ireland. This figure is derived from the total population of the census towns, which include settlements of less than 500 inhabitants that contain at least 50 inhabited houses. Frequently a higher threshold figure of 1,500 population is used to distinguish between urban and non-urban settlements; on this basis 57 percent of the population could be classified as "urban".

The distribution of population by town size, shown in the table below, highlights certain distinctive characteristics of the Irish urban system:

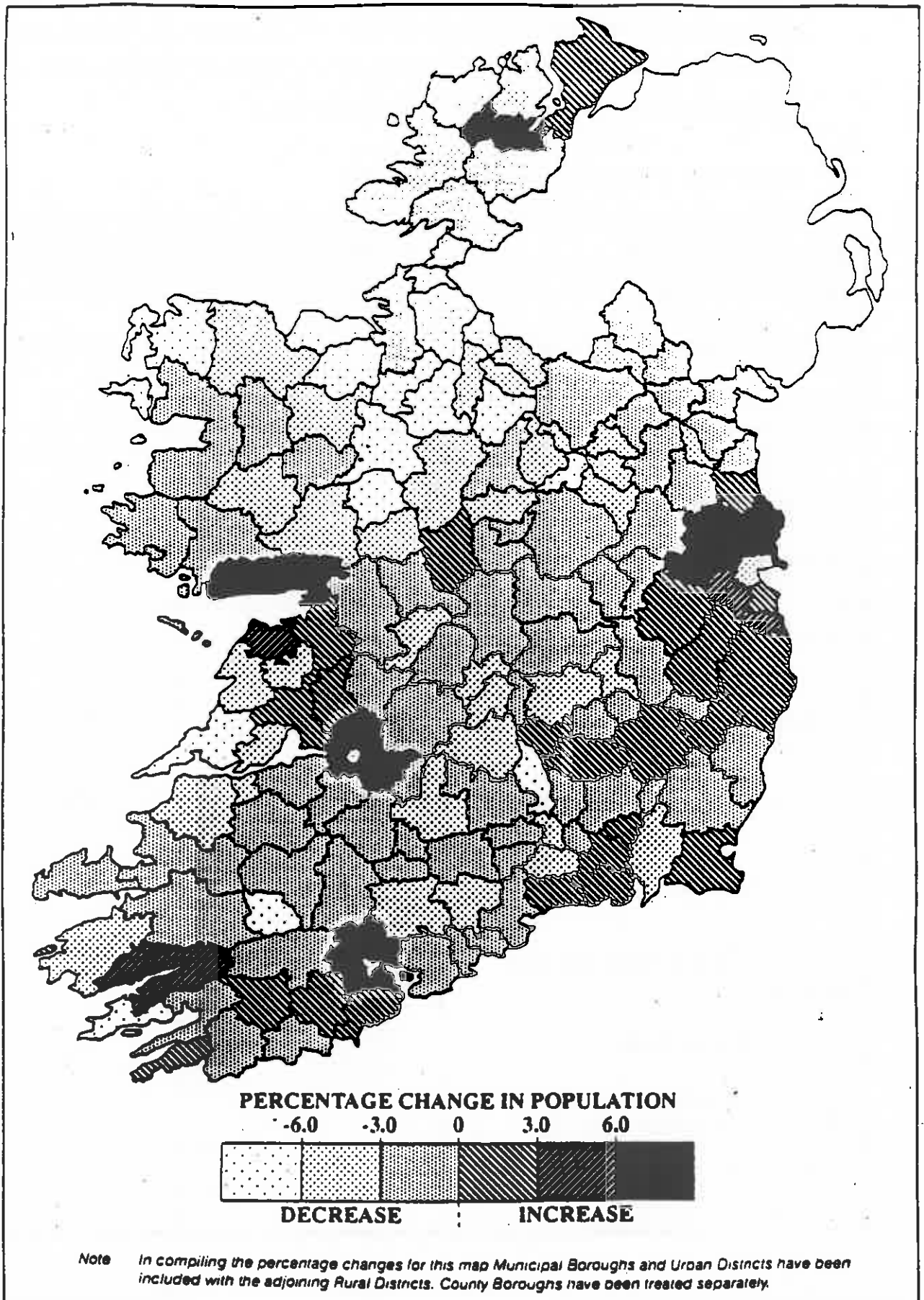
- (1) the dominance of Dublin which contains one quarter of the population of the country and two-fifths of its urban population;
- (2) Dublin is five times larger than Cork, the second largest city;

- (3) the large number of small settlements - 80 percent of the 634 towns have less than 1,500 population and together account for less than 12 percent of the total urban population; a further 11 percent of the towns have a population between 1,500 and 5,000 and contain 8.7 percent of the urban population.

Distribution of Population by Town Size, 1991

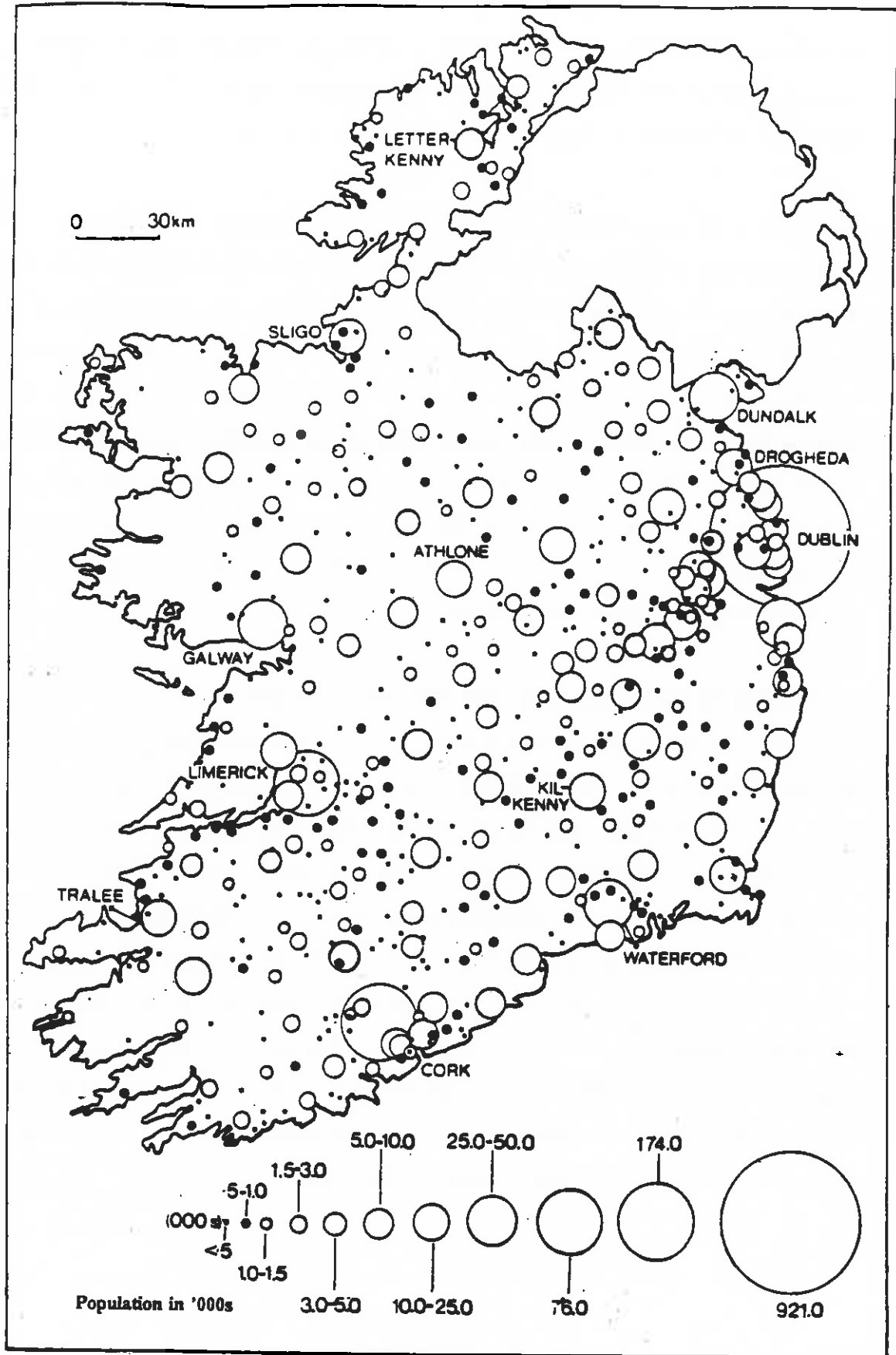
SIZE OF CITY/TOWN	NUMBER OF TOWNS	POPULATION
Greater Dublin Area	2	915,516
Cork County Borough and Suburbs	1	174,400
Limerick County Borough and Suburbs	1	75,436
Galway County Borough	1	50,853
Waterford County Borough and Suburbs	1	41,853
Other towns classified by average population in the period:		
10,000 population and over including environs	21	336,411
5,000 to 10,000 population including environs	31	218,564
3,000 to 5,000 population including environs	25	96,403
1,500 to 3,000 population including environs	47	101,264
1,000 to 1,500 population including environs	64	79,196
500 to 1,000 population	134	94,984
Under 500 population, but with at least 50 inhabited houses in 1991	306	93,045
Population outside Towns	-	1,247,794
TOTAL	634	3,525,719

The geographical distribution of cities and towns in Ireland shows a pronounced concentration of the number and size of settlements in that part of the country lying to the south and east of a line running from Dundalk to Galway to western County Cork. Only



Population Density 1991

(Source: Walsh, 1995)



Urban Settlement in Ireland

(Source: Cawley, 1991)

three towns with a population over 10,000 (Letterkenny, Sligo and Tralee) and seven towns with a population between 5,000 and 10,000 (Castlebar, Ballina, Tuam, Longford, Cavan, Monaghan and Killarney) lie to the north or west of this line.

This pattern of urban settlement correlates closely with the distribution of the better agricultural land which has provided the basis for a more prosperous agricultural sector and the subsequent evolution of a well-developed urban system. The southern and eastern parts of the country have also been more favoured in terms of external communication and trading links in that they face Britain and mainland Europe. Within this more urbanised part of the country, there are concentrations of settlement along the major transportation routes that radiate from Dublin - northward and southward along the coast and to the west and southwest of the city. On a smaller scale, there are concentrations of towns within the regions of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford cities. Almost half of the towns with a population over 10,000 lie within the five city regions.

POPULATION CHANGE AND THE URBAN SYSTEM

Over the past three decades there have been marked variations in the demographic performances of towns of different sizes. (See table of population changes below). Towns of all sizes, together with rural areas, shared in the national demographic recovery of the 1970s. Medium-sized towns (3,000 to 10,000 population) had the better rates of growth, although these 59 towns, in aggregate, comprised such a small proportion of the total population that absolute gains were relatively small and were exceeded, for example, by the increases in the Dublin area alone. In the early 1980s the rate of population growth decreased nationally, but the slow-down was not experienced evenly by different types of area. In the late 1980s the slow-down became a decline and in this period only the larger town categories (population over 5,000) continued to show an increase. The Greater Dublin Area was an exception and also showed a small decline.

*Population Changes 1966 to 1991 and
Population Distribution by Type of Area/Centre, 1991*

Type of Area/Centre	Percentage change				percent
	1966-71	1971-81	1981-86	1986-91	1991
Greater Dublin Area	+ 5.6	+ 14.2	+ 0.8	- 0.6	26.0
County Boroughs ¹ and suburbs	+ 7.3	+ 15.5	+ 3.1	+ 1.1	9.6
Other towns - population with environs:					
10,000 and over ¹	+ 8.7	+ 25.8	+ 6.7	+ 3.0	9.8
5,000 to 10,000	+ 8.1	+ 40.4	+ 5.3	+ 0.8	6.1
3,000 to 5,000	+ 16.0	+ 38.1	+ 4.3	- 0.5	2.6
1,500 to 3,000	+ 10.7	+ 26.3	+ 2.5	- 1.1	2.8
1,000 to 1,500	+ 7.9	+ 24.4	+ 0.2	- 2.1	2.4
500 to 1,000	+ 7.6	+ 22.6	+ 4.7	- 1.2	2.6
Under 500	+ 5.8	+ 29.7	+ 6.1	- 0.4	2.7
Country districts	- 2.2	+ 7.4	+ 2.6	- 1.6	35.4
State	+ 3.3	+ 15.6	+ 2.8	- 0.4	100.0

¹: The Galway Municipal Borough is included in the figures for County Boroughs and suburbs from 1971.

Source: Commins and Keane (1994)

*Percentage of Towns in different Size Categories
having Population Decline*

	1981-86	1986-91
Greater Dublin Area	0.0	100.0
County Boroughs	0.0	25.0
Other Towns (persons)		
10,000 persons +	0.0	33.3
5,000 - 10,000	37.5	65.5
3,000 - 5,000	37.5	72.0
1,500 - 3,000	46.5	70.0
1,000 - 1,500	53.4	64.1

Source: Commins and Keane (1994)

Although, generally speaking, the larger the population centre the less its propensity to lose population, not all the larger towns gained - nor all the smaller towns lost. There was a marked sub-regional effect, particularly in the most recent inter-censal period. Thus, in 1986-1991, about 80 percent of the gross population increases in towns above 4,000 population (excluding County Boroughs and Dublin) occurred in towns within the Dublin region - Swords, Malahide, Celbridge, Lucan, Maynooth, for example.

DUBLIN

During this century, Dublin has changed from a well-defined compact city to a more populous, more dispersed, city region. The growth and re-distribution of population are shown in the table below, where population changes are expressed in relation to a series of concentric rings drawn at intervals of 8km out from the city centre. The "urban" population described comprises those persons living in the towns and villages of the region as well as in the main built-up area.

"Urban" Population ('000s) in the Dublin City-Region 1936-1991

Distance from centre (km)	1936	1971	1981	1986	1991
0-7					
(a) Inner City ¹	266.5	131.5	97.2	83.2	76.6
(b) Rest	221.1	547.1	587.1	561.1	539.4
8-15	45.2	140.0	281.0	332.0	362.3
16-23	14.7	28.6	52.6	65.3	73.0
24-31	12.5	21.7	39.1	47.8	51.8
TOTAL	560.0	868.8	1057.0	1089.4	1103.4

¹: The 'inner city' is defined here as all census wards lying wholly or partly within the canals or, on the north-west, on the city side of the North Circular Road. The Ballybough wards are included. Slight variations exist between the boundaries for 1936 and those used for later years.

The population within the city-region nearly doubled in the period 1936-1991 and this has been accompanied by a major population re-distribution, characterised by population loss at the centre and population gain on the fringe. For much of the first half of this century a majority of the population of Dublin lived in the inner city, within 1-2 kilometres of the centre at O'Connell Bridge. Over a quarter of a million people lived in this area during the 1930s, many of them in highly congested, very poor, accommodation. Since the 1930s two processes have acted to promote the fringe at the expense of the centre: a sustained programme of local authority house-building at suburban locations allowed for slum clearance; and a rise in car ownership accelerated a trend for middle-class Dublin to disperse outward to new suburbs and to surrounding towns and villages.

As a result, the city expanded and its urban fringe extended outwards. Up to the late 1960s, the main growth was suburban and close to the city, leading to a doubling of the population in the area between 1.5 and 8km from the centre. Since then, however, growth has been more widely scattered. Although the main bulk of growth was in the 8-15km zone, which now has over 360,000 persons, marked urban population growth also took place in each of the two outer zones. Some 125,000 persons now live in the towns and villages between 16 and 31km from the city centre - five times as many as in the 1930s.

In parallel with the growth of the urban fringe there has been an emptying of the city centre. Over the last quarter century the decrease promoted by earlier slum clearance has been compounded by a re-structuring of employment within the city. Many of the longer-established sources of inner city work have either disappeared or have migrated to suburban sites. Although resultant losses in employment have been more than offset by the growth of office-based activity, the change has had little impact on inner city unemployment since offices draw on a workforce with quite different skills to those formerly available. As a result, a series of processes have combined to turn de-congestion into a much broader set of changes, leading in some areas to the disintegration of long-established communities.

The inner city now contains a population of under 80,000 - less than one-third the total of fifty years ago. In relation to the total population of the Dublin area the relative influence of its inhabitants is further diminished: in the 1930s the inner city contained nearly half the population of the city-region, now it accounts for about one-fourteenth.

These long-term trends continued during the 1980s but in the context of a slow-down in overall growth. The population in the city-region grew by around 46,000 between 1981 and 1991, about one-quarter the increase during the 1970s. The inner city experienced a further loss of 20,000 jobs, but a new development was the extension of population decline to many inner suburbs. During the late 1980s changes became very mixed, with 125 of the 164 wards in Dublin County Borough in decline. In many wards, these losses occurred at the same time as a marked increase in the building of apartments and town houses. This has happened through the emergence of a new demographic structure in which household size is much smaller. The growth of one-and two-person housing units has allowed the total housing stock to continue to expand while, at the same time, the population remains either almost static, or in slight decline.

The expansion of built-up areas in the city region provides a physical expression of these spatial population changes, characterised, in particular, by the extension of the main built-up area and the spill-over to nearby towns and villages. The area of built-up land is now almost four times as extensive as in the 1930s - 23,890 hectares (1988) compared with 6,450 hectares (1936/40). Urban population densities have also changed at different distances from the city centre. Density in the 0-7km band has halved over the last 50 years with the result that, at a broad level of generalisation, the density gradient has now largely disappeared and Dublin has become a city where there are usually only quite limited variations in population density between different districts. In spatial terms, Dublin in 1936 corresponded to the classical city model of a high-density centre around which densities declined with distance outwards. Fifty years later it had metamorphosed to a quite different model, that of the 'doughnut' city, with a city centre of greatly reduced residential population and density, surrounded by extensive areas with increased, very similar, population densities.

CORK AND OTHER CITIES

The pattern of population change in Cork, Ireland's second largest city, is similar to that of Dublin, though following later in time. The city (County Borough) experienced an increase in population from 128,645 in 1971 to 138,627 in 1979, and thereafter underwent a decrease to 127,253 in 1991. There has been a shift in population to the suburbs, which, in the years 1981 to 1991 increased by over 45 percent from 32,417 to 47,147 persons. However, within this general trend there have been exceptions as some central areas have experienced increases, part of which may be attributable to local authority infill housing schemes.

Limerick, Waterford and Galway cities share with Dublin and Cork the experience of depopulating city centres, increasing numbers living in the suburbs, and population growth within commuting areas. For many of the larger towns the same pattern of processes is also present, though at a much reduced scale.

URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

The five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford account for 47 percent of total national unemployment with, in addition, 20 percent located in urban centres with a population of 10,000 or greater. This concentration of unemployment, and especially the very high concentration in areas of public housing within cities and towns, lies at root of urban poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion in Ireland. In Limerick, for example, 84 percent of the Corporation's tenants depend on social welfare as their principal income source.

In Dublin, the restructuring of industrial employment and the growth of service employment have led to a contraction in manual and semi-skilled employment. In particular, the rise in unemployment in the inner city is directly linked to the decline in the traditional manufacturing base. In the Greater Dublin Area unemployment, in 1993, stood at 96,143, which represented 32 percent of the total state unemployment. This was a 25 percent increase on the 1986 figure. Males on the Live Register made up 65 percent of the total unemployment, although female unemployment rose by 34.5 percent between 1989 and 1993.

Within Dublin city unemployment is concentrated in parts of the north and south inner city (up to 50 percent in some cases) and in areas of suburban public housing (30 to 50 percent) such as Finglas, Coolock and Darndale. Beyond this, in peripheral urban areas of recent public housing, there are blackspots of high unemployment (above 50 percent in some wards) in Tallaght and Blanchardstown.

As in other Irish cities, unemployment in Cork has increased in recent years, particularly in the over 25 age group for both males and females, and in 1993 stood at nearly 18,000. Males on the Live Register made up 64 percent of the total unemployment. The wards

containing the highest rate of unemployment, some with over 40 percent, were largely concentrated in the north inner city area. A few wards on the southern and south-eastern periphery also have high unemployment.

Limerick County Borough has undergone a marked population decrease in recent years from 60,736 in 1981 to 52,083 in 1991. Much of this loss has been due to the process of suburbanisation and the growth of the environs within Limerick County. The registered unemployment figure in January, 1994 was 7,132, an estimated unemployment rate of 35 to 40 percent which is over double the national average. There has been a pronounced rise in unemployment rates among unskilled sectors of the labour force, resulting in the very high level of long-term unemployment rate of 37 percent. Much of the long-term unemployed consists of older male workers who were once employed in the indigenous food, clothing and construction industries and these are increasingly being joined by younger people who have left school early and find that they do not have the skills required by the current labour market. The central area has the highest rates of unemployment (50 percent and over) with other concentrations of unemployment in the northside of the city and in the Southill area on the southern periphery.

Galway County Borough (population 50,853 in 1991) had 7,936 persons on the Live Register in 1993 with a males/females breakdown of 62 percent and 38 percent respectively. Concentrations of unemployment are found in the central area and in two areas in the other city - one to the east (Ballybaan) and one to the west (Newcastle/Rahoon/Shantala).

Waterford County Borough (population 40,328 in 1991) had 7,389 persons on the Live Register in 1993 with a males/females breakdown of 65 and 35 percent respectively. Unemployment is largely concentrated in the central and western parts of the city, particularly in the triangular wedge of Larchville, Lisduggan and Ballybeg radiating to the south-west.

POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Using a single indicator of poverty, where a household's average income is below 50 percent of the national average, the percentages of householders and people affected by poverty in 1987 were 17.5 and 19.8, respectively. By applying a combination of poverty lines (living

on incomes below 50 to 60 percent of average disposable income) and basic deprivation indicators, it has been estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of the Irish population can be described as living in poverty. This group has been described as "consistently poor", whose income is low and whose ability to draw upon accumulated resources is extremely limited.

A survey in 1987 showed that households headed by an unemployed person, households headed by someone from the unskilled manual class and small-farm households were the largest groups in poverty. The groups at greatest risk of poverty were the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed; children, particularly those living in large families; small farmers; some groups of women, particularly lone mothers; people with disabilities; Travellers; and people out of home.

From this 1987 survey, it was possible to chart the incidence of poverty by type of area. Based on the combination of a 60 percent income line plus basic deprivation indicators for households, the distribution was as follows:

Incidence of Poverty by type of area

Area	Percentage of poor households	Percentage of all households in sample
Open country	33.9	35.8
Village/town < 3,000	16.2	11.2
Town > 3,000	19.8	18.0
Waterford, }		
Galway, }	11.0	8.6
Limerick, }		
Cork cities }		
Dublin City & County	19.2	26.3
ALL	100.0	100.0

Source: ESRI Survey, 1987

Poor households are not highly concentrated in particular types of area (using these categories), but when the analysis is complemented by categorising households by tenure (public and private housing) a more focused picture of concentrations of poverty is obtained:

Incidence of poverty by area and tenure type

Area	Percentage of poor households		Percentage of all households	
	Local Authority	Other	Local Authority	Other
Open country	5.9	28.0	2.9	32.9
Village/town < 3,000	10.3	5.8	3.3	8.0
Town > 3,000	11.1	8.7	5.8	12.1
Waterford, Galway Limerick, Cork cities	7.3	3.6	3.3	5.4
Dublin City & county	14.0	5.1	7.0	19.3
ALL	48.7	51.3	22.2	77.8

Source: ESRI Survey, 1987

Over 21 percent of all poor households are in local authority housing in the cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway, with a similar percentage present in local authority housing in all towns and villages. In total, urban local authority housing represents 19.4 percent of all households, but contains 42.7 percent of all poor households. It should be noted, however, that these concentrations of urban poverty are only part of the picture: another 23.2 percent is spread through owner-occupier and other types of rented households in the cities, towns and villages. And, taking a view of poverty nationally, 34 percent of the poor households are in open country areas.

Concentrations of people living in poverty have often resulted in areas of cumulative disadvantage, sometimes referred to as "poverty blackspots". It has been suggested that the experience of being poor and living in such an area is a qualitatively different, and usually worse, experience than being poor and living in a non-disadvantaged environment. These areas are characterised by a lack of community structures and leadership, crime, vandalism, poor environment and, in many instances, the handicap of being accorded a stigmatic reputation. The reasons for the evolution of areas of localised deprivation include:

- a decline of localised unskilled employment;
- a concentration of low-income groups, sometimes occurring because of the operation of housing policies; and
- poor or inadequate provision of local services, facilities and amenities.

Two types of concentrations of spatially defined disadvantage in urban areas in Ireland have been distinguished: inner city communities and suburban communities. These communities have been described, as follows, in the Overview Statement prepared as the first part of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy currently being developed:

Inner city communities

Marginalised communities have been identified in inner city areas, particularly in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. Industrial expansion, alongside technological advances have forced a contraction of employment opportunities in inner city areas. In addition the educational profile of many of these inner city residents do not fit the new job requirements. The decline of many inner city local economies has resulted in further decline and division of labour between those with the skills to compete for scarce jobs and those without those skills. Thus, within many inner city communities there are now a group of people who have experienced long-term unemployment and are living in an area of economic, social and physical decline with little hope of escape. Such communities have become increasingly isolated from mainstream society and have increasing problems of vandalism, addiction and lawlessness.

Suburban communities

As a result of inner city restructuring and planning policies large suburban housing estates were built on the periphery of many towns and cities in the 1960s and 1970s. However, in many areas jobs and public service provision did not materialise for people living in these new large areas of public housing for a prolonged period. There were a number of consequences of these policies: high concentrations of low income groups, particularly the long-term unemployed and lone parents on these estates; socially segregated homogeneous communities often isolated from family and friends and other family and social networks; poor physical environment; poor infrastructure and provision of services; remoteness from urban centres; high levels of crime, vandalism and addiction; fear; a certain sense of fatalism and detachment from society generally. A concentration of low income and unemployed families limits their potential to improve their economic prospects. Because an area lacks resources its morale and confidence is affected. A cycle of disadvantage becomes obvious. Persistent inter-generational educational disadvantages contribute to this cycle resulting in low levels of educational achievement, high drop-out rates in schools and high levels of illiteracy which further marginalise such communities. With concentrated unemployment and low levels of educational attainment there is consequently a high level of welfare dependency. Such communities often believe

that their needs are ignored by the state, whose existing structures are unable to respond to the needs of these communities and further contributes to the community isolation and alienation.

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Water Supply

About 80 percent of the population of Ireland is served by public water supply schemes and the remainder are served by private group schemes or individual wells. The amount of water produced by public water supply schemes is about 1,290.00m³/day, and that produced by group water supply schemes is more than 50,000m³/day. Not all of these total amounts are used since losses occur through leakage. Domestic and commercial water requirements, in urban areas, amount to approximately 250 litres per person per day and most of this is discharged to sewers after use.

Waste Water

About 2.4 million persons, 68 percent of the population, are connected to public sewers. There are 619 sewerage schemes in the country serving populations greater than 200. All sewerage schemes discharging to inland waters have treatment plants. Of the 619 schemes, 17 have treatment to tertiary level, 289 have treatment to secondary level, 218 have primary treatment only, and 95 (discharging to tidal waters) have no treatment. Over a third of the sewerage schemes (213) serve towns with a population of more than 1,000 and of these, 14 have tertiary schemes, 98 have secondary treatment and 101 discharge to estuaries and coastal waters with primary treatment or no treatment.

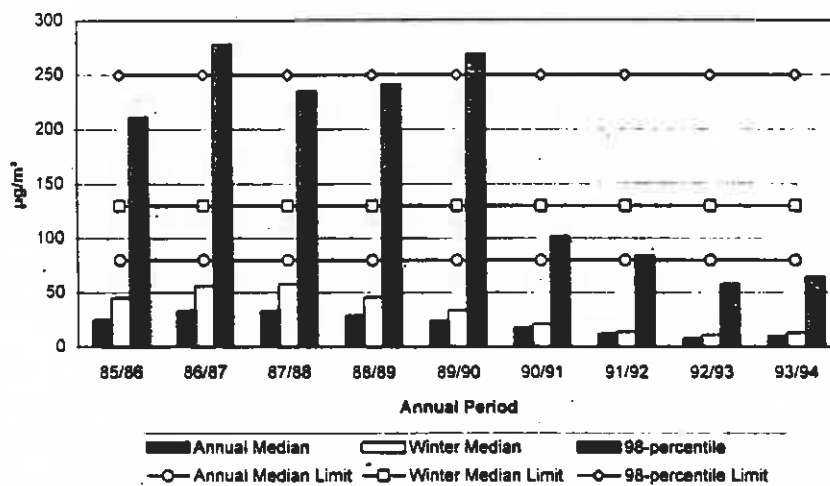
Under the requirements of the EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, urban areas with a population equivalent of 2,000 and over are required to have collecting systems and secondary treatment by 31 December, 2005, if the effluent is discharged to inland waters or estuaries. If the discharge is to coastal waters, the population equivalent criterion is 10,000. (Population equivalent takes into account the waste water from industries as well as the domestic and commercial water loads). Significant upgrading of sewage treatment,

particularly in relation to cities and towns discharging to tidal waters, will be necessary in order to meet the various requirements of this Directive.

Air Pollution

Smoke and SO₂ are the air pollutants most intensively monitored in Ireland and both have led to pollution of urban areas. Statistics for Dublin, obtained from the Dublin Corporation network of 15 monitoring sites covering city centre and suburban locations, are presented in the figure below. They show that the reduction in smoke concentrations since 1990 has been quite dramatic and illustrate the effectiveness of the smoke-control regulations introduced in the Greater Dublin area in September, 1990 (see Part B). The 98 percentile smoke value for the Dublin Corporation network averaged 77 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ between 1990/91 and 1993/94, compared with 256 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ over the four years prior to 1990/91. For the winter smoke median value, the corresponding decrease has been from 49 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to 15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. This represents a 70 percent decrease in smoke concentrations overall in terms of these parameters. The trend for individual sites was broadly similar.

Smoke concentrations in the Dublin Corporation Network



Over the seven years from 1983/84 through 1989/90, there was an average of ten exceedances per annum of the EU Directive limit values for smoke, most of which related to the daily reference period. In 1990/91, for the first time in ten years, there was no

exceedance of any Directive smoke limit value, and none for any reference period in the three subsequent years. Only nine occurrences of smoke greater than $250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ were recorded in the 1990/91 through 1993/94 annual reference periods.

Dublin experienced some pollution by SO_2 in the early 1970s, but ambient concentrations have declined steadily since around 1973. The SO_2 levels recorded in the Dublin Corporation network have apparently stabilised following this decrease, with similar results for all annual periods since 1988/89. The corresponding winter median SO_2 concentrations for these periods were consistently around $20 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, compared with the highest values of approximately $100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in the early 1970s.

In Cork, SO_2 levels are low, but there has been a noticeable increase in smoke concentrations recorded at some stations since the mid-1980s. The 98 percentile smoke limit has been approached on several occasions since 1988. No occurrences of smoke greater than $250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ were recorded in Cork city prior to 1986. However, smoke concentrations greater than $250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ were measured on 23 occasions in 1988/89 and on 22 occasions in both 1990/91 and 1992/93, with six of these recorded at one site in both years. This trend has led to the introduction of appropriate control legislation in February, 1995.

For 28 other smoke and SO_2 monitoring sites in large and small urban centres throughout the country, values are generally well within the limits but there is the potential for high concentrations of smoke to occur in some of the centres. The 98 percentile limit value for smoke has been approached on a few occasions at some sites, even in years with very mild winters. The levels of SO_2 recorded at all local authority sites outside Dublin and Cork are very low and in compliance with the standards.

With increasing road traffic, vehicle emission of pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons has increased. At College Street, one of two Dublin sites monitoring NO_x , the limit value of the NO_2 Directive has been approached closely on two occasions in the period 1988 to 1993; and the Directive guide value in respect of the 98 percentile has been exceeded in each of the six years, while the median guide value was exceeded in 1993. Measures that have been introduced to reduce the pollution, including lead emissions, emanating from traffic are described in Part B.

Noise

Although noise is an environmental nuisance, the systematic gathering of noise measurements is time-consuming and expensive. Measurements are more usually made in the investigation of particular complaints. In the absence of the systematic programme, it is difficult to provide an overall picture of environmental noise levels and trends based on actual measurements.

A major source of environmental noise is transport, particularly road traffic and aircraft. Nevertheless, noise from fixed and identifiable sources, such as industrial and commercial activities and construction sites, tend to give rise to the majority of complaints of noise nuisance. Thus in Dublin, in the period 1981 and 1990, the number of noise related complaints was 474, of which only 34 related to traffic, but 240 related to industrial activities, garages, workshops, ventilation systems and construction sites.

What seems to be a more fatalistic acceptance of road traffic noise - due perhaps to a realisation that simple easy remedial action is difficult - does not detract from the fact that it is a nuisance which disturbs many people. Noise levels in Irish towns and cities are typical of those in urban areas generally (a daytime level of between 55 and 77dB), though measurements have shown that levels at residences on the main roads in Dublin (Leq 64 to 81) can be as high or higher than those in the city centre (Leq 73 to 76).

Road Accidents

The incidence of accidents, and resultant fatalities and injuries, constitutes the most serious consequence of road traffic in urban areas. Of Ireland's 92,257km of public roads, 3.3 percent is in urban areas; but in 1994, 48.4 percent of all persons killed or injured on Irish roads resulted from accidents that occurred in built-up areas. Over a third of these persons (35 percent) were pedestrians or pedal cyclists.

It is an important goal of transportation planning and management policies to produce conditions that lead to a reduction in the number of road accidents. An important measure in this regard is the construction of motorways and by-passes which may be assumed to have contributed to the reduction from 72 to 64 and 122 to 107 million vehicle kilometres of travel on National Primary Urban Roads for trucks and light goods vehicles respectively,

between the years 1992 and 1993. Car travel, however, increased on these roads from 702 to 732 million vehicle kilometres.

Waste

It is estimated that the quantity of municipal waste (household and commercial) arising in Ireland, in 1993, was 1,679,000 tonnes, of which 92.6 percent was consigned to local authority landfill sites and 7.4 percent was recycled. This waste included 767,000 tonnes of commercial waste, of which 14 percent was recycled; and 912,000 tonnes of household waste, of which 1.4 percent was recycled. The current pattern of annual increase of between 3 and 4 percent in quantities of waste generated has persisted for at least a decade.

For municipal waste as a whole, the recycling rate for paper was 19 percent, for glass 21 percent, for metals 24 percent and for textiles 14 percent. However, for the household waste component the rates were paper (1.7 percent), glass (17.9 percent) and negligible for metals and textiles. Virtually no organic material, which forms 42 percent of household waste and 25 percent of commercial waste, was recycled.

Landfill is, and will continue to be, the principal disposal route for municipal waste in Ireland. In 1994, 117 landfills were in operation, of which 94 were publicly operated and 23 privately operated. This compares with a total of 205 operating landfills in 1984, of which 164 and 41, respectively, were publicly and privately operated. Many of the landfills currently in operation are close to maximum capacity: over two-thirds of the large local authorities have stated that they expect to experience capacity problems in the near future. In some areas, notably Dublin, there is an acute need for new landfill capacity.

HOUSING

The Department of the Environment is responsible for the formulation and implementation of housing policy, for the financing of the national housing programme and for the preparation of legislation in relation to housing. Housing services are generally provided directly to the public through the 88 democratically elected local authorities. The authorities periodically assess housing need in their areas, provide accommodation and allocate it on the basis of needs, maintain and manage their rented stock, operate a range of housing loans and grants schemes and discharge certain regulatory functions e.g. in relation to the private

rented sector. Financial assistance towards the provision of accommodation by voluntary housing organisations is provided by local authorities, generally the County Councils and the County Borough Corporations.

Policy

The overall aim of housing policy, as stated in the policy document Social Housing - The Way Ahead (May, 1995) is to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment, and, as far as possible, at the tenure of its choice. This statement of policy clearly acknowledges the role of all tenures in the housing system - social rented and private rented as well as owner-occupied which, of course, remains the preference of the vast majority of the population.

The general strategy for realising the overall policy aim is that those who can afford to do so should provide housing for themselves, with the aid of the fiscal incentives available, and that those unable to do so from their own resources would have access to social housing or income support to rent private housing.

Stock and Tenure

In April, 1991 (the most recent Census date) the stock of occupied dwellings stood at 1,029,000, an increase of 133,000 or 14.8 percent on the 1981 figure of 896,000. There were 292 dwellings per 1,000 population compared with the 1981 figure of 260. It is estimated that in 1994 there were some 303 dwellings per 1,000 population.

When compared with other Western European countries, the housing stock is small in relation to population owing to the relatively large family size and the relatively small number of single-person households in Ireland. However, in recent years many demographic factors are changing rapidly in the direction of the European norms, including lower fertility rates and smaller household and family sizes. The average number of persons per private household declined from 3.68 in 1981 to 3.34 in 1991, reflecting these changes.

Some 40 percent of the housing stock is less than 20 years old and the level of owner-occupation is the highest in the EU at 80 percent. The socially owned housing stock (mostly owned by the local authorities) stands at just under 10 percent of the total stock. A further 10 percent is rented privately - virtually all at market rents.

Indicator D 9 - Tenure Type

Tenure Type		
A1	Owned	37.98
A2	Purchasing	41.29
B1	Private rented	8.01
B2	Social rented	9.70
D	Rent Free	2.12
	Not Stated	<u>0.89</u>
		100.00

Source: Census, 1991.

Recent Trends in Output

Total house construction peaked in 1995, when 30,575 houses were built (representing 8.7 units per 1,000 population), and is at the upper end of estimated requirements. The previous record was in 1981 when almost 29,000 new houses were built (representing 8.2 units per 1,000 population) and declined each year between 1982 and 1988 when 15,654 new houses were constructed (4.5 units per 1,000 population). Since 1989 output has increased to its current record level and there are indications that this high level of output will be maintained or surpassed in 1996. Some 88 percent of housing output in 1995 was private sector (for either owner-occupation or private renting). The balance was social housing for local authorities (9 percent) or voluntary housing (3 percent).

Indicator H 9 - Housing Production - 6.3 (1995)

(net provision per 1,000 population)

	Total Provision	Obsolescence	Net Provision	Net provision per 1,000 population
1992	22,464	7,959	14,505	4.1
1993	21,391	8,060	13,331	3.8
1994	26,863	8,201	18,662	5.3
1995	30,575	8,368	22,207	6.3

Indicator H 10 - Housing Investment - 5.45 percent

Investment in the provision and maintenance of housing (1993) - IR£1.535bn; G.N.P. (1993) - IR£28.16bn.

Quality

National House Condition Surveys are carried out at ten-year intervals. Following are some of the main indications of progress achieved between 1980 and 1990.

Proportion of Housing Stock

- Unfit Down from 8.1 to 5.5 percent
- No fixed bath or shower Down from 19.5 to 8.0 percent
- No internal W.C. Down from 16 to 6.4 percent
- No internal water supply Down from 4.3 to 2.3 percent

Further significant progress would have been achieved since 1990 having regard to the high level of new house completions, the loss of older substandard dwellings and specific measures such as the remedial works scheme and bathrooms sub-programme for local authority housing.

Home Ownership

Home ownership is supported by (i) mortgage interest relief, (ii) cash grants to first-time purchasers of newly built dwellings, (iii) the absence of a general property tax on dwellings, (iv) the sale of public housing to tenants and (v) the shared ownership system.

(i) Mortgage interest relief

Tax relief is allowed in respect of 80 percent of the interest payments on a mortgage loan for the provision or improvement of a taxpayer's principal private residence. Up to 5 April, 1994, the value to individual taxpayers of the tax reliefs to which they were entitled depended on their marginal rate of tax i.e. 27 to 48 percent and the degree to which their income was exposed to that rate. With effect from 6 April, 1994, phased over a four-year period, mortgage interest relief is being curtailed to the standard rate of income tax of 27 percent. Thus, in the tax year 1996/1997, tax payers subject to tax at a rate of 48 percent, get relief at 32.25 percent.

The limits to the amount of interest on which relief can be claimed in tax year 1996/1997 are:

Single	-	IR£2,500
Widowed	-	IR£3,600
Married	-	IR£5,000

However, no tax relief is available on the first IR£200(married), IR£100(single) of interest paid. Favourable treatment is offered to first-time purchasers in that they are allowed relief on 100 percent of the mortgage interest paid up to IR£5,000 (married) and IR£2,500 (single) for the first five years in which they claim mortgage interest relief. In addition the reduction by IR£200 (married), IR£100 (single), in allowable interest does not apply.

While improvement works to existing owner-occupied housing is encouraged by the availability of mortgage interest relief there is no generally available scheme of house improvement grants.

(ii) New house grant

A grant of IR£3,000 is available to first-time owner-occupiers of modestly sized new dwellings. In 1995, grants were paid in respect of some 38 percent of new private dwellings.

Indicator H 1 - House Price to Income Ratio - 3.64

This figure relates to average new house prices and average male industrial earnings. The following table indicates recent trends.

	Average New House Price IR£	Average Male Industrial Earnings IR£	Price Earnings Multiple
1989	45,819	12,933	3.54
1990	51,618	13,419	3.85
1991	52,699	14,014	3.76
1992	54,550	14,497	3.76
1993	55,037	15,139	3.64

The most recent available figure for the Price Earnings Multiple is 3.74 for the first quarter of 1994.

(iii) Property taxes

There is no general property tax on dwellings. In 1978, local property taxes on dwellings were abolished. Prior to this, locally assessed property taxes were levied on all premises including domestic dwellings. In 1983, a limited Residential Property Tax was introduced and is currently payable only in respect of dwellings valued at over IR£101,000 (one-and-a-half times the average house price) and where household income exceeds IR£30,100 p.a. (twice the average industrial wage). The tax is payable on the excess of the value of the property over IR£101,000 at a flat rate of 1.5 percent. For example, the tax on a IR£120,000 dwelling is IR£285. It is estimated that the Residential Property Tax applies to about 3 percent of dwellings.

(iv) Sale of public housing to tenants

Generally, tenants of local authority dwellings have the option of purchasing at a discount of up to 30 percent of the market value.

(v) Shared ownership

This system is designed to assist households aspiring to home ownership who are unable to afford full home ownership in one step but who could afford to purchase an initial 40 percent of the equity and pay rent in respect of the remainder with a view to buying out the rented equity over a period. The system is designed to encourage ultimate full ownership of the dwelling. Almost 1,300 dwellings were acquired under the shared ownership system in 1995.

Indicator H 8 - Mortgage to Credit Ratio

Private Sector Credit End December, 1993

	Private Sector	Accrued Interest	Total
Total	22,496.3	145.4	22,641.7
<i>of which</i>			
Banks	15,153.7	128.4	15,153.7
Building Societies	5,604.1	6.6	5,610.8
Selected Credit Inst.	1,866.9	10.3	1,877.2
	Residential Mortgages	Accrued Interest	Total
Total	7,289.5	13.2	7,302.7
<i>of which</i>			
Banks	2,373.7	8.5	2,381.8
Building Societies	4,587.6	3.7	4,591.3
Selected Credit Inst.	328.6	1	329.6

Mortgages as a percentage of private sector credit (including accrued interest)

Total	32.3
<i>of which</i>	
Banks	15.7
Building Societies	81.6
Selected Credit Institutions	17.6

Local Authority Housing

Local authority housing output, which averaged 6,000 dwellings per annum in the early 1980s was reduced in line with declining needs in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Since then the numbers on local authority waiting lists have risen significantly and the programme has been expanded to almost 3,800 dwellings in 1995. The cost of providing local authority housing is met by Government grants and a capital contribution from local authority resources funded from the sale of local authority dwellings to tenants.

Local authority housing is let at rents that are income-related and the large subsidies are implicit rather than explicit. Nationally, the average rent is around IR£12 per week and typically represents less than 10 percent of household income. Total annual rental income of local authorities is around IR£58m or some IR£35m less than the cost of maintaining and managing the local authority housing stock. Overall, therefore, rents make no contribution to meeting the capital costs of providing or improving dwellings. Over 70 percent of households in occupation of local authority dwellings are dependent on social welfare incomes.

Voluntary/Non-profit Housing

The provision of housing accommodation by voluntary and other non-profit organisations to supplement the local authority housing programme has been actively encouraged. This sector now provides about 20 to 25 percent of new social rented housing, having been insignificant up to the mid 1980s. Under a Capital Grant Scheme for voluntary housing accommodation, the voluntary sector has catered mainly for special category housing needs such as the elderly, disabled persons and the homeless. The rental subsidy scheme assists voluntary housing bodies throughout the country in the provision of family-type accommodation for low-income households.

Private Rented Sector

The important role of the private rented sector in the overall housing system is now clearly recognised and the promotion of a thriving, more diverse and well-managed rented sector is one of the specific objectives of housing policy. It is essential to have a proportion of the housing stock available for renting to cater for those who cannot afford - or do not wish - to purchase, and to meet temporary and transitional needs. In addition, with changing employment patterns, the need for mobility and flexibility in housing may well increase in the future.

Measures in place to promote the provision of private rented accommodation include:

- in urban renewal areas, tax relief allowed against rental income for all property (including non-residential property) in the State in respect of certified expenditure on the construction, refurbishment, or conversion of residential accommodation provided by investors for renting;
- the "living over the business" pilot scheme, introduced in 1994, to encourage the utilisation of existing space over shops for living accommodation;
- income tax relief at the standard rate in respect of rents;
- in addition to the tax reliefs, in the private rented sector, support by public funds by way of rent supplements under the Supplementary Welfare Allowances scheme. It is estimated that one third of all private sector tenants receive such payments.

Indicator H 2 - House rent to income ratio - 0.1375

This figure relates to average rents in private rented accommodation and average private rented sector household disposable income. In 1987, rent accounted for 13.75 percent of the average disposable household income in the private rented sector. For local authority tenants this figure was 6.3 percent. This percentage is relatively low since the subsidies for the local authority rented sector are implicit in the assessment of the income related rent.

B POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PLANS

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy. The Constitution of 1937 provides that the National Parliament shall consist of a President and two Houses - Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann. Under the constitution, the Government is elected by, and is responsible to, the Dáil alone. Election of the President and the Dáil is by direct vote of the people on a system of proportional representation. The cabinet-style Government consists of the Taoiseach, or Prime Minister, and fourteen ministers (including the Tánaiste or deputy Prime Minister). The central administration is organised into a number of Departments of State each politically headed by a member of the Government. The 114 democratically elected local authorities form the only subordinate tier of government.

The Department of the Environment is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policy and for the preparation of legislation in relation to the protection of the environment, physical planning, housing and infrastructural services, such as roads, water and sewerage services. The Department oversees the building industry and guides and coordinates the activities of the local authorities.

There are 88 principal local authorities comprising County Councils (29), County Borough Corporations (5), Borough Corporations (5) and Urban District Councils (49). These authorities and the boards of Town Commissioners (26), who have a more restricted range of functions, are elected by universal franchise and vary greatly in size. All local authorities consist of two elements - the elected members and an executive Manager. The Manager of a County Council is also manager for every Borough Corporation, Urban District Council or Board of Town Commissioners whose functional area is within the county. The respective powers and duties of the elected Council and the Manager are defined in law. The functions reserved to the elected members are important matters of policy or principle, while day-to-day executive functions are discharged by the Manager. Local authorities are responsible for a wide range of functions within their own areas including housing, physical planning, urban renewal, development incentives and controls, roads, water supply and sewerage,

environmental protection and the protection and development of recreational and amenity facilities. There are eight regional authorities whose tasks include promoting the co-ordination of public services in each region and monitoring and advising on the implementation of EU funding programmes.

In recent years a major programme of local government reform has been underway which has seen the establishment of three new county councils and eight regional authorities. Local authorities have been provided with broad powers of general competence to act in the community interest together with statutory recognition of their general representational role. In addition, a number of detailed central government controls have been removed. Other reform measures are being developed on local government financing, sub-county structures and the devolution of additional functions.

PHYSICAL PLANNING

The physical planning system functions at two levels - national and local. Policy is decided at national level by the Government, implemented and co-ordinated mainly by the Department of the Environment and carried through at local level by the planning authorities - the 88 principal local authorities who are also housing, roads and sanitary authorities. The legislation governing physical planning consists of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 1993, together with regulations made under these Acts, which incorporate the terms of the EU Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment.

The main instrument for the regulation and control of physical planning is the development plan. Each local planning authority is required to make a development plan and to review and up-date it at least once in every five-year period. The development plan is a statement of the policy of the authority for the use of land and for the promotion and control of development in its area. The planning authority, in exercising planning control, has to have regard to the provisions of the plan and must operate to secure the implementation of its objectives. The development plan indicates the objectives of the planning authority for the use, solely or primarily, of specific areas for particular purposes (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural or otherwise), for road improvements, for development and renewal of obsolete areas and for preserving, improving and extending amenities.

Decisions to grant, or to refuse planning permission are matters for the relevant planning authority and, in the event of an appeal, for an independent body (An Bord Pleanála). All development, except development specifically exempted, requires planning permission. A planning authority may decide to grant permission with, or without condition, or to refuse it. In considering planning applications, planning authorities are restricted to considering the proper planning and development of the area concerned, including the preservation and improvement of amenities, having regard to the provisions of the development plan.

The planning system involves extensive public participation both in the adoption of development plans by local planning authorities and in decision making on individual planning applications. In the latter case, there is a universal third party right of appeal in relation to decisions taken by local planning authorities.

GENERAL POLICY BACKGROUND

The economic policies of successive governments in Ireland have focused on two main areas:

- (i) Reduction of unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment;
- (ii) Economic development - the realisation of the economic potential of the country.

Though not bearing the designation "urban", these policies, nevertheless, are fundamental to all programmes and plans of action affecting cities and towns in Ireland since they are directed at the root causes of many urban problems, such as social deprivation and exclusion, and environmental degradation. They provide the foundation on which other, more specifically urban, policies are based. The fact that 67 percent of the total national unemployed are located in the cities and towns over 10,000 population illustrates how "urban" these two major policy thrusts are.

In addition, even aspects of these policies which are concerned with rural development have a strong urban component. The viability of the large number of small urban centres serving rural communities is dependent upon the prosperity of rural areas. For this reason measures

designed to assist rural development also contribute to the economic and social well-being of the smaller towns and villages. Rural and urban policies are inter-twined at this level: for example, by aiming to supply non-farm employment opportunities for rural people in the context of declining employment in the agricultural sector, and by seeking to provide a satisfactory level of services, in urban centres, for rural communities. Moreover, the creation of employment opportunities for people living in rural areas and smaller towns and villages reduces the propensity to migrate to the cities and larger towns and the subsequent necessity of having to provide shelter, employment and services in these areas.

THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The National Development Plans (1989-1993 and 1994-1999) gave expression to these policies. The first Plan set out the main development priorities for the period 1989-1993. Its two main objectives were to address the economy's structural weaknesses and deficiencies, especially those associated with peripherality and late development; and to support the Government's efforts to create an environment conducive to increased productive investment.

In response to the Plan, the EC Commission agreed with the Government the Community Support Framework for Ireland (CSF) 1989-1993, which set out the broad thrust of the development programme to be undertaken jointly by the Irish authorities and the EC Commission. Under the CSF, including Community initiatives, an estimated IR£3.3 billion (current prices) in EC aid were spent in Ireland over the period 1989-1993. Allied investment by the public and private sectors, representing the required matching financing, amounted to a further IR£4.3 billion over the period. A further IR£2 billion, not co-financed by the Structural Funds, was also invested by the public sector on structural measures which were included in the 1989-1993 Plan.

The growth and fiscal aims of the Development Plan were more than achieved. The rate of economic expansion at 5 percent was about three times the Community average. In consequence, Ireland's GDP per capita rose from 62 percent of the Community average in 1988, to 72 percent, in 1992. This strong growth enabled Ireland to make substantial progress towards the stabilisation objectives. The aim of reducing the Exchequer Borrowing

Requirement to 3 percent of GNP by 1993 was achieved well ahead of schedule. The debt/GNP ratio fell markedly between 1988 and 1993, at a time when debt ratios throughout the European Community rose. Consumer prices rose by 3 percent, per year, as compared with 4¾ percent for the Community as a whole.

Employment between 1988 and 1990, rose by 39,000. Industrial employment expanded rapidly between 1988 and 1990, with the manufacturing sector leading the way. However, over the following three years industrial employment contracted owing to a decline in both manufacturing and the building sector. Agricultural employment continued on its downward trend but these losses were offset by growth in services employment leaving the total numbers at work, in 1993, on average about 41,000 higher than in 1988.

While Ireland did well to maintain employment when it had been falling elsewhere, this employment performance was insufficient to absorb the natural increase in the labour force, estimated at about 25,000 per annum. There was a large increase in unemployment (on a Labour Force Survey basis) which, having fallen from 202,000 on average in 1989 to 187,000 on average in 1990, rose to 218,000 in 1994. Emigration, which had been running quite rapidly, slowed as the prolonged period of expansion in the international economy began to peter out, resulting in a rapid acceleration in the growth of the labour force. The labour force in 1993 was 89,000 higher than in 1989.

The central objective of the current National Development Plan 1994-1999 is to ensure the best long-term return for the economy by increasing output, economic potential and long-term jobs, and to reintegrate the long-term unemployed, and those at high risk of becoming so, into the economic mainstream. The strategy of the Plan is directed towards the national and European Union objective of greater economic and social cohesion through:

- the development of the growth potential of the economy in agriculture, industry, the services sector, forestry, fisheries and tourism;
- infrastructural investment to improve the capacity and competitiveness of the economy;

- the development of the skills of people through education and training; and
- an increased emphasis on harnessing local community leadership and local initiative.

The measures to implement this development strategy involve:

- the extension and development of existing programmes of investment in transport (roads, airports, seaports), industry, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, water and sanitary services, education and training;
- areas of new and increased emphasis, including a new local development programme targeted at places of high long-term unemployment, greater support for the development of indigenous industry, a major programme of investment in the food industry, new initiatives in the tourism sector, the implementation of the Dublin Transportation Initiative, upgrading of the national rail network, increased investment in regional and county roads, and strategic investments in the energy and communications sectors.

The present level of unemployment requires the Plan to have an overriding focus on stepping up employment growth. Key elements of policies directed at strengthening employment performance include improving competitiveness, especially in relation to labour costs; economic and fiscal strategies that support enterprise, job creation and job maintenance; and attacking poverty traps that keep people out of work.

It is envisaged that the development measures in the Plan, together with domestic policies, will lead to a significant acceleration in the pace of job creation. Over the Plan period it is estimated that about 200,000 jobs will be created in industry, services, natural resource sectors and construction. Many of these jobs will be permanent and many more will be sustained during the period of the Plan. In addition, many thousands of jobs which will otherwise be under threat will be protected by the measures in the Plan.

In a rapidly changing economic climate, major achievements in gross job creation are needed to cope with the pace of change. It is forecast that these jobs will translate into net non-agricultural job growth of between 70,000 and 100,000 over the period of the Plan, depending on the level of wage competitiveness improvement achieved and the strength of the growth in the world economy.

The National Development Plan sets out the strategies and policies to be assisted by the Community Support Framework for Ireland (1994-1999), the Cohesion Fund and the Community Initiatives. The Plan, in effect, provided the basis of the negotiations between the Irish Government and the European Commission for the agreement and adoption of the Community Support Framework. The CSF is now outlined, with an emphasis on those elements which relate to urban Ireland.

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT FRAMEWORK FOR IRELAND (1994-1999)

The Community Support Framework (CSF) is a legal agreement between the European Commission and the Irish Government. It describes the use of the 5.62bn ECU to be provided by the four Structural Funds over the six years between 1994 and 1999.

Four priorities to guide the allocation of financial assistance were identified. In turn, nine Operational Programmes were drawn up and approved to give effect to action under these priorities. The priorities and Operational Programmes are -

Priorities	Operational Programmes
1. The Productive Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Industry, Research and Technological Development ● Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development ● Fisheries ● Tourism
2. Economic Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transport ● Energy Post and Telecommunications ● Environmental Services

3. Human Resources

- Human Resources Development

4. Local Urban and Rural Development

- Local Urban & Rural Development

The Industry Operational Programme

The Industry Operational Programme builds on the strengths and achievements of the previous 1989-1993 Industry OP which saw almost 99,000 gross new jobs created and marked increases in industrial output and productivity. The primary objective of the Government's industrial development policy, expressed through the current OP, is to promote the development of a strong, internationally competitive, enterprise sector, comprising both indigenous and non-indigenous companies which will make the maximum contribution to sustainable employment growth. Total investment over the period of the OP will amount to IR£3,576m, of which IR£832m (23.3 percent) will be provided from structural funds. To attain this primary objective various policies will aim to:

- Develop and improve the competitiveness of Ireland's indigenous manufacturing and traded services sector;
- Enhance and develop requisite human resource capabilities;
- Attract new inward investment;
- Strengthen R&D in all sectors of Irish industry;
- Build up market capabilities within firms to enable them to take advantage of opportunities in world markets;

The success of these policies will be measured by the extent to which they achieve:

- The generation of sustainable employment in the industrial and services sectors.
- A greater integration of industrial activity with other sectors of the economy, with the consequential effect of increasing Ireland's value-added share of industrial output.

- The development of natural resources as a foundation for increased industrial development (with particular emphasis on the development of the food-processing industry).
- The growth of indigenous firms, utilising best practice and modern technology; and having the ability to compete successfully on home and export markets and in technology-based markets.
- Higher living standards in Ireland and the achievement of a satisfactory regional balance in economic development.

The close geographical and functional association between industrial development and urban centres in Ireland means that this Operational Programme is of the utmost importance to the future economic and social well-being of the country's cities and towns. The Operational Programme, through its potential to advance economic development and reduce unemployment, can directly achieve much ameliorative change in urban areas. Indirectly, it can also give an impetus to the successful implementation of a variety of other urban measures.

The Agricultural, Forestry and Rural Development Operational Programme

The Operational Programme for Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development has as its principal objectives:

- improved efficiency of production;
- promotion of farming in harmony with the environment;
- diversification of on-farm production;
- development of the non-farm rural sectors;
- improved processing and marketing of agricultural produce;
- development of the forestry sector; and
- income maintenance in less favoured areas.

Measures designed to improve the efficiency agriculture, diversification of production and the marketing of produce do not have a direct bearing upon conditions in the larger towns and cities. However, much of the viability of smaller towns and villages derives from the

economic strength of the farming communities they serve and therefore measures to assist the latter have a relevance. More directly related are the various non-farm measures dealing with the development of the wider rural economy which are provided under the Local Urban and Rural Development OP, described later.

The Fisheries and Tourism Operational Programmes

The Fisheries Operational Programme has little bearing on urban policies. The Tourism Operational Programme, on the other hand, has a particular relevance. Firstly, tourism is a countrywide economic activity, ranging from the cities to the remoter, scenically attractive areas of the west and north. In the latter areas in particular, but also in rural Ireland generally, tourism offers opportunities for non-agricultural employment in rural areas and the maintenance of rural communities. Secondly, the cities, towns and villages act as nodes of tourist activity, providing accommodation and social, cultural and shopping facilities. They are also places of tourist attraction in their own right through their legacy of historically interesting buildings and townscapes. Tourism as an economic activity brings a regional distribution of benefits to rural areas and to urban centres of all sizes, from village to city.

The current OP builds upon the achievements of the 1989-1993 OP. During this period nearly 1 million extra overseas visitors came to Ireland, an increase of 42 percent; an extra IR£525m was earned; over 23,000 extra jobs were sustained by tourist revenue; and tourism increased its share of national employment from 6 percent in 1988 to nearly 8 percent in 1993.

The Tourism OP 1994-99 aims to continue this growth by aiming to:

- Achieve annual foreign exchange earnings of IR£2,250m.
- Create 17,250 full-time jobs in the tourism sector, as well as 11,750 in indirect employment, together with a further 6,000 in construction and associated capital works.
- Reduce the seasonality of Irish tourism by concentrating growth in off-peak periods.

- Continue to expand, develop and market the Irish tourism product in accordance with identified market demand.
- Improve service and quality in the Irish tourism product, as well as value for money.

Under the OP IR£652m will be invested in the 1994-1999 period and the strategy will be implemented through five Sub-Programmes - Product Development, Marketing, Natural/Cultural Tourism, Training and Technical Assistance.

The geographically extensive nature of the tourism industry in Ireland and the fact that, characteristically, it is meshed with other aspects of Irish life and economy means that it is not assisted solely under the Tourism OP. Measures to grant aid projects are also available under the Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development OP, the Local Urban and Rural Development OP, and the Community Initiatives such as LEADER II and INTERREG II.

The Transport Operational Programme

Transport services and infrastructure are critically important to Ireland on account of the country's high dependency on exports and tourism. Investment in transport underpins the development of the other sectors of the economy, especially industry, tourism, agriculture and the food industry.

The predecessor to this OP, the 1989-1993 OP on Peripherality, was Ireland's first integrated transport programme. It recognised and sought to diminish the adverse impact of Ireland's peripheral location upon its economic activity by reducing the cost of internal and access transport. The Programme directed investment to national roads, state and regional airports, commercial seaports, rail freight infrastructure and mainline railways. Between 1989 and 1993, some 450km of national roads were improved and upgraded, together with 1,700kms of roads supporting industrial and tourist development. Facilities at Dublin, Shannon and Cork Airports were upgraded and the development of six regional airports was assisted. Renewal works on different rail links were undertaken and in the ports improved handling facilities, bulk storage capability and upgraded ferry terminals were realised.

It has been estimated that the effects of this OP will add just over 0.4 percent to the level of Ireland's GNP by the end of the decade and increase employment by around 9,000. On the main trunk roads where improvements have been made there has been a 23 percent saving in journey times for freight vehicles, leading to an estimated 6 percent reduction in transport costs. The environment in and around those towns that were by-passed has benefited from the removal of commercial and private through traffic.

The current Transport OP aims to ensure continuity with achievements to-date by providing essential infrastructural support for the development of productive sectors of the economy and the creation of long-term sustainable employment. The primary transport objectives are

- to improve internal and access transport infrastructure and facilities on an integrated basis, thereby reducing transport costs and offsetting the negative effects of peripherality;
- to improve the reliability of the transport system by removing bottlenecks, remedying capacity deficiencies and reducing absolute journey times and journey time variance.

The Programme comprises two sub-programmes:

- the national economic development sub-programme covering investment in strategic transport infrastructure and facilities, principally national roads, mainline rail, commercial seaports and the State airports (IR£669 million investment);
- the sub-regional economic development sub-programme dealing with investment in key sub-regional and local transport infrastructure and facilities, primarily non-national roads, the Dublin Transportation Initiative and regional ports (IR£468 million investment).

The first sub-programme will be the means of strengthening the Irish urban system by improving the communications network joining the principal centres of population. Thus, under the National Primary Roads measure, investment is directed at four strategic corridors:

North/South (Belfast - Dublin - Rosslare - Waterford - Cork); Southwest (Dublin - Limerick - Shannon and Cork); East/West (Dublin - Galway and Sligo); and Western (Sligo - Galway - Limerick - Waterford - Rosslare). The targets are to complete the development of the national primary road network by 2005 and to provide, on completion, an inter-urban travel speed of 80km per hour. The Mainline Rail measure also concentrates on the key corridors radiating from Dublin with the aims of modernising and sustaining the national inter-urban rail corridors, and achieving substantial improvements in the reliability, dependability, cost effectiveness and quality of rail services. Works will also be carried out under the National Secondary Roads measure on a number of routes of particular importance to economic development, such as certain tourism routes and access routes to ports.

The second sub-programme aims "to support economic development at sub-regional or local level, particularly industry, tourism and local development (including rural development and urban renewal and regeneration)". The Non-National Roads measure will concentrate on improvement works and preserve investment already made in these roads; and two measures will help to implement proposals in the Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI).

The first DTI measure involves an integrated investment package to improve public transport services in the Greater Dublin area. The principal project is the implementation of the priority phases of the light rail system recommended by the DTI. Other planned developments include an extensive network of quality bus corridors, upgrading of commuter rail services on existing railway lines and improving interchange facilities in the city centre.

The second measure supports and complements the proposed road and public transport investment in the Greater Dublin area. It includes the development of facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and mobility-impaired people, and the introduction of city-centre environmental traffic cells, residential traffic calming and enhanced traffic management measures.

The Economic Infrastructure Operational Programme

The Economic Infrastructure Operational Programme 1994-1999 aims to enhance energy and communications services in order to improve the competitiveness and efficiency of the Irish economy. It is designed to provide support for the development priorities identified in the

Community Support Framework, 1994-1999. There are three sub-programmes dealing with energy, communications and technical assistance. There is little that is explicitly urban-related in the proposals of this Operational Programme, though measures to achieve improved energy efficiency and conservation in both the public and private sectors have a certain relevance to housing and settlement.

The Environmental Services Operational Programme

This Operational Programme covers direct investment in environmental services and follows on the previous OP for Water, Sanitary and other Local Services which covered investment in the development and treatment of water supplies, the provision of systems for the disposal of sewage, and the implementation of limited urban renewal measures. This investment related to 35 water supply reservoirs, over 260km of trunk and distribution mains, 27 sewage treatment works and 280km of sewers.

The current OP recognises that economic expansion must be supported by efficient environmental infrastructure, and that a high quality environment is itself a guarantee of increased economic activity in a number of sectors. The Programme also focuses on many of the priority themes of the EU's Fifth Action Programme on the Environment, Towards Sustainability, including water resources, waste management and coastal zones. The OP is designed to contribute to the creation of a sustainable development path for key economic sectors, and recognises the need for a stronger link between environmental policy and supporting R&D.

The main objectives are:

- To strengthen the long-term infrastructural base of the economy, facilitating industrial and other forms of economic development activity.
- To protect natural resources which are themselves a basis for growth and competitive advantage in the tourism, food and aquaculture sectors.

- To meet identified urban and rural needs for services of acceptable quality and capacity.
- To promote rural and sub-regional development.

Under this Operational Programme, IR£101.5 million will be invested in the 1994-1999 period and among the measures that relate specifically to urban areas are

- The augmentation or upgrading of water supply schemes where economic development is constrained by inadequate water supply services.
- The extension and/or upgrading of existing sewerage infrastructure where capacity is deficient.
- The improvement of municipal waste management by supporting the provision of recovery and recycling facilities; and by the preparation of waste management strategies.

Measures are also proposed that have the capability of contributing to improved environmental conditions in urban areas in the longer term through R&D, innovation and environmental monitoring. One measure, Environmentally Sustainable Resource Management, aims to promote high quality environmental standards, encourage better natural resource management, and provide the necessary information for development of improved environmental management plans. A second measure, Cleaner Production, aims to encourage the manufacturing and services sectors to reduce waste at source and in manufacturing processes.

The Human Resources Operational Programme

The Human Resources Operational Programme has the potential to make a significant contribution to tackling the problems of unemployment and social exclusion in many urban areas. Assistance towards human resources development is intended to improve the human capital of the Irish workforce and contribute to the occupational integration and training of

people entering the labour force. It also aims to re-integrate and retrain the long-term unemployed and other socially-excluded groups. It is the intention that these measures should give Ireland the skill base necessary to create and sustain employment and that they should be relevant to industry and working life.

The main objectives of the Operational Programme are:

- To improve radically the quality of training provision.
- To increase the level of recognised certification within the education and training sector and promote progression and career-long training.
- To encourage industry and services to give priority to greater training as a key element in securing long-term competitiveness.
- To promote greater equal opportunities to allow women and the disadvantaged greater access to training and the active labour market.
- To enhance the employment prospects of the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed and socially excluded groups.

Total expenditure, through five sub-programmes, will be IR£3,180 million. Importance is attached to programme targets and indicators: for example, increasing the participation rate in education and training, increasing the numbers receiving publicly-funded training, lowering the percentage of young people leaving school without qualifications and improving the student - teacher ratio.

Of particular relevance to the amelioration of urban economic and social conditions is the sub-programme for the re-integration of the socially excluded. This sub-programme (40 percent of the total OP funding) seeks to combat social exclusion by assisting disadvantaged and disabled persons to improve the opportunities in the labour market through training, retraining, or a return to education. An important measure is community employment, which

aims to provide temporary employment opportunities and individual training and personal development for long-term unemployed and socially excluded persons. In 1995, some 55,000 participated in community employment projects. This measure also contributes to the Local Urban and Rural Development OP.

Another sub-programme, for continuing training for the unemployed, contains measures to assist people who have already entered the labour market and to train them in the changing skills required by industry. This training will enable those who are unemployed to improve their prospects of returning to the workforce through the acquisition of new skills.

For new entrants to the labour market, a sub-programme for initial education and training aims to increase their education and skill levels and thereby improve their employment opportunities while, at the same time, responding to the skills needs of the economy. The proposals are targeted at growth sectors and skills areas identified as priorities in the National Development Plan. Funding of IR£1,215 million (38 percent of the total OP funding) has been allocated to this sub-programme and almost half is devoted to the Youthstart group of measures which is focused on young people seeking vocational qualifications, including those without basic educational qualifications. These measures include interventions designed to retain young people in the education system and to provide support for early school leavers and those experiencing difficulty during the transition from school to working life. Additional resources will go to schools serving disadvantaged communities. Other preventive actions against early school leaving are included in the Local Urban and Rural Development Operational Programme.

Local Urban and Rural Development Operational Programme

This Operational Programme is designed to bring about social and economic development at local level, to enable local communities to be involved in that development in a formal way, and to achieve physical improvements to the environment. It comprises three integrated Sub-Programmes - Local Enterprise, Integrated Development of Designated Disadvantaged and Other Areas, and Urban and Village Renewal. The Operational Programme recognises the role which local initiatives can play as a catalyst for local economic, social and environmental development, and the particular importance of locally-based measures to complement the national approach and to release the local potential for development.

This Operational Programme is the one that deals most directly with urban conditions and problems, though not exclusively so as its remit also includes rural areas. It has a strong area-based approach and it is infused throughout with the concepts of enterprise, partnership and integration. Its primary objective is to provide an integrated approach to local development through a cohesive framework which will assist in:

- Promoting enterprise creation and employment.
- Reintegration of the long-term unemployed and other marginalised groups into the labour market.
- Promoting education and training measures to prevent early school-leaving leading to social exclusion.
- Regeneration of the environment in inner cities, towns and villages.

The Programme is a key element in the strategy of the National Development Plan 1994-1999. It builds on the experience gained from the Pilot Area Programme in Integrated Rural Development 1988-1990, the LEADER Initiative, the Area-Based Response to Long-Term Unemployment introduced under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP), the EC Global Grant for Local Development, the Third EC Poverty Programme and the Community Development Programme introduced in 1990. The programme will involve investment of approximately IR£340 million in the 1994-1999 period.

The Local Enterprise Sub-Programme uses the mechanism of the County Enterprise Boards to fill a gap in the range of support services for local enterprise initiatives. The Boards' role is to develop indigenous potential and stimulate economic activity at local level, primarily through the provision of financial assistance and technical support for the development of small enterprises. Objectives will be met through specific measures involving the preparation and review of local enterprise plans; promoting enterprise culture, business information and advice, counselling and mentoring; financial assistance; and management development. The Boards will facilitate and support enterprise activity undertaken by individuals, firms and community groups, and the creation of an enterprise partnership at local level between the social partners, financial institutions and local communities.

The Sub-Programme for Integrated Development of Designated Disadvantaged and Other Areas provides support to communities, especially disadvantaged communities, which make a collective effort to plan and promote the development of their areas and are capable of a sustained effort to implement a plan. The objectives are to accelerate local economic development and thereby increase employment; and to tackle exclusion and marginalisation resulting from long-term unemployment, poor educational attainment, poverty and demographic dependency. Specific actions will be undertaken under:

- Measure 1, co-financed by the ERDF, to support enterprise creation and development, environmental and infrastructural works, transport services and technical assistance;
- Measure 2, co-financed by the ESF, to support education and training, services for the unemployed, community development and related technical assistance.

The strategic implementation of the sub-programme involves the preparation of local development plans by the eligible communities. Appropriate objectives in local development plans are:

- to provide a range of support measures for the creation and development of local enterprise and employment;
- to improve the potential of the unemployed and especially the long-term unemployed and socially-excluded communities to gain employment;
- to provide a programme of advice and support in career planning for those who are long-term unemployed;
- to create specific training, education, employment and work experience opportunities for the long-term unemployed which will promote their integration into the labour market and also contribute to local and community development;
- to provide additional supports to facilitate participation in and benefit from education, including at primary level, for those at risk of early school leaving;

- to enhance the capacity of local communities, particularly in areas of economic marginalisation and depopulation, to participate fully in local development and to counter social exclusion;
- to improve the physical environment and to upgrade local infrastructure and services.

The categories of communities and groups eligible for support are partnerships in designated disadvantaged areas, communities in other areas, organisations representing or working on behalf of Travellers, and selected organisations with the capacity to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the sub-programme's objectives. The designation of areas of disadvantage was based on objective indicators of need. A wide-ranging process of consultation was undertaken and the choice of the areas was based on an assessment of criteria such as indicators of disadvantage, feasible operational boundaries and viability in terms of size and economic base. The urban designated areas are:

Dublin

Ballymun,	Dublin Inner City,
Tallaght,	Finglas/Cabra,
Clondalkin,	Blanchardstown,
Ballyfermot,	Coolock/Darndale/Kilbarrack,
Crumlin/Kimmage/Walkinstown.	

Other Urban Areas

Dundalk,	Tralee,
Bray,	Limerick City,
Galway,	Cork City,
Drogheda,	Waterford City,
Wexford,	

and pockets of disadvantage in South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Counties.

The third Sub-Programme, Urban and Village Renewal, comprises a range of initiatives to promote the sustainable physical, social and economic revitalisation of urban centres, from villages to cities, throughout the country. This is a grant-based approach and follows a previous, modest, scheme of urban renewal grants introduced by the Government in 1989

to help local authorities upgrade the environment in, or near, areas which had been designated for tax incentives under the Urban Renewal Schemes (described later). The earlier grants scheme operated for three years and the total funding of IR£11 million was used for works such as pedestrianisation schemes, paving, street lighting and street furniture, creation of walkways, improvement of derelict sites and urban landscaping. The success of this approach in complementing the tax-based incentive scheme led to the adoption of this arrangement again whereby the urban renewal provisions of the Sub-Programme will operate in parallel with the new tax-incentive scheme that came into operation on 1 August, 1994.

Planned overall investment in urban and village renewal will be in excess of IR£110 million and the Sub-Programme will be implemented through:

- Five major initiatives in the five cities (County Boroughs) involving support for an integrated action plan for a key area in each of the cities, the theme for each plan depending on the priority needs of the city.
- Urban and village improvement measures in various urban centres throughout the country, to include a selective series of environmental upgrading measures.
- Interventions, through civic trusts, conservation groups and local authorities, to restore and rehabilitate landmark buildings in cities and towns.
- The Temple Bar Cultural Quarter, to assist the provision of a range of cultural facilities in the Temple Bar area of Dublin.

The objective of the major initiatives is to implement successfully in each city a flagship project which is concentrated, as far as possible, on a single area in need of renewal, and will have a major impact on the economic and social regeneration of the central area in each city. The integrated package of urban renewal should include, as far as possible, physical improvements to streets, the integration of remedial works to social housing, conservation measures, the use of Community Employment for training in conservation and other skills, and the development of enterprise units. Major projects will be drawn up on the basis that they will attract ERDF funding in the range of 3.7 to 6.2 MECU each over the period 1995 to 1999, with matching funding to be provided from each local authority's own resources.

The Urban and Village Improvements measures have as their objective the general upgrading of the physical environment of towns and villages in order to improve their capacity to attract and sustain an enterprise base. The measures complement those in Sub-Programmes 1 and 2 and under the LEADER Programme aimed at enterprise creation. The focus of the first measure is on the larger towns where improvements to the urban fabric and amenities will help to support private investment in the mix of resources, including enterprise creation, commercial activity and residential development, needed to ensure the long-term viability of these urban centres. The second measure is directed at smaller towns and villages and sustaining their role as centres for agriculture-based communities.

Works will not be carried out in isolation, but will form part of an integrated area renewal action plan or development strategy developed by the local authorities. In the counties bordering Northern Ireland an additional objective is to create and enhance cross-border linkages to attract investment and development and foster self-sustaining physical, social and economic development in these areas. For the towns, projects will include environmental upgrading and the creation of linkages between areas in need of renewal with other urban areas, thereby opening up the former to potential development. The works will include urban landscaping, development of riverside areas in towns, pedestrianisation, eradication of derelict sites, and streetscape improvement, including decorative paving, street lighting and furniture.

In the villages, the works will form part of an overall strategy for village renewal. The improvements will help to underpin the future development of the villages and the rural communities on which they are dependent, by enabling the villages to attract and sustain enterprise development complementary to the surrounding rural economy. The work to be supported will have a clear link with agriculture and will include village landscaping and conservation, including maintenance of traditional farm buildings and rural heritage; general amenity improvement; and the development of focal points and meeting places.

In addition, an urban conservation measure aims to rehabilitate elements of the built environment through the conservation and restoration of urban architecture and heritage buildings. Initiatives will be designed to upgrade significant landmark buildings, including listed buildings in need of restoration; bring unused floors of commercial and retail outlets into use; and restore historic features. Action will include demonstration and pilot projects, support for bodies such as Civic Trusts and liaison with County Enterprise Boards and Area Partnerships.

The final measure under this Sub-Programme relates to the Temple Bar Cultural Quarter, Dublin, (see below) where the aim is to provide a new focus for culture and tourism in Dublin that will be of major significance in the regeneration of the city centre. A number of major cultural development schemes will be assisted.

THE COHESION FUND

The Cohesion Fund, which came into existence with the implementation of the Treaty on European Union in November 1993, is the principal financial instrument giving practical effect to the Treaty's aim of economic cohesion. Spending is limited to the four "cohesion countries" (the Member States that have a per capita GNP of less than 90 percent of the EU average), Ireland, Greece, Portugal and Spain. There are two differences between the Cohesion Fund and the Structural Funds: in the Cohesion Fund the rates of EU contribution, at between 80 percent and 85 percent, are generally higher; and the Cohesion Fund runs on a project by project basis, rather than the programme basis of the Structural Funds. Projects receiving support from other Structural Funds (under the CSF or the Community Initiatives) are not eligible for support from the Cohesion Fund; to date some 90 projects representing a total cost of almost 870 MECU have been approved.

The Cohesion Fund provides Community financial support to projects in two specific fields:

- **Environmental Protection:** to ensure that the four Member States are better equipped to comply with EU environmental policies; and
- **Transport Infrastructure:** for developments considered vital for the completion of the trans-European networks and the Single Market.

Projects in both these areas have the potential to bring major improvements to environmental conditions in cities and towns in Ireland. Under Environmental Protection, most of the projects are to assist local authorities comply with the EU Urban Waste Water Directive 1990. To date, some twenty-three schemes have been supported, mainly the improvement of drainage and sewerage systems and water treatment plants. In addition, eight projects have been approved for the upgrading and improvement of water supply and water distribution systems. The construction of a bailing and transfer station for municipal waste, including collection facilities for recyclable materials, in County Dublin, is nearing completion and a new landfill site, for the disposal of domestic waste for the Tralee and surrounding area, has been completed.

Under Transport Infrastructure, the main thrust is to contribute to the improvement of Ireland's economic performance through developments to the road system, the rail network, port facilities and Dublin airport. Cities and towns, as the centres of economic activity, will benefit from the realisation of this goal. Some will also gain environmentally through the construction of motorway links and by-passes as heavy commercial and much private vehicular traffic is progressively removed from urban areas. Among the sixteen projects in the road transport sector that have been approved, the major ones include the construction of the Southern Cross section of the Dublin Ring Road and the construction of the Portlaoise and Arklow by-passes.

THE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

There are several Community Initiatives which, to varying degrees, relate to urban conditions and problems in Ireland. The Community Initiatives are spending programmes, co-financed by Structural Funds and separate from the Community Support Framework. In comparison with other measures financed by Structural Funds, they are characterised by three additional features:

- support for the development of transnational, cross-border and inter-regional co-operation;
- an emphasis on innovation; and
- a "bottom-up" method of implementation.

The Community Initiative most directly relevant to urban areas is URBAN. The aim of URBAN is to help find solutions to serious social problems in many depressed urban areas by supporting schemes for economic and social revitalisation, the renovation of infrastructure and facilities, and environmental improvement. The projects, which will normally run for four years, should also have a demonstrative character for other urban areas. Priority will be given to innovative projects forming part of a long-term strategy for urban integration.

Four categories of measures are eligible for funding:

- Launching of new economic activities, including assistance and services for small businesses and the establishment of workshops, business centres, and public/private partnerships.
- Employment for local people, including appropriate training, mobile advisory units, and work experience for the long-term unemployed.
- Facilities in the health and safety field, including nursery and child-care facilities, public-health facilities, anti-drug centres, and improved security.
- Infrastructure and environment linked to the above, including renovation of buildings for economic and social purposes, restoration of public areas, reclamation of derelict and contaminated land, and the provision of cultural, recreational and sporting facilities.

The URBAN Initiative is confined to cities with a population of 100,000, or greater, and for projects a four-year integrated development plan has to be submitted. In Ireland, the Government has agreed that URBAN should apply in the Northside of Cork City, and in the West Tallaght/Clondalkin and Finglas/Ballymun/Darndale areas in Dublin. The areas selected are Partnership Areas under the Sub-Programme on Integrated Development of Disadvantaged and Other Areas of the Operational Programme for Local Urban and Rural Development. Consequently, there is a history of community involvement and partnership, and adequate mechanisms to ensure complementarity. The EU allocation to URBAN will be approximately IR£16.35 million.

The first INTERREG Community Initiative, adopted in 1990, was designed to assist border areas to overcome development problems and to encourage cross-border co-operation in order to maximise growth potential prior to the completion of the Internal Market. This programme is being continued and extended in the INTERREG II Operational Programme, approved on 24 February, 1995, which covers the border counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo, and the whole of Northern Ireland (apart from Belfast).

In special cases, and in the context of cross-border co-operation programmes, EU assistance may be given to measures located outside, but adjoining, those areas identified, provided they involve a high degree of cross-border co-operation. A separate INTERREG II Programme covers the maritime border region of Ireland and Wales.

The main objectives under INTERREG II (Ireland/Northern Ireland) are:

- to promote the creation and development of cross-border networks and linkages;
- to promote and diversify the local economies, thus reducing vulnerability to external changes;
- to improve the skills of persons in the region;
- to improve both internal and external access;
- to protect the area's natural environment; and
- to diversify within the primary production sector.

The Programme contains five Sub-Programmes dealing with regional development, human resources development, infrastructure, agriculture/fisheries/forestry, and environmental protection. While urban areas are not singled out, or policies for them explicitly stated, the thrust of the Programme towards economic development will mean that the towns of the region, as the centres of economic and social activity, have an important role to play and will benefit from the attainment of objectives.

A parallel Programme is the Special Support Programme for Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland which has emerged in response to the development of the peace process in Northern Ireland. The Commission agreed guidelines on 16 May, 1995 for a special Community Initiative in favour of Northern Ireland and the six border counties of Ireland, through which 300 MECU will be made available during the period 1995-1997 with the

possibility of further financing for 1997-1999. The EU will finance up to 75 percent of the cost of measures under the initiative, with a maximum of 80 percent of total aid for Northern Ireland and at least 20 percent for activities in the border counties. At least 15 percent of the overall amount will be devoted to activities carried out in a cross-border context. The Programme will not simply be a list of individual projects but rather a framework of objectives and measures. The five priority areas to be addressed in the context of the consolidation of the peace process are employment, urban and rural regeneration, cross-border development, social inclusion and productive investment and industrial development.

Of special relevance to urban areas will be work undertaken in relation to social inclusion, and urban and rural regeneration. The latter priority area, in particular, is concerned with the improvement of the social and physical environment in the worst-affected urban areas, towns, villages and rural communities. The types of action envisaged include landscaping and clearing of derelict sites, community development, the provision of facilities for small businesses, rural infrastructure, the development of social and cultural activities, training and capacity building for regeneration, pedestrianisation, and the provision of parks and playgrounds.

The LEADER II Community Initiative is designed to complement proposals contained in the CSF to bring about social and economic development in Ireland's rural areas. The aim is to encourage and facilitate integrated rural development by supporting local action groups, in particular, to implement innovative action plans drawn up by them for the development of their areas; and to complement and maximise the impact of other development programmes. The programme builds to a significant extent on LEADER I, 1991-1994, which proved to be popular and successful in rural areas. Gross total expenditure is estimated at 163 MECU, of which 67 MECU will be EU co-financed. While this is clearly and explicitly a rural development programme, its potential to increase employment and expand economic activity will contribute to the viability of smaller towns and villages, the urban centres at the lowest levels of the Irish settlement hierarchy which act as key components of the rural economic and social scene.

Finally, there are two other Community Initiatives, EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT, which are designed to promote and enhance opportunities for employment among various groups within the population. Although not specifically or solely directed at urban areas, these initiatives form an important addition to the armoury of measures used to tackle the social and economic problems of Irish towns and cities. Under EMPLOYMENT some 76.1 MECU and under ADAPT 21.2 MECU will be made available to Ireland.

In the EMPLOYMENT Initiative there are three distinct, though interrelated, strands:

- EMPLOYMENT-NOW, aimed at the development of equal opportunities for women in the labour market, ensuring access for women to jobs in growth sectors, and professional development through training.
- EMPLOYMENT-HORIZON, which will address the root causes of marginalisation and the resulting poor employment prospects of disabled people, the long-term unemployed, the homeless, former convicts, ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees. HORIZON will draw in local area-based and partnership-based projects.
- EMPLOYMENT-YOUTHSTART, which is designed to accelerate the effort required to enable young people to participate effectively in the labour market. The ultimate aim is that every young person under the age of 20 would eventually have access either to full-time employment or to a recognised form of education or training, including apprenticeships or other forms of linked-work training.

The overall aim of ADAPT is to help the workforce adapt to industrial change and to facilitate changes in production systems. It is essentially employment-action orientated and in Ireland the three priorities are to contribute to increasing the incidence and quality of training of the employed through innovative approaches to the design and delivery of such training; to develop new approaches to ensure job retention for those in risk employment; and to promote new forms of work. A guiding principle is to allow a local approach to evolve through project proposals.

URBAN RENEWAL

The decline of the physical fabric and of socio-economic conditions at the heart of many Irish cities and towns, together with the presence of suburban areas of severe economic deprivation resulting from the development of large-scale, mono-class, public housing schemes, has been described in Part A. To address these urban problems a number of specific policy initiatives have been undertaken over the last decade, including the tax based urban renewal scheme in 1986 and the Plan for Social Housing in 1991.

The building of new, large, public social housing schemes in suburban locations has been replaced by smaller schemes located as far as possible in city centre or infill locations. Secondly, a major programme of remedial works to substandard social housing schemes in both suburban and inner city areas has been in operation. The programme involves environmental upgrading works in the vicinity of the housing schemes, as well as works to the fabric of the houses. Thirdly, to encourage private investment in city centres within the process of urban renewal, tax incentives were given, a measure which has achieved notable success.

This urban renewal scheme, introduced in 1986, was aimed largely at encouraging rapid growth in private investment. The Urban Renewal Act, 1986, provided for the designation of areas in which there was a special need to promote urban renewal; the Finance Act of the same year provided for the application of a package of tax incentives in those areas, to encourage commercial and residential development. The scheme initially applied in the Custom House Docks area in Dublin and in the five major urban centres but was later extended to a total of twenty-four urban centres.

In terms of investment generated the scheme has been a success. Excluding the Custom House Docks development, projects to a value of IR£920 million were completed by the end of 1995; a further IR£165 million worth of projects were then in progress, with another IR£257 million worth of projects at the planning stage. However, the experience with this scheme suggested that the areas selected in the five major cities were not sufficiently focused on pockets of severe dereliction. In addition, and in the earlier years of the scheme in particular, the incentives appear to have resulted in an over-emphasis on commercial

(particularly office) development as against residential development and in a bias towards the newly-built rather than refurbishment.

Under the old scheme the incentives were weighted towards new building rather than the replenishment of the old, which had the effect of stimulating the construction of new blocks of largely one and two-bedroom apartments, not suitable for family occupation; and of making the refurbishment and upgrading of the existing housing stock comparably less attractive.

The scheme expired on 31 July, 1994 and a new scheme came into effect on 1 August, 1994 for a period of three years. The new scheme draws on the experience of the previous one by seeking to achieve more balanced forms of urban renewal. The incentives under the new scheme do not extend to office development but are aimed, instead, at residential and non-office commercial development. Accelerated capital allowances are available for certain industrial buildings. The residential tax incentives are heavily weighted in favour of

refurbishment works. The areas designated in the five major population centres are more sharply focused and reduced in size, while small areas in 30 other towns have been designated. In terms of investment, at the end of 1995, projects to the value of IR£40m had been completed, a further IR£190m worth of developments were in progress and another IR£353m worth of projects were in planning. In addition, a pilot initiative to encourage people to live on the vacant upper floors over city centre business premises was introduced with effect from 1 August, 1994 for a small number of streets in each of the major cities.

The new urban renewal tax-incentive scheme operates alongside the Urban and Village Renewal Sub-Programme of the Operational Programme 1994-1999 for Local Urban and Rural Development, described above. A large proportion of expenditure under the Sub-Programme will be concentrated in, or adjacent to, the designated areas in the larger urban centres. However, projects in a significant number of non-designated areas meeting the criteria under the Sub-Programme, in particular the smaller towns and villages, also qualify.

While only a general indication of the scale of need and resources required for urban renewal has been available, inner city land-use surveys in Dublin and Cork indicated complete vacancy rates as high as 30 percent in secondary commercial streets. In central Dublin, it was estimated that there was a minimum of 10,000 vacant units over business premises. The estimated cost of environmental upgrading in run-down Dublin city centre areas was at least IR£42 million, with a further IR£20 million required to restore landmark buildings in the city. The Action Plan for Cork's historic core, prepared with the assistance of the European Commission, estimates that IR£31 million would be required to revitalise the area.

Since the initial appraisals were carried out, further surveys have sought to quantify the scale of need. The results to date are summarised in the following table.

URBAN RENEWAL: SCALE OF NEED				
TOWN/CITY	POPULATION	NO. OF DERELICT SITES	HECTARES	NO. OF VACANT OR PARTIALLY VACANT BUILDINGS
Dublin (Inner City)	73,055	690	61.5	3,820
Limerick	75,436	323	19.4	332
Waterford	41,853	65	4.0	214
Sligo	17,964	23	10.9	54
Drogheda	24,656	29	2.0	57
Kilkenny	17,669	131	11.3	88
Clonmel	15,562	20	2.8	200
Dundalk	30,061	40	1.6	50
Bray	26,953	56	12.0	56
Letterkenny	10,726	12	5.3	58
Ennis	16,058	89	0.8	80
Tullamore	9,430	76	8.1	40
Portlaoise	8,360	11	3.6	28
TOTAL	385,645	1,619	143.3	5,212

The historic buildings counted above represent only the buildings of major significance in these towns that are in need of repair or restoration. Other buildings and historic features,

and entire streets and squares, also have major conservation requirements. The towns and cities listed above contain just under 17 percent of the urban population. It is probable that the total number of urban derelict sites in Ireland is of the order of 9,500, covering 900 hectares. Similarly, the total number of vacant or partially vacant town-centre buildings is likely to be around 10,000.

Custom House Docks Area

The Custom House Docks Area is a large area of redundant port facilities lying to the east of the commercial centre of Dublin. The potential for redevelopment was recognised by the Government who, in the Urban Renewal Act, 1986, provided for the establishment of the Custom House Docks Development Authority with flexible planning and financial powers and with the mandate of the re-development of the Custom House Docks area. This area enjoys the benefits of the financial incentives under the Urban Renewal Scheme together with a favourable rate of corporation tax for international financial services. The Authority in carrying out its general duty to secure the redevelopment of the Custom House Docks Area, seeks to encourage the urban renewal of the area, strengthen its urban economy and provide employment opportunities. The Authority has been given powers to acquire, hold and manage land in the Custom House Docks Area for development by itself or others, and to dispose of land. The area, which has been extended three times, now covers just under 30 hectares, inclusive of water areas. Approximately 17 hectares are developable land.

The Authority was empowered and required to produce a planning scheme for the area, in consultation with Dublin Corporation, having regard to the latter's Development Plan for the city, and subject to the approval of the Minister for the Environment. Any development to be carried out in the area by the Authority or by any other person, which is consistent with the scheme, is regarded as exempted development for planning control purposes. A planning scheme was prepared in 1987, and an amended planning scheme was also made in 1994.

It is also a function of the Authority to create a wide range of new investment and job opportunities. In this task it has been assisted by the provision of tax incentives which include rates relief (i.e. local property tax), capital allowances for commercial development, double rent allowance, and residential accommodation reliefs. The qualifying period for these urban renewal reliefs has been extended to 24 January, 1999.

The goals in relation to urban renewal, economic development and employment opportunities in the area are being successfully achieved, producing a physical and economic transformation of this part of the city. The development of the original Custom House Docks Area should be completed by late 1997. A total of 49,000 square metres of high quality space has been provided in eight new office buildings, and a further 37,000 square metres of office and other space are under construction. Eighty-five approved financial services companies had located in the area by the end of 1995, and a further 150 companies approximately, had been licenced to operate there. All the 333 new apartments in the area have been completed and many are occupied. Other developments include five new retail units (completed), and a 235-bedroom hotel and a multi-storey car park, both due to open at the end of 1996. The re-flooding of two large docks has restored the water features that are central to the area's environmental attractiveness.

Temple Bar Quarter

The Temple Bar area in Dublin is located in the centre of the city, along the southern bank of the river Liffey. For many reasons the area suffered from urban blight, with over a third of the buildings in some streets in a decayed or derelict state. Nevertheless, the area possessed a distinctive and attractive townscape character derived from its street layout and the variety of types of buildings. To this was added the interest and animation provided by the shops and the social and cultural activities accommodated in the buildings, attracted there by low rent, short lease, conditions.

The redevelopment of this area was a special initiative of the Government, one that is very different in nature and intent to that of the Custom House Docks Area. The aim of the Temple Bar Project, which originally had a five-year implementation period from 1991, now extended to 1998, was to build on the spontaneous activity which had already taken place in the area over the last number of years and to develop an exciting cultural, residential and small business district in the heart of the capital city. The development programme is distinctive, therefore, in that it is based on a theme - the development of facilities for arts and culture.

Special arrangements were put in place for the redevelopment of the Temple Bar area of Dublin under the Temple Bar Area Renewal and Development Act, 1991, and the Finance

Act, 1991. The former Act established Temple Bar Properties Ltd. as a development company for the area and a sister company, Temple Bar Renewal Ltd., which is responsible for approving proposals for the purposes of the taxation incentives available under the Finance Act, 1991. An architectural and urban design framework to guide developments in the area was prepared, through a competition. It was not intended to be interpreted as a fixed masterplan, but was devised to evolve and change, adapting to specific circumstances within general principles and guidelines and allowing, essentially, a flexible and incremental approach to urban redevelopment to be adopted.

Five of the major urban design proposals contained in the Framework Plan are now well advanced; many buildings have been restored or refurbished; and adapted for new uses; 220 residential units have been completed, 247 are in progress or in the planning stage. A target has been set to achieve a residential population of some 2,000 in Temple Bar by the year 2,000; by the end of December, 1995 the residential population had increased to 750 persons from some 250 in 1991.

By March, 1996, a total of 131 new businesses had opened in Temple Bar, including 10 cultural centres, 39 restaurants and cafés, 8 pubs, 43 shops, 9 clubs and 3 hotels. A target of 2,000 new long-term jobs by the end of 1996 has been set, and to date 1,900 new jobs have been created. The construction and development phase provided construction jobs for some 5,000 people. Seven of the major cultural development projects within the programme of cultural initiatives have been completed and are open for business.

Developments to be carried out by Temple Bar Properties will cost in the region of IR£100m. Expenditure of a similar order on projects will be undertaken by the private sector, using available tax incentives. Total public funding for the cultural programme planned for the Temple Bar Area is 47.15 MECU. 13.6 MECU was provided under the ERDF Article 10 Pilot Projects Programme and under the Tourism Operational Programme of the Community Support Framework 1989-1993. The balance of 33.09 MECU needed to complete the cultural programme is being met under the Local Urban and Rural Development Operational Programme, the ERDF and from the Irish authorities.

Review of Urban Renewal Schemes

Following some 10 years experience of urban renewal a comprehensive review of the impact, effectiveness and cost of the tax-based schemes is being carried out. The review, which will be concluded before the current phase of designation expires, will serve to inform future policies in the urban renewal area. As part of the review, consultants have been appointed to undertake a detailed study of the impact of the urban renewal schemes in the designated areas (including the Custom House Docks and Temple Bar) in economic fiscal, social, architectural and urban design terms. The broad terms of reference for this study are to:

- Assess the costs and benefits of the schemes in economic and fiscal terms including the tax incentives, the level of investment generated and the impact on local authority revenues;
- Address the role and effects of the different categories of development in terms of the social fabric of urban areas;
- Assess the architectural and urban design quality of developments including their relationship with the existing built environment;
- Make recommendations on the future direction of urban renewal policies.

The consultants study is due to be completed by the end of June 1996.

STRATEGIC LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

In the last two decades, the Greater Dublin and Greater Cork areas have been the subject of strategic planning approaches to the integration of land use and transportation. Although the Dublin Transportation Initiative and the Cork Land Use and Transportation Study have each a different focus, and consequently differ in the range of objectives and issues dealt with, both are innovative and many of their policies are being successfully realised.

Cork Land Use and Transportation Study (LUTS)

The Cork Land Use and Transportation Study was commissioned in 1976 by the South-West Regional Development Organisation on behalf of Cork County Council, Cork Corporation, Coras Iompair Éireann (CIE), the Department of the Environment, Cork Harbour

Commissioners, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB). For the purpose of long term projects a horizon year of 2001 was adopted, and a target year of 1991 was selected for the development of detailed plans.

The fundamental purpose of the Land Use and Transportation Study was to develop a strategic plan for the orderly growth and co-ordinated development of the Greater Cork Area. The LUTS Plan was issued in 1978, and had two main objectives: to provide for future population in respect of its development needs, including a framework for job creation; and to be realistic as regards investment required for implementation. The Plan was also intended to promote the local economy, to make efficient use of local resources and of energy, to secure equitable accessibility, and to minimise environmental impact including disruption of existing communities.

LUTS, in adopting a balanced and integrated approach in the consideration of land use and transportation issues together, was a pioneering venture in Ireland. It sought to achieve its objectives in an unusually integrated way, combining policy, investment and management proposals, many types of development decision, and support services. Its comprehensiveness was one of its strengths, and allowed a variety of development decisions to be handled in a unified way to achieve the desired results.

LUTS was prepared near the end of a period of two decades of fairly continuous expansion in the Irish economy, in which the Cork area had shown consistent demographic and economic growth, resulting in rapid physical development. The principal issue confronting LUTS was to plan satisfactorily for the expected continuation of this process of growth and development, while at the same time seeking the most favourable conditions for it. However, the 1980s brought a lower overall level of growth and development, and more selective development, with many sectors and areas remaining static, or even declining. These changes in both the overall and regional contexts meant that not all the objectives were attained. Nevertheless, major improvements have been achieved as a result of the 1978 LUTS policies.

The Cork area is now well served in terms of water supply, industrial land availability, port and airport facilities and road access; and work is already underway in relation to most remaining infrastructural deficiencies. The Cork area has a much stronger base in growing sectors, such as electronics and pharmaceuticals, and much better supporting educational and research facilities, than it did in the 1970s. Cork's central and inner city areas have benefited greatly from the renewal policies initiated by LUTS, while the satellite town policy has encouraged the development of a variety of attractive settlements within reach of the City.

The continuing value and relevance of LUTS are borne out by the fact that a Review was commissioned in 1990 and published in 1992, under the direction of the consultants who led the original study. The purpose was to ensure the broader and more effective implementation of the basic 1978 objectives, while responding fully to changed circumstances. This has required re-evaluation of projections and proposals contained in LUTS, and the necessary adaptation and modification of policies. Nevertheless, it has been reassuring that the basic objectives have remained highly relevant to the development of the Cork area in the 1990s.

The purpose of the Review was to measure recent physical, social and economic changes, re-evaluate projections for the period up to the year 2001 and adjust the Plan to address existing, emerging and future needs. In particular, the Review aims to improve the performance in those areas where the intentions of the 1978 Study have not been fully implemented. The main areas are:

- the local economy, where only modest increases in employment have been achieved, resulting in unemployment rates of around 20 percent and rapid emigration;
- the lack of development to the north and east of the River Lee and Harbour, as a result of the economic difficulties of the 1980s, which disproportionately affected these areas;
- the lack of progress on measures designed to encourage alternatives to car use, and the movement of population away from areas where these alternatives are attractive.

Finally, it is appropriate to place the Cork LUTS Plan in the context of both economic and urban development by quoting from the Preface to the Review:

The greatest single challenge facing the County and City of Cork is the creation of employment opportunities. While the Plan (and the modifications to it proposed here) cannot directly create employment, it has been and will remain a robust framework for directing land use and infrastructure investment policy. This policy can be focused specifically to provide an enhanced setting for the creation of employment opportunities.

Dublin Transportation Initiative

The Dublin Transportation Initiative (DTI) represented a new approach to transportation planning in the Greater Dublin area. Sponsored by the Government and receiving 75 percent funding from the EU, it initiated an ongoing transportation planning process for the capital and its hinterland. Phase 1 of DTI, completed in September, 1991, reviewed changes in the transportation situation since the 1971 Dublin Transportation Study, assessed the implementation of previous studies and recommended terms of reference for Phase 2 based on the lessons learned from past experience.

Phase 2 of DTI, which began in February, 1992, had three critical objectives:

- the putting in place of a continuous transportation planning process;
- the production of a long-term transportation strategy (to 2011) for the Greater Dublin Area;
- the preparation of a medium term Investment and Implementation Programme for the period 1994-1999 drawn from the Recommended Strategy.

The final report was officially launched by the Minister for the Environment, with full Government support for the recommended strategy, on 1 August, 1995.

DTI was an integrated initiative in that it dealt with all surface transport (road, rail, bus, cycling and walking) as well as issues such as traffic management and enforcement,

institutional arrangements for transport and so on. It was also integrated in the sense that it looked at transport, not on its own, but in the context of its inter-relationships with other policies in areas such as land use, economic development, urban renewal, employment and the environment. The DTI was also an open initiative: it placed importance on extensive public consultation and was concerned to ensure that the views of all sections of society were properly identified and addressed. Detailed arrangements were put in place for the supervision of the Initiative, again with the emphasis on participation.

A distinguishing characteristic of the DTI was its central objective to put in place an effective process for continuous transportation planning in the Dublin area. The other two objectives defined the first two major stages of this process - the long-term transportation strategy for the following two decades and the investment and implementation programme for the period 1994-1999, drawn from the strategy and designed to coincide with the next programme of EU support for infrastructural developments.

In producing the strategy, the DTI formulated a Vision Statement for the Dublin Area, a deliberately aspirational view of the Dublin of the future, building on its existing qualities and seeking to address its weaknesses. This Vision for Dublin defined and characterised the various perceived roles of the city - Dublin as a leading European city, as the national capital, as a metropolitan region, and as a living city-region. Elaboration of these roles, in turn, informed the making of the objectives of the DTI Strategy.

The principal elements of the Strategy are:

- A major investment in public transport to improve accessibility throughout the Greater Dublin Area, including the construction of a light rail transit (LRT) system, the provision of a substantially enhanced bus service particularly through the introduction of Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs), and the upgrading of passenger services on existing suburban railways.
- The upgrading of the national road system in the Greater Dublin Area as a critical part of the country's strategic network.

- No increase in radial road capacity within the motorway C-Ring, except where justified on environmental or safety grounds, or to support economic development and regeneration.
- Improved management of the transport system, including enhanced traffic management and enforcement systems; improved facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and mobility impaired and disabled people; and traffic calming measures in the city centre and residential areas.
- Increased parking restraint within the motorway C-Ring, and particularly within the city centre.
- Construction of an access route, mostly in tunnel, to Dublin Port - from Whitehall to the North Port - combined with truck management measures.

A key recommendation in the Final Report of the DTI is the need for a coherent and co-ordinated overall land-use policy for the entire Study Area to support and reinforce the DTI Strategy. The main issues to be addressed in such a policy were identified and include:

- maintenance of a viable city centre;
- the future development requirements of the Western Towns (Tallaght, Lucan/Clondalkin and Blanchardstown);
- development restraint to counter the dispersal tendencies encouraged by transportation improvements;
- encouraging higher density development along strategic public transport corridors in development areas;
- avoiding the C-Ring becoming a focus for retail and leisure development.

In this context, the Government also accepted that the Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities should be jointly asked to prepare strategic land use planning guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area. Once the strategic land use guidelines have been adopted by the regional authorities, the individual Dublin planning authorities will be obliged, under the Local Government (Dublin) Act, 1993 to have regard to them in carrying out their functions, including the review of their development plans.

Recognising that the transportation planning approach developed by the DTI is an ongoing process, the Government has agreed to put in place arrangements, broadly similar to those in the Final DTI Report, to oversee implementation of the transport strategy as a whole and to ensure the continuation of the transportation planning process in the Greater Dublin Area.

These arrangements include:

- A Dublin Transportation Office, providing staff expert in land use and transportation planning matters, and a secretariat for the overall structures;
- A Steering Committee, to direct the work of the Dublin Transportation Office and oversee the implementation of the strategy;
- A Local Authority Committee, representative of city and county local authorities;
- A Consultative Panel, representative of transport users and providers;
- Project planning and design teams to plan the implementation of individual elements of the DTI Strategy such as the Light Rail Network, Quality Bus Corridors and cycle facilities.

In November 1995, the Minister for the Environment announced the establishment of the Dublin Transportation Office on a statutory basis, as a corporate body, to:

- co-ordinate and monitor the implementation of the DTI Strategy and make recommendations to the Minister for the Environment for an overall strategic implementation programme including priorities for expenditure;

- review activities of the implementation agencies by reference to the DTI Strategy to ensure consistency between their programmes;
- review and update the DTI Strategy at least once in every five years;
- undertake, or promote the undertaking of, public consultation, public awareness and education campaigns in relation to the DTI Strategy.

The Steering Committee has also been appointed and arrangements are being made for the appointment of the Local Authority Committee and the Consultative Panel.

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

The National Development Plan 1994-1999 and the Community Support Framework for Ireland, together with their elaboration through the Operational Programmes, are premised on the principle that policies and programmes should be environmentally sustainable. In Ireland, environmental policy is based on:

- the concept of sustainability which requires that development must be within the capacity of the environment to support it without suffering lasting damage or depletion;
- the precautionary principle which requires that emphasis should be placed on dealing with the causes, rather than the results, of environmental damage and that, where significant evidence of environmental risk exists, appropriate precautionary action be taken even in the absence of conclusive scientific proof of causes;
- the integration of environmental considerations into all policy areas;
- the polluter pays principle regarding cost allocation and action by public authorities;
- the principle of shared responsibility for the environment which requires a broadly-based involvement of public bodies, private enterprise and the general public so as to achieve environmental policy objectives.

Based on these principles and designed to provide a comprehensive and systematic framework for environmental protection, the Environment Action Programme was published by the Government in 1990. It set out objectives for protecting and improving the environment across a range of public sector activities. Targets involving public expenditure of almost IR£1 billion over a ten-year period were identified in the programme for a variety of measures including pollution control, preservation of the natural and built environment and the enhancement of amenities. The programme indicated investment of IR£930 million, in particular, on the provision of new and improved public water supplies and sewage treatment services. Measures were also included in relation to waste (particularly the promotion of recycling), agriculture, forestry, energy and industry. A central feature was the proposal to establish an Environmental Protection Agency (subsequently set up in 1993) to exercise environmental management over all activities with major polluting potential and to provide important supervisory and support services to other public authorities, including local authorities.

The philosophy and policies of the Environment Action Programme provide the environmental dimension to the National Development Plan, influencing the nature of many of the latter's policies and being implemented, in many instances, through the Operational Programmes. These have been described above and so this section will deal with other actions relating to the urban environment that are being undertaken.

Air Quality

Particular attention has been given to urban air pollution and priority was accorded to measures to combat the serious and persistent problem of smoke pollution in Dublin, caused largely by the use of coal for domestic heating. Successful measures to reduce Dublin's smoke pollution were developed within a relatively short space of time. As noted in Part A, in the seven years prior to 1990/1991, EC Directive air quality standards for smoke were breached on average in Dublin some ten times each winter. In 1990/1991 no breach of these standards occurred and this position has been maintained. This success has been due to:

- The introduction of regulations, in 1990, banning the marketing, sale and distribution of bituminous coal in the built-up area of Dublin.

- Active campaigns for conversion to gas and electrical home heating: in the first two years (1990 and 1991) some 21,000 conversions to gas heating took place in Dublin.
- An extensive publicity/information campaign by the Department of the Environment, complemented by information and advertising on smokeless fuel options by the fuel industry.
- A weekly allowance for low income groups, to minimise any additional costs arising from the use of smokeless fuels.
- Longer-term measures related to home-heating specification, to ensure that all new houses in Dublin conform to clean air requirements.

In Cork, smoke control legislation, similar to that in force in Dublin, was introduced with effect from February, 1995.

In the past Dublin also experienced some pollution by SO₂, but ambient concentrations have declined steadily over the last 20 years to around one-fifth of the highest values recorded in the early 1970s. The progressive decrease in SO₂ levels is due to the combined effects of the change from fuel oil to natural gas in Dublin power stations, a decrease in the sulphur content of gas oil, a decrease in fuel oil combustion in industry, and the conversion of solid fuel heating systems to gas-fired or oil-fired units in private dwellings.

The presence of lead in the air is particularly a matter of concern in urban areas where there can be high ambient lead levels in conjunction with concentrations of population. Petrol combustion is the primary source of lead emissions and the Government, as part of the Environment Action Programme, has sought to achieve a progressive reduction in the lead content of leaded petrol and an increase in the use of unleaded petrol. In 1988 only 0.25 percent of total sales of petrol was unleaded; currently the proportion is over one half.

The effects of this policy are apparent in the decrease in ambient lead levels in Dublin shown by the downward trend in annual mean concentrations of airborne lead measured at eight sites

from 1988 to 1993. Currently the annual mean lead concentrations for most of these sites are less than half the WHO guideline value of $0.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and well within the air quality standard of $2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ which is also the limit set by the relevant EU Directive.

Vehicle emission controls are being progressively introduced to reduce other pollution emanating from traffic, such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons, but it will be some years before significant benefits are obtained. From 1 January, 1993, all petrol-engined vehicles, diesel-engined passenger cars and most light commercial vehicles being licensed for the first time must comply with EU-wide emissions standards for carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons. In practice, petrol-engined vehicles must be equipped with closed-loop, three-way, catalytic converters. Stricter EU emissions standards for light commercial vehicles have been imposed since 1 October, 1994; and new heavy duty passenger and commercial vehicles with diesel engines have also been subject to mandatory EU emissions standards since 1 October, 1993.

Policies and programmes relating to transportation and roads that are currently being implemented will also contribute to the reduction of traffic pollution in urban areas. The Dublin Transportation Initiative has as one of its objectives the reduction of direct environmental effects, including air pollution and noise, resulting from transport, and this will be achieved through the priority it accords to improved public transport and traffic management. In many towns outside Dublin with the construction of by-passes, the removal of through traffic will help to reduce air pollution.

Waste

The Government's policy in relation to waste, including municipal solid waste (approximately 1.7 million tonnes per annum), is most clearly expressed in the Waste Management Bill, 1995, which will provide a statutory basis to regulating waste production and treatment. The Bill is expected to be enacted shortly.

The guiding principles of the Bill are to prevent and reduce waste production; to encourage and assist recycling and recovery of waste; to reduce the risk to, and impact on, the environment from waste by strict control of waste collection, movement and disposal. The objectives, in turn, are expressed as providing for a more effective organisation of public

authority functions in relation to waste management; enabling measures to improve performance in the prevention, minimisation and recovery/recycling of wastes; and a comprehensive regulatory framework for the application of higher environmental standards.

The Bill provides for regulatory measures to promote waste prevention and recovery and these may involve obligations upon producers, distributors, retailers and consumers. In relation to waste prevention and minimisation, the measures will include:

- a requirement to have regard to the need to minimise waste production in agricultural, commercial or industrial activities;
- the carrying out of waste audits and the implementation of waste reduction programmes by businesses;
- controls on the production, design, composition, or use of substances, products or packaging;
- controlled use of a marketing "logo" or "symbol" indicating good waste prevention practice by a business;
- controls in relation to problematic raw materials, products and wastes.

The waste recovery measures are directed at achieving the recycling targets set out by the Government in Recycling for Ireland. A Strategy for Recycling Domestic and Commercial Waste, issued by the Department of the Environment in 1994. The general objective stated in this document is to divert 20 percent of combined household and commercial waste away from landfill, through recycling, by 1999, compared with the present diversion rate of 7.4 percent. Efforts will be directed at packaging waste, the compostable fraction of household and commercial waste and waste newsprint.

Recycling targets, including a target of 27 percent for packaging waste, such as paper, plastic and metals, will be achieved on a phased basis, led by pilot/demonstration programmes, and will be accompanied by an expansion of the present network of collection sites for recyclable

materials. The Government has adopted a target coverage of one site per 5,000 population in all urban centres or a total of some 500 collection sites for various materials. The new sites would include, in the short term, some 20 civic amenity sites provided by local authorities for the reception from the public of segregated waste and, in the medium term, 75 such sites.

Landfill will continue to be the main disposal route for most wastes. Ireland's current landfill network, comprising some 120 operational sites (public and private) will be rationalised on a county and regional basis, resulting in a network of some 50 larger landfill sites over the next 5-10 years. These will be designed, engineered and operated to high environmental standards. It is recognised, however, that although there will be benefits from the economies of scale associated with fewer, larger, landfill sites, the transportation of waste to more distant sites will bring increased collection costs. This is another factor underlining the importance of waste reduction and recovery measures.

Litter

Litter is a form of waste that has been a persistent problem in Ireland, particularly in urban areas. It is a form of visual pollution: its effects are not toxic and it rarely inflicts permanent damage on eco-systems. Litter detracts from the attractive appearance of an area and this, in turn, can be translated into an economic cost in places where the quality of the environment, urban or rural, has a strong role - the "image" in marketing terms - in underpinning economic and social activities such as shopping, tourism and recreation. In particular, the presence of litter can contribute to a failure to optimise the benefits to be gained from major investment in urban renewal and townscape improvement works. Its control also presents an operational cost - at least IR£20 million each year to local authorities for whom litter is 10 times more costly to deal with than the same waste presented for bin collection.

To tackle the problem of litter in a fundamental and structured way, the Minister for the Environment launched an initiative, Action Against Litter, in February, 1996, which will be urgently and actively promoted over the next two years. In aiming to achieve a long-term shift in attitudes and behaviour towards litter, the initiative has adopted four strategic objectives:

- Improving local authority performance in relation to litter prevention/control, including tougher action against offenders; .
- New legislation to ensure more effective regulation and sanctions in support of litter control;
- Creative partnership with business/industry to combat litter and to create a clean outdoor environment;
- Promoting greater public awareness and education about litter, with a special focus on young people and with help from community and environmental groups.

The objectives have been articulated into nine proposed measures. A key measure will be new legislation, to replace the Litter Act, 1982, that will provide stronger enforcement powers for local authorities; place clear responsibility for clean-up operations on organisers of major events, and on businesses whose operations have a particular bearing on litter creation; and establish new procedures for litter control and zoning.

The Tidy Towns Competition will be closely aligned with Action Against Litter, and there will be an intensification of recycling, particularly in relation to packaging wastes. Awareness - enhancing measures include a media-based campaign, the preparation of material for schools and the targeting of specific groups such as motorists, shoppers and public transport users.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since the landmark statement of the principle of sustainable development in the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development) in 1987 much effort, worldwide, has been put into elaborating the definition and giving it an operational utility. To the Brundtland definition, "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", there has been added the complementary one of the World Conservation Union, UN Environment Programme and World Wide Fund for Nature (1991), "sustainable development means improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of

supporting ecosystems". "Quality of life" draws attention to the economic and social dimensions of the sustainable development concept - in addition to the environmental one - and embraces a concern for equity between people in the present as well as across the generations.

Of particular relevance is the Fifth Environmental Policy and Action Programme of the EU, adopted in 1993 and setting the environmental agenda for 1993 to 2000 and beyond, which is entitled "Towards Sustainability". In many ways the Programme exemplifies the approach to sustainable development which is coming to be accepted at all levels - a strategic programme setting objectives and targets, identifying the agents responsible for implementation and indicating a range of techniques such as strategic environmental assessment, environmental audit and life-cycle analysis.

In the National Development Plan 1994-1999 it is explicitly stated by the Irish Government that the implementation of its general development strategy will be undertaken in a manner which fully respects the principle of sustainable development. All major sectoral policies will be required to adhere to this principle, and economic approaches to support environmental objectives will also be developed. To help achieve this aim, the Government has committed itself to the preparation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy, which will be completed this year. The challenge is to draw upon experience in the formulation and implementation of sustainable development initiatives at home and abroad, in order to establish policies and measures that are appropriate to the particular environmental, economic, social and political circumstances of Ireland. A first report, Moving Towards Sustainability. A Review of Recent Environmental Policy and Developments was issued by the Department of the Environment in 1995.

In relation to sustainable urban settlements, the National Sustainable Development Strategy will provide an opportunity to set out the means of achieving an integration of the various policies currently addressing urban problems and issues, together with new ones that may emerge. In this way sustainability can act as an appropriate methodological and organisational mechanism for harmonising policies and measures, avoiding possible conflicts, achieving synergistic benefits and providing a holistic approach to the planning and management of towns and cities.

The Strategy will also provide a rationale and an impetus to formulating and using urban indicators. Their practical application is wide, including their use as diagnostic tools in identifying the severity and extent of problems, and as a means of monitoring and evaluating the effect of urban policies and measures. The experience of the UNCHS Indicators Programme and other agencies, together with work by the Environmental Protection Agency in the area of environmental indicators, will be utilised in establishing appropriate indicators.

At the local level, work towards achieving sustainable development is being directed through Local Agenda 21. In this regard, Ireland possesses certain advantages in bringing about the partnership and co-operation that are recognised as being essential to the attainment of Local Agenda 21 objectives. Local government, in which the units are generally small in terms of population and area, is strongly democratic and representative, and possesses a number of key functions such as land use planning, environmental protection and infrastructure provision. In addition, there is a strong tradition of urban communities working together, exemplified by the Tidy Towns Competition which has been running for thirty-eight years and annually involves over 700 urban centres of all sizes. In 1996, the criteria for judging the competition have been radically revised to focus more broadly on the totality of the urban environment.

The Government recognises that Local Agenda 21 provides a creative opportunity to focus on the pivotal role of local government in the community: to look in a new way at the social and environmental impacts of local authority activities, and to seek new and original ways of promoting the interests, and representing the views, of local communities. It also perceives the value of harnessing local interests and loyalties in order to bring enhanced commitment and effort to achieving sustainable development objectives. As a means of giving a practical expression to these views, the Department of the Environment issued Local Authorities and Sustainable Development: Guidelines on Local Agenda 21, in 1995.

The potential of land use planning to contribute to sustainable development at the local level, and within the context of Local Agenda 21, is being explored. Many aspects of sustainable development form an intrinsic part of planning: urban renewal is an example, par excellence, in that it involves the re-use of land in locations of prime accessibility and enables continuing benefits to be obtained from past major infrastructural investment. Consideration is now

being given to how traditional planning policies and objectives can be more strongly orientated towards more sustainable forms of development.

The Guidelines on Local Agenda 21 highlight the role of local development plans in this process. Among the matters relating to urban areas that might be addressed through planning, the document lists:

- development and settlement policies;
- urban land use policies to address population decentralisation, suburbanisation, dereliction in central areas and general reductions in quality of life;
- urban renewal programmes to halt decline in physical fabric and socio-economic conditions, and protect and enhance urban heritage and architecture;
- the relationship between the urban area and its rural hinterland;
- urban housing policies incorporating environmentally sound design, infill, open space and mobility considerations;
- the creation of a green urban structure through the provision of parks, landscaped areas and the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers.

POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

National Anti-Poverty Strategy

At the UN World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in March, 1995, the Irish Government along with other governments adopted a Declaration which commits countries to the goal of eradicating poverty and inequality through decisive national actions and international co-operation. Arising from this commitment, and following proposals from the Minister for Social Welfare, the Government approved the development of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy which is to be put in place by the end of 1996.

The Strategy is a recognition by the government that tackling poverty and social exclusion is one of the major challenges facing Ireland and it has committed itself to set out a comprehensive national strategy to address all aspects of these problems. Under the Strategy, all government departments and state agencies will be expected to include the reduction and prevention of poverty as key objectives in the development and implementation of their policies and programmes. They will also be required to consult and involve people affected by poverty in this process.

The key elements of the Strategy have been established as follows:

- the preparation of an overview statement setting out in broad terms the nature and extent of poverty, social exclusion and inequality in Ireland;
- the selection of key themes and policy areas to be addressed in tackling poverty, social exclusion and inequality;
- the setting of specific targets within each theme against which progress can be assessed;
- the use of the government's Strategic Management Initiative to reflect government commitment to an anti-poverty strategy;
- recommending the type of institutional mechanisms to be put in place to ensure that the issue of reducing poverty, social exclusion and inequality is on the agenda of all government departments and agencies, and that there is co-ordination across and between departments on policy in this area;
- specifically including the people directly affected by poverty in these processes of policy formulation and implementation through a wide-ranging consultative and participative exercise.

An Inter-departmental Policy Committee, made up of representatives from government departments and national agencies with a contribution to make to addressing anti-poverty

issues, is overseeing the preparation of the Strategy. Great importance has been placed on achieving the widest possible consultation with interested organisations and individuals. The Secretariat to the Committee is in the Department of the Taoiseach and, for the purpose of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, is augmented by the Department of Social Welfare and the Combat Poverty Agency. In December, 1995, this Committee produced a discussion paper, Poverty, Social Exclusion and Inequality in Ireland - An Overview Statement, which is a response to the first strategy element listed above.

The Committee has also published a consultation paper, Institutional Mechanisms to Support the National Anti-Poverty Strategy, which sets out the issues and questions in relation to the fifth element of the Strategy. These include the mechanisms at political level; administrative co-ordination and leadership, including means to overcome the compartmentalised nature of the administrative system; policy guidelines; intra-department structures and mechanisms; supporting departments and agencies; monitoring and reporting mechanisms; linking NAPS and the budgetary process; and voluntary and community sector involvements.

The National Anti-Poverty Strategy seeks to deal with poverty in all parts of the country, in all communities. Nevertheless, a special concern will be areas where there are concentrations of people living in poverty and suffering from chronic and cumulative disadvantage. The two classic types of urban area that meet this description are the inner city areas, particularly in Dublin, Cork and Limerick, and large suburban housing estates. Though very different in many respects, both types of area are characterised by large numbers of people experiencing long-term unemployment and living in areas of economic, social and environmental decline; and by communities affected by social exclusion and the problems of vandalism, drug addiction and lawlessness.

Area Based Response to Long-Term Unemployment 1991-1994

The problems of disadvantaged urban areas such as these have already been the subject of a government initiative, the Area Based Response to Long-Term Unemployment 1991-1994. This initiative emerged from the Programme for Economic and Social Progress, a three year programme agreed by the Government and the Social Partners in January, 1991. Section VII of PESP described an Area Based Response to Long Term Unemployment as "an integrated approach designed to implement a community response, in particular local areas, to long-term

unemployment and the danger of long-term unemployment". It went on to say that "the proposed strategy will be area based, will have local communities as the primary movers, will integrate the various existing initiatives, will involve progression, in particular to ensuring second chance education leading to qualifications and therefore, with a greater real possibility of a job".

The objectives of the initiative were:

- To work with people who are long-term unemployed and those in danger of becoming long-term unemployed in order to improve their skills and self-confidence, their involvement in the community and to increase their opportunities of getting a job or starting their own business;
- to promote the type of fundamental attitudinal change needed to enable individuals to generate enterprise thereby creating additional employment and to encourage a more positive attitude towards the recruitment of people who are long term unemployed;
- to work at the local level to generate more jobs through sustainable enterprises and through the promotion of local economic projects and initiatives which will stimulate confidence and investment.

The Area Based Response was a pilot scheme which took the form of setting up partnership structures to work at the local level in twelve areas. Each partnership consisted of a chairperson, a board of directors and a manager. The Board was a tripartite structure of community representatives, statutory agencies and social partners. The manager was a full-time member of staff.

The twelve pilot areas were selected on the basis of three criteria: geographical spread, the extent of unemployment and long-term unemployment, and the existence of structures and activities already in place on which the PESP initiative could build. Eight of the areas were urban - Ballymun, Coolock, Finglas, Inner-City Dublin, Tallaght, Dundalk, Limerick City and North Cork City.

The priority for each partnerships was the preparation of an Area Action Plan. This process required consultation leading to consensus and commitment from the local community. The result was the production of a number of comprehensive Area Action Plans with a strategic focus on creating jobs locally and linking them to revised education/training and social welfare measures to give unemployed people a new chance. For the most part, Area Action Plans comprised:

- the establishment of levels of existing service provision within the area;
- the identification of the main needs of the area in relation to education and training, enterprise development and community development;
- detailed proposals aimed at addressing the needs identified.

However, it has been suggested that the process allowed for insufficient discussion and consultation at local level, owing to the lack of skills for planning at such an early stage within the partnership approach.

The work undertaken by the partnerships fell into six areas:

- education and training
- enterprise and employment creation
- Initial Contact programme (meeting unemployed people and responding through advice and guidance)
- services for the unemployed
- community development
- environment, tourism and agriculture

Within each of these areas a variety of specific actions was undertaken. In total, some 60 types of measures - policy and delivery focused, short and long-term - were initiated among all the partnerships.

An evaluation carried out in 1994 (Progress Through Partnership) found that, although still in its early stages, the initiative has shown a considerable degree of progress in relation to the achievement of objectives in these areas. In education and training, a number of innovative projects were undertaken and in mainstream provision there was a net increase in places on training from 2,245 places in 1991 to 9,262 places in 1993. In education, there was a growth in the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme from 200 places to 1,073 places and Youthreach places doubled from 333 to 602 in the same period.

In enterprise, the Area Allowance (Enterprise) measure, introduced specially for the partnership areas, had a significant impact on the opportunities for long-term unemployed people to set-up a business. Over 740 individuals set-up their own businesses since the initiative started, despite some administrative difficulties with the AA(E). The role of the partnerships in job-creation, however, was not fully realised in the pilot phase. Changing employer attitudes to recruitment of long-term unemployed people proved to be a difficult aspect of the initiative. Nevertheless, partnerships succeeded in producing a range of activities with a significant impact at local level and in assisting the placement of over 1,600 persons in jobs.

The initiative also highlighted the need for a community development approach to local development which encompasses all the aspects. It was found that the existence of Community Development Projects (CDPs), funded by the Department of Social Welfare, in nine PESP areas helped to create a context for community work. Their network of community resource centres, provided a facility for the co-ordination of the community development aspects of the partnerships' Area Action Plans. Community representatives generally broadened the context of the initiative to include social as well as economic issues, in relation to unemployment and the local community.

There were also examples of environmental improvement work making a significant contribution at the local level, with partnerships acting as a medium for the direction of a number of projects. Examples included:

- home insulation for elderly people (Cork North City and in Dundalk), that improved housing conditions and provided long-term unemployed people with training and work experience;
- tenant estate management, on a pilot basis in Ballymun, Tallaght, Limerick and Cork North City, that provided a security system for buildings at risk and offered employment;
- a number of urban renewal projects in partnership areas: for example, in North Cork City, an urban afforestation project and in Limerick a small team of long-term unemployed people was trained in urban forestry skills.

The evaluation referred to earlier concludes that, while the innovative nature of the programme and the changing political context in which the partnerships operated posed many difficulties, the initiative raised awareness of the needs of long-term unemployed people and the difficulties experienced by them in the search for work. It also brought the three main sectors together to focus on specific areas of high unemployment and to address problems in a multi-dimensional way which includes initial contact, enterprise, job creation, education, training and local community development.

The evaluation pointed out a major weakness of the initiative: its failure to secure commitment by agencies to undertake new programmes to any significant degree in relation to long-term unemployment. It also drew attention to the constraints presented by a national context of centralised and compartmentalised decision-making where the local discretion of agencies is limited and where local development initiatives are limited in their capacity to tackle national level institutional arrangements. Nevertheless, the partnerships succeeded in starting a process of change with individuals from the three sectors working together at the local level in a new and constructive way. This positive outcome from the pilot initiative has contributed to the continuation of an integrated and partnership approach to socio-economic development at the local level through the Operational Programme on Local Urban & Rural Development.

Community Development Programme, 1990

Another initiative also contributed to the approach adopted in this Operational Programme. This was the Community Development Programme, introduced by the Government in 1990 and co-ordinated by the Department of Social Welfare and the Combat Poverty Agency, which also demonstrated the capacity of local communities in disadvantaged areas to initiate and participate in the social and economic development of their own areas. The purpose was to provide grants to projects -

"to assist in the staffing of local resource centres which will provide a focal point for community development activities in the area. The activities undertaken will include local enterprise initiatives, projects with the elderly, young families, single parents, the unemployed and other groups in need of help and support, advice and information. The emphasis in the projects will be on involving local communities in developing approaches to tackling the problems they face and on creating successful partnerships between the voluntary and statutory agencies in the area".

The CDP was sourced from the National Lottery and in the period 1990-1992 the fund amounted to IR£2.525 million. In the first year, fifteen community groups were invited to participate, with five new communities in 1991 and a further eight in 1992. Over two-thirds of the initial fifteen projects were urban based and included both inner city areas and suburban housing estates in Dublin and Cork.

A review of the CDP (A Programme in the Making) was published in 1994. It was critical of the lack of clear policy objectives in the programme and the mechanisms for managing it were seen to be confusing and lacking in cohesion. The review recognised, however, the complexity of objectives and the contexts in which individual projects operated, and the fact that this was the first national programme of its kind. The emphasis in the review, therefore, was on process rather than outcomes and the majority of its twenty-five recommendations relate to the operation of the programme. Among the other recommendations, those relating to matters of policy or structural arrangements included:

- integrated area-based strategies for responding to the needs of large disadvantaged, suburban communities;

- exploration of further local, as distinct from institutional, perceptions of need in order to gain greater understanding of the effects of recent social and economic developments on communities and of the potential of local responses;
- technical backup to inner city communities so that they may respond more effectively and quickly to issues involving urban renewal and development;
- involvement of the management of institutional services in attempts at integration at a higher than local level in order that the outcomes of local actions are understood at other levels;
- the CDF should have structures whereby the lessons and experiences of community based work are being fed directly into the policies and operations of national, regional and other organisations;
- a review of representative community structures, with particular attention to the legislative and political options for improving community sector participation in decision-making;
- research into the organisational and legal structures capable of giving more meaningful expression to the aims and objectives of community development projects.

Third European Poverty Programme

The Third EU Poverty Programme, Poverty 3, ran from December, 1989 to June, 1994. Its fuller descriptive title was "the medium-term community action programme concerning the economic and social integration of the economically and socially less privileged groups in society". The programme had three principles - partnership, participation and multi-dimensionality - and its aims were:

- to produce organisational models for action to combat poverty, involving partnership between interested bodies in the areas concerned;
- to ensure the coherence of Community policies affecting less privileged groups;

- to strengthen economic and social cohesion;
- to be a forum for exchanges, stimulation and optimization of effort.

Poverty 3 contained two types of project: model actions and innovative measures. In Ireland there were two model actions - a rural one, Forum in north-west Connemara, and an urban one, PAUL in Limerick City. The innovative measure was the Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group (DTEDG). The EU contribution was 4.8 MECU over the five-year period, with national co-funding through the Combat Poverty Agency of 45 percent with the model actions and 50 percent with the innovative measure.

The projects were required to produce a strategic plan, regular progress reports on their work and plans of work for the year ahead. The Commission stressed that Poverty 3 was a programme of actions, not simply a fund to be drawn on. Projects were issued with guidelines and they were expected to operate within a common framework, a discipline of ideas and organisation. Model actions, in particular, were expected to operate in depth, targeting their resources on those most in need and those most excluded. It was expected that as a result of the programme, the governmental and non-governmental participants would learn about social exclusion and its many dimensions and find new and more effective ways to combat it.

The urban project, PAUL in Limerick, covered four local authority housing estates in the north-west and south-east of the city, with a population of around 20,000 people. The project expanded substantially in 1991 when it became part of the Government's scheme of Area-Based Responses (ABRs) to long-term unemployment, extending the PAUL target group to all long-term unemployed people in the city and adding a fifth parish.

The principal aims of PAUL, as set out in its strategic plan, were -

"to promote the social and economic integration of the least privileged groups through innovative organisational models which emphasise partnership, participation and an integrated approach to tackling issues.... The partnership is primarily concerned to address the issue of long-term unemployment and its impact on the lives of individuals and families in Limerick."

The principal activities undertaken in the PAUL project illustrate the extent and variety of the work in tackling social exclusion:

- Community action centres in four communities,
- Welfare rights information service, benefit take-up campaigns,
- Advice to people in debt,
- Early education intervention project,
- Adult education courses,
- Project for lone parents,
- Career relaunch for long-term unemployed over 25s,
- Urban afforestation training programme,
- Community childcare facilities, childcare training,
- Support for and development of local cooperative,
- Pilot project for the co-management of housing estate,
- Network to support families whose children were in care.

The DTEDG innovative measure had not only a housing dimension, but also an urban one since it is estimated that a quarter of the 20,000 Travellers in Ireland are in the Dublin area. The project focused on the problem of cultural discrimination and its principal aims were

- to support the rights of Travellers to self-determination and equality;
- to build recognition of Travellers' self-identity;
- to develop anti-discrimination policies and practices;
- to achieve dialogue between the Travellers and the sedentary population.

The resultant activities, which involved working with both Travellers and settled people, included:

- Training programmes for Travellers and professionals working with Travellers;
- Educational events, information days, seminars and workshops;
- Development of national and regional fora for Travellers (e.g. youth forum, women's forum);
- Health awareness programme;

- Scheme for the improvement of standards in Traveller accommodation;
- Traveller heritage centre;
- National religious pilgrimage for Travellers.

A review of Poverty 3 in Ireland (Combating Exclusion), published in 1994, analyses the experience of these projects and sets out the lessons that were gained from them. Some of the conclusions on policy and organisational issues may be summarised as follows:

1. The urban problems of Limerick are consistent with national and European situations of urban decline where a combination of inappropriate planning and housing policies and unequal educational opportunities are exacerbated by rapid and negative changes in the labour market.
2. There is a need to give appropriate recognition to Ireland as an urbanised society and to adopt an integrated range of urban developmental policies. From the PAUL experience, the elements of such an urban policy should include local estate management, adult education, legitimisation of the shadow economy, self-employment, small and medium-size enterprises, investment in the physical structure and consumer-sensitivity of welfare services.
3. The work of the projects substantiated the important links between social exclusion and joblessness, welfare dependency and educational inequality and disadvantage. There is a need to see social exclusion in a much wider framework: combating social exclusion is not simply a question of social policy but has to do with a range of policies, especially economic policy. All the issues are inseparable.
4. Public investment decisions can operate in an exclusionary way. PAUL contrasted the lack of investment in working class estates with the tax incentives available for renewal of the urban fabric in commercial parts of the city; and the two model actions illustrated the extremely low levels of investment in adult education compared with conventional primary, secondary and third-level education.

5. The potential of self-employment and community businesses in areas of considerable deprivation was demonstrated in the PAUL project. DTEDG illustrated how the Traveller community already plays a part in the recycling economy and outlined how it could play a much bigger role, granted the appropriate policies and support. The projects showed how, even in a difficult national and European labour market, there are distinct possibilities for economic development and economic routes out of poverty.
6. The DTEDG project has begun to effect a significant shift in the manner in which Travellers are perceived in Ireland. Its impact is most evident at national policy level, with Travellers being increasingly seen as a distinct cultural entity entitled to respect, recognition and full citizenship. The manner in which Travellers have been excluded from their citizenship has been identified as a form of racism.
7. The size of the model action projects and their duration of funding meant not only stability but also the possibility of drawing into the programme a wider range of people, communities, services and activities in anti-poverty work.

The review concluded that the local development projects in the Poverty 3 Programme demonstrated a positive impact far out of proportion to their size and that the approaches of targeting, partnership and multi-dimensionality could usefully be applied to other EU specialised programmes.

HOUSING

Policy

The overall aim of national housing policy is to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment, and, as far as possible, at the tenure of its choice. This statement of policy acknowledges clearly the role of all types of tenure in the housing system: social rented, private rented, and owner-occupied, which remains the preference of the vast majority of the population.

In the strategy for realising this aim, the guiding principle is that those who can afford to do so should provide housing for themselves, with the aid of the fiscal incentives available; and that those unable to do so from their own resources would have access to social housing or

income support to rent private housing. The overall aim is supported by seven specific objectives:

- to promote home ownership;
- to promote a thriving, more diverse, well-managed rented sector, both public and private;
- to ensure that households that are not in a position to provide housing from their own resources have suitable accommodation available at an affordable price;
- to promote the conservation and improvement of public and private housing;
- to reduce the extent and effects of social segregation in housing;
- to enable a prompt and adequate response to the accommodation needs of homeless people;
- to enable the provision of suitable housing and halting sites for Travellers (persons who have traditionally pursued a nomadic way of life).

The Government's Plan for Social Housing (1991) set out strategies to meet the changing level and nature of housing needs by expanding the social housing programme and introducing a range of new responses. It aimed to improve access to housing for those in need, to make more efficient and equitable use of available resources, to provide improved opportunities for community and voluntary action in housing, and to present a choice to those in need of social housing. The strategies embraced a range of specific measures, including a new scheme of shared ownership, new ways of promoting voluntary and non-profit social housing, initiatives relating to social housing management, the reduction of social segregation in housing, and proposals for the private rented sector.

Social Housing - The Way Ahead (1995) reviewed the operation of the various policies introduced in 1991, and brought in a number of changes to increase their effectiveness and to improve their implementation. It also set out proposals for further policy development in the social and private rented housing sectors.

Social Housing Needs

Social housing need is broadly defined as the housing needs of households whose resources are insufficient to provide them with access to suitable and adequate housing. Social housing needs increased between 1987 and 1993. The upward trend during that period can be attributed to the fall-off in the construction of local authority housing and to demographic and economic factors, notably the age profile of the population, the increased rate of household formation (particularly one-parent households), the rise in unemployment and the fall-off in emigration. Notwithstanding the positive economic outlook, social and demographic factors suggest a continuing strong demand for social housing in the future. A total of 28,624 households were assessed by the local authorities as being in need of housing in March, 1993 - an increase of 23 percent on the March 1991 figure of 23,242. A further assessment of social housing needs was carried out in March, 1996.

Social Housing Output

It is estimated that the local authority, voluntary and other social housing programmes, together with vacancies arising in the existing local authority rented stock provided accommodation for 9,913 households in 1995, compared with 8,541 in 1994 and 6,148 in 1992. The annual social housing provision has thus increased by almost 60 percent in three years, significantly improving general access to housing, shortening the length of time on waiting lists and generally alleviating need. It is projected that social housing output will meet the needs of over 10,000 households in 1996.

In addition to the direct provision of social housing, the payment of rent and mortgage supplements under the Supplementary Welfare Allowances Scheme has increased in recent years. In 1995, the average number of households in receipt of supplements in any month was of the order of 32,000 for rents and 7,000 for mortgages. This assistance is currently administered in the nature of an income maintenance scheme. It is proposed to transfer the

administration of rent and mortgage supplements to local authorities so that it can be better integrated with their other housing functions. An inter-Departmental Committee has been established to consider the major issues involved in the proposed transfer and to make recommendations.

Home Ownership

In relation to the objective of promoting home ownership, a number of measures have been introduced. These are administered by the Department directly, or indirectly through the housing authorities. New house grants for first-time purchasers of new houses were introduced in 1977. The amount of the grant is IR£3,000 which would approximate to 5 - 7.5 percent of a typical new house price. Currently some 10,000 new house grants are paid annually. Another measure allows local authorities to provide house-purchase and improvement loans to lower-income households who cannot obtain mortgage finance from commercial lending agencies.

In 1991, a shared ownership system was introduced to facilitate households aspiring to home ownership but unable to afford to purchase in one step, in the conventional manner. The ownership of the house is initially shared between the occupier and the local authority with the minimum initial equity, which must be purchased by the occupier, being 40 percent. The occupier pays a rent on the share of the property owned by the local authority. Those who use the system enjoy the benefits of ownership but have more affordable outgoings than under a conventional mortgage. They do not need a large deposit and are exempt from stamp duty - an important concession in the case of existing houses. A subsidy towards the rent element is payable in the case of lower income households in shared ownership.

Tenants of local authority houses (but not flats) have the option of purchasing their homes and two-thirds of all dwellings provided by local authorities over the years have been bought by tenants under successive tenant purchase schemes. This facility has made a substantial contribution towards the achievement of the present 80 percent level of owner-occupation in the overall housing stock and has been a key factor in the stabilisation of housing estates, in the upkeep of the houses and in promoting community development.

Management and Maintenance of Local Authority Housing

The management and maintenance of their rented housing stock is the responsibility of the local authorities. There is a policy emphasis on the more effective management and maintenance of this stock in order to protect the large-scale capital investment in its provision and refurbishment, and to ensure that tenants secure a high quality professional service. This has required a multifaceted approach to tackling the problems of social housing neighbourhoods and to encouraging improved housing management. New local authority houses are now provided to a very high standard of design, layout and construction. The scale of individual local authority housing developments has been reduced significantly and no high-rise local authority flats have been built since the early 1970s. Each local authority is now required by law to draw up a policy statement for the better management of their stock.

The Department of the Environment is assisting local authorities in carrying out housing management pilot projects. The projects may relate to specific aspects of housing management such as tenant involvement, estate based management systems or maintenance of dwellings. In addition, in January, 1996 a Housing Management Group was established to put housing management practices on a sound professional footing throughout the country. The Group will initially address four priority issues: the development of best practice by local authorities in managing their accommodation; the development of a comprehensive and easily accessible housing advice and information service incorporating the "one-stop-shop" concept; a programme for the training of local authority housing personnel and the monitoring of its implementation; and the identification of key housing performance indicators.

The Private Rented Sector

The position of tenants in the private rented sector has been improved considerably in recent years. The following measures are now in force:

- the provision of income tax allowances for tenants of private rented accommodation;

- landlords now prohibited from seizing tenants goods to enforce payment of rent on dwellings;
- a requirement of at least one month's notice to quit;
- mandatory rent books;
- legally binding standards of accommodation, including sanitary facilities;
- a statutory registration system requiring that certain details of lettings of private rented dwellings be entered on a public register.

Voluntary/Non-Profit/Co-Operative Housing

The growth in voluntary housing output has been a significant feature of Irish social housing policy in recent years. The Department of Environment's Capital Assistance Scheme, introduced in 1984, and the Rental Subsidy Scheme, in operation since 1991, have resulted in a greater proportion of social housing need being met by voluntary bodies. In 1995, voluntary housing output represented over 21 percent of total new rented social housing compared with less than 5 percent in 1987. The rented voluntary housing stock now amounts to some 8,000 dwellings.

Voluntary organisations also provide and run hostels to meet the accommodation needs of the homeless and provide support/resettlement assistance for homeless persons. For some organisations, advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged groups, for example, Travellers and the homeless, is the core activity. Grant aid, not exceeding 75 percent of expenditure, is available from the Department of the Environment towards the administrative and general expenses incurred by voluntary organisations which perform a representative role, conduct research or provide information, advice or training related to housing.

Among the bodies grant aided is the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH). The ICSH functions as the national federation of non-profit, voluntary and other social housing organisations; it encourages and assists the development of a range of social housing services

which complements the role of the local housing authorities and meets the different and changing needs of various groups in the population.

The Department of the Environment also grant aids the National Association of Building Co-operatives (NABCo), the central organising, advisory and representative association for the co-operative housing movement in Ireland. NABCo provides information, advice, training and management support services for its affiliated co-operatives and organises co-operatives with home ownership and rental forms of tenure. Over 3,000 dwellings have been built by local home ownership co-operatives, mainly in urban areas around the country. The current building programme for new rental co-operatives comprises over 500 dwellings.

Conservation and Improvement of Housing

In relation to the objective of promoting the conservation and improvement of both public and private housing, various measures have been put in place. To assist local authorities to improve housing standards and upgrade the physical environment in certain older or substandard local authority housing estates, a number of schemes were initiated, including:

- The Remedial Works Scheme, introduced in 1985, enables local authorities to carry out major improvement works to the sub-standard elements of their rented housing stock - mainly 'low cost' housing built in the 1960s and 1970s, certain pre-1940 dwellings and inner city flat complexes. Since 1985 some 6500 units have been improved.
- A scheme to provide bathrooms for some 6,500 local authority dwellings which lacked these facilities in 1991 when work began. By 1995 this figure was reduced to 2,000 dwellings, and of these 1,200 will be dealt with under the Remedial Works Scheme.
- A special budgetary provision of IR£3m was made available in 1994 to assist local authorities to provide replacement windows in flat complexes, mainly located in inner city areas. Windows have been replaced in 3,105 flats.

To promote the improvement of private housing a scheme introduced in 1985 made available grants for a wide range of house improvement works. Although the scheme was terminated in 1987 owing to constraints on public expenditure, cumulative expenditure had reached over

IRE200m at the end of 1995 and some 100,000 dwellings (10 percent of the total stock) had been improved. Other measures currently in operation include:

- home improvement loans from local authorities to low- income households for necessary works to improve, repair or extend their existing houses;
- a scheme, administered by local authorities, which provides grants to adapt dwelling houses to cater for the needs of disabled persons;
- a scheme, also administered by local authorities, which can provide an essential repairs grant of up to 100 percent of the cost for necessary repairs to prolong the useful life of houses in poor repair in rural areas.

In addition, a Task Force on Special Housing Aid for the Elderly was set up in 1982 to undertake a programme to improve the housing conditions of elderly persons living alone in unfit or insanitary accommodation. Since 1982, some 23,000 dwellings have been improved with assistance from the Task Force.

Counteracting Social Segregation

It has been a specific objective of Government housing policy since 1991 to mitigate the extent and effects of social segregation in housing. Local authorities are required by law to draw up and adopt a written statement of their policy to counteract undue segregation in housing between people of different social backgrounds.

Local authorities are encouraged to provide new housing in smaller developments and to avoid where possible adding to existing large scale local authority housing estates. General guidance has been given to local authorities on the size of new estates that would be appropriate in different circumstances, and on the design and location of new schemes. Local authorities have also been requested to develop, as far as possible, infill sites for local authority housing to allow new housing to be integrated into existing communities. Since 1991, local authorities are also meeting needs by purchasing existing houses where this represents reasonable value for money. As a result, the purchase of existing houses

accounted for over 23 percent of the local authority programme in 1993 and over 16 percent in 1994.

The diversification of social housing provision, notably the increased share being provided by the voluntary/non-profit sector and the shared ownership system also helps counteract social segregation. In addition, good design in local authority housing is being promoted in a variety of ways including through the introduction of an award scheme. The aim is to encourage the provision of schemes which are aesthetically pleasing, provide good living environments and are functionally and economically sustainable. The winners of the inaugural design award scheme for local authority housing have recently been announced. When assessing entries, weight was given to factors such as the degree to which schemes met the needs of the residents in terms of providing a pleasant living environment, the way they fitted into the overall environment of the locality and their capacity to be maintained at a reasonable cost. The assessors were also asked to pay particular attention to those aspects of design which would facilitate mobility for disabled persons and to highlight areas where improvement might be sought in future local authority housing projects. The design award scheme shows that local authorities can create fine architecture while fulfilling their statutory obligations as housing authorities.

Homeless Persons

In addition to the direct provision of accommodation, local authorities may also assist homeless persons by:

- (a) making an arrangement with an approved voluntary body to provide accommodation;
- (b) providing assistance, including financial assistance;
- (c) renting accommodation or lodgings, or contributing to the cost of such accommodation or lodgings.

Local authorities provide financial assistance to voluntary bodies towards the cost of operating accommodation/hostels for homeless persons. The assistance may be on a per person/per night basis or on a block contribution basis, i.e. per unit of accommodation occupied per year. The Department of the Environment reimburses 90 percent of expenditure reasonably incurred by local authorities; this reimbursement has risen from IR£7,000 in 1989 to

IR£2.35m in 1995. Accommodation for the homeless amounts to one third of all accommodation provided under the Voluntary Housing Capital Assistance Scheme. Since 1988, some 1,600 units of accommodation for homeless persons have been provided under the scheme.

An assessment of the number of homeless persons was carried out by local authorities in March, 1993. The results of that assessment estimated the number of homeless persons at 2,667 on 31 March, 1993. Voluntary agencies working on behalf of the homeless estimated the number of homeless persons at about 5,000, based on flows of homeless persons through voluntary agencies during 1993. Guidelines on the assessment of housing needs to be conducted by local authorities in March, 1996 have been issued by the Department of the Environment. In the guidelines local authorities have been asked to ensure that every effort is made to accurately record the number of homeless persons in their functional areas on 29 March, 1996 so that the assessment will reflect as far as possible the real position on that date. Local authorities are also required to ensure that notice of the carrying out of the assessment of the number of homeless persons should be given to adjoining housing authorities and health boards and to voluntary bodies, including those providing accommodation, welfare, etc. services for the homeless in the area.

An initiative involving a number of measures aimed at securing better co-ordination and delivery of services for the homeless in the Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare area was announced in December, 1995. The aim is to ensure that services for the homeless provided by the statutory and voluntary sectors are properly co-ordinated so that accommodation is available for the homeless and measures are also in place to prevent persons from becoming part of the cycle of homelessness.

Central to the arrangements is the establishment of a Management Committee, comprising senior officials of Dublin Corporation and the Eastern Health Board, to oversee and co-ordinate the provision of services for the homeless in the region. The Management Committee will be assisted by an Advisory Board representative of the major housing authorities in the region, the Eastern Health Board and the voluntary bodies providing services for the homeless. An Administrative Director will be responsible for co-ordinating

the provision of services for the homeless by statutory and voluntary agencies. The new arrangements will provide a framework for a more co-operative and unified approach by the statutory authorities, working with the voluntary sector, to plan and co-ordinate the development and delivery of services for the homeless.

Travellers

It is an objective of national policy to enable the provision of suitable housing and halting sites for Travellers - persons who have traditionally pursued a nomadic way of life. From 1991 to 1995, some 55 permanent and temporary sites, comprising 582 bays, have been provided by local authorities. Guidelines for local authorities on the provision of halting sites are currently being reviewed to make available advice and guidance on their design and location. Authorities whose areas Travellers visit at certain times of the year are being encouraged to provide short-term halting facilities. In addition, the expansion of the local authority housing programme has increased access to local authority housing for traveller families in common with other categories. The Department of the Environment finances 90 percent of the salaries and expenses of about 60 social workers employed by local authorities and voluntary bodies to deal with the accommodation needs of Travellers.

The Department of the Environment has recently launched a major strategy aimed at meeting the accommodation needs of the travelling community, in which a national programme will be put in place to provide the 3,100 units of accommodation for Travellers recommended by the Government's Task Force on the Travelling Community. The national traveller accommodation programme will be based on plans adopted by local authorities. A special unit will be established in the Department of the Environment to oversee the strategy, co-ordinate the local plans and monitor the implementation of the national programme. A National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Group will be established on a statutory basis to monitor the preparation, adequacy and implementation of the local traveller accommodation plans. Legislation will be prepared requiring local authorities to draw up and adopt plans, and to provide adequately for traveller accommodation. There will be representation of traveller interests on the Consultative Group and on the local traveller accommodation committees which local authorities will be required to establish.

Gender Aspects of Housing Policy

One-parent families are treated in the same way as two-parent families when their applications for local authority housing or other social housing are being considered. Virtually all the heads of one-parent families are women. Women also constitute the majority of elderly people and this category of housing need is catered for through a range of measures, including the direct provision of local authority and voluntary housing. There is no discrimination against women in securing mortgage finance from lending institutions.

Rural Housing

The importance of housing to the maintenance of smaller rural communities and to the viability of local shops, schools, etc., is fully recognised. However, when providing isolated dwellings, under the local authority housing programme, authorities require to be satisfied that there will be a continuing demand for the dwelling during its useful life. The building of isolated local authority dwellings in rural areas is generally limited, therefore, to special categories of persons whose needs can only be met satisfactorily by the provision of such dwellings: for example, farmers and small-holders who desire to live on their holdings, and agricultural workers who must live near their place of employment. Rural dwellers have also benefited from increased output under the voluntary housing schemes. Under the Capital Assistance Scheme, accommodation, including communal facilities, has been provided in villages, particularly for elderly persons from remote rural areas.

The maintenance of existing rural housing is important in sustaining rural communities and there are several ways through which improvement works can be secured. For example, under the Improvement Works in Lieu of Local Authority Housing Scheme local authorities can carry out improvement works to the accommodation of approved housing applicants as an alternative to rehousing them. Improvements can also be carried out under the Essential Repairs Grants and the Task Force on Special Housing Aid for the Elderly, both of which have particular relevance in rural areas.

Rural Resettlement Ireland Ltd. (RRI) is a voluntary agency which was established to promote resettlement of families, usually tenants from large public housing estates in the larger urban centres, to move to houses in rural areas. Homes that have been vacant, some

for many years, are again lived in by relocating families. In addition, local authority housing in high-demand urban areas is generally released for re-letting to other households on local authority waiting lists. Since 1990, some 220 households have moved from urban to rural areas with the help of RRI. The Department of the Environment provides grant aid to RRI to assist with the administrative costs of their resettlement programme.

C DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

Irish Aid

Ireland's Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme in 1996 is likely to amount to IR£106m (0.29 percent of GNP). Having remained at a low level for a number of years, Irish Aid has expanded rapidly in recent years: since 1992, the programme has grown from IR£40m to IR£106m (\$170m) or from 0.16 percent to 0.29 percent of GNP. The Government has committed itself to the aim of making further significant increases in the years ahead.

There have been two major statements of policy related to the expansion of the ODA programme, Irish Aid : Consolidation and Growth - A Strategy Plan (1993); and Challenges and Opportunities Abroad : White Paper on Foreign Policy (1996). In the latter document Ireland's development cooperation objectives are set out in the following terms:

- to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development in some of the poorest countries of the world;
- to assist in establishing and maintaining peace in developing countries by fostering democracy, respect for human rights, gender and social equality and protection of the environment;
- to respond promptly to emergencies and humanitarian disasters, both natural and man-made, as they occur, and to support preventive measures so that such emergencies may, so far as possible, be avoided;
- to contribute to building civil society and social solidarity.

Multilateral Aid

A significant part of Ireland's ODA is allocated in the form of mandatory contributions to multilateral development and finance organisations. The principal multilateral agencies involved are the European Union (EU), the World Bank Group and the UN agriculture and

food agencies. In the case of the EU, Ireland contributes both to the European Development Fund, which is the funding mechanism for the developing countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) under successive Lome Conventions, and through the General Budget of the Community to all other EU aid activities. Voluntary contributions are also made to various UN development agencies and programmes.

Ireland takes a direct interest in the work of these multilateral agencies in order to ensure that they perform effectively and that their funds are used in the most efficient manner possible. It also plays an active role in the debates in the various international fora on important development issues, such as sustainable development, debt and the related issue of trade. Ireland supports the efforts being made in the international financial institutions to resolve the problems caused by the heavy burden of debt carried by many developing countries.

Sustainable Development

Ireland has co-operated substantially in international action to take forward the UNCED process and has implemented relevant UNCED conclusions at national level. It has ratified the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Biodiversity Convention, has signed the Desertification Convention, and will subscribe to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the primary funding mechanism for environmental measures having global benefits, beginning in 1996. Contributions have also been made to the Trust Funds for the Climate Change Convention, the Desertification Convention, Small Island Developing States, and the Commission on Sustainable Development. Ireland reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development and participates in its meetings in an Observer capacity.

Ireland has also adopted measures to honour the UNCED commitment on finance. Ireland is a participant in the European Union initiative towards strengthening assistance to developing countries in the field of sustainable development and increasing funding for Agenda 21. The EU is a leading force for progress at international level in efforts to deal with global environmental problems and to promote the pursuit of sustainable development.

61 percent of the ODA allocations for 1996 are for bilateral aid, 35 percent are for multilateral (including EU) aid, with the remaining 4 percent being accounted for by

administration costs and other items. The Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs is responsible for all aspects of Ireland's development cooperation policy and programme, including implementation of the Irish Aid bilateral programme. Separate bodies deal with volunteer assignments, refugees, overseas students in Ireland, development education and an advisory committee on development cooperation.

Bilateral Aid

Bilateral assistance is given to six priority countries : Ethiopia, Lesotho, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia (although the programme in Sudan has remained at a low level for a number of years). It is expected that a priority country programme will be established in Mozambique later in 1996. The targeting of Irish Aid on a group of low-income countries helps to give the programme a clear poverty focus. The budgetary allocations to the priority country programmes will amount in 1996 to 42 percent of bilateral assistance (25 percent of ODA). Special programmes also support activities implemented by non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), emergency humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation programmes and measures in support of democratic structures and processes.

The priority country programmes focus on:

- support of basic needs (primary health care, basic education and rural infrastructure) and is normally effected through area-based programmes;
- support of capacity-building at national, regional and, increasingly, local levels.

There is an overriding concern about sustainability: environmental, economic, financial and institutional and administrative. Related to this, there is a strong emphasis on the concepts of partnership and participation, with a preference for making the maximum possible use of locally-available resources. Parallel structures are avoided as far as possible. Gender considerations are a central focus of attention.

The basic objective of the priority country programmes is to enhance the quality of life and productivity of poor people, thereby helping to enable them to deal with their problems. The

strategy is based on a bottom-up, organic process of development (other parts of the programme address "big picture" issues). A key concern is that activities initiated with support for development aid from outside should be capable of being absorbed and sustained in the local environment.

Other elements of the bilateral programme include:

- a programme to support service in developing countries by volunteers from Ireland;
- support for activities implemented by non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);
- support for rehabilitation assistance following major emergencies (channelled through international organisations, NGOs and recipient country authorities);
- funding for programmes in support of democratic institutions and processes and the promotion of human rights; and
- development education to increase understanding and awareness of developed-related issues in Ireland.

Habitat-Related Issues

The central thrust of the Irish Aid priority country programmes is to help to improve the circumstances of poor people, especially in rural areas. The sectors of concentration include primary health care, basic education and rural infrastructure including small-scale water supply and sanitation. There is a particular emphasis on "soft" inputs to support community organisation and local capacity-building. To the extent that the programmes achieve their objectives, the principal results should be an improvement in the quality of life and productivity of the communities concerned, and an enhancement of their capacity to exercise control over their conditions. Such improvements in rural areas are obviously worthwhile in themselves and also serve to discourage migration to urban areas.

While the environment sector per se is not a central focus of the priority country programmes, environmental concerns are taken systematically into account in the design and appraisal of all programme activities. There are also individual programmes in the environmental sector, which include:

- reforestation and land-use projects in Sudan and Tanzania;
- an integrated coastal management programme in Tanzania in the Tanga Region;
- an environmental impact assessment of the drought in Zambia in 1992;
- support of an environmental information network for the SADC region (INFOTERRA/SASIN);
- support for an environmental information centre in Lesotho;
- preparation of a district environmental profile for a district in Uganda;
- soil conservation activities in Ethiopia; and
- a proportion of the Irish assistance through the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) is for environmental activities, including the use of forage legumes for improved pasture management in Africa and support for research into agro-forestry as a means to promote sustainable food production.

In addition, a number of NGO-implemented projects supported by Irish Aid have an environmental focus, for example, conservation-based rural development programmes in Ethiopia co-financed with Trócaire and Self Help Development International.

Similarly, the urban sector per se has not been a central focus of Irish Aid but individual programmes have been supported, for example, a series of community-based "compound upgrading projects in Zambia. Irish Aid has also co-financed a considerable number of

NGO-implemented projects focused on urban poverty; the agencies concerned include Concern, GOAL and a number of missionary organisations). A number of Irish NGOs and one academic institution (University College Cork) have developed a specialised capacity related to street children and have implemented projects in this sector in Sudan, Ethiopia, India, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda). The Irish local government authorities, together with other public organisations, have developed a specialised capacity related to the management of municipal and other public authorities and utilities in developing countries. They have established a consulting firm (DEVCO) to undertake activities in this sector, sometimes with finance provided by multilateral agencies.

Large-scale infrastructure projects do not feature in the Irish Aid programme. However, DEVCO, and a number of Irish private sector firms, have participated in projects financed by multilateral aid agencies in a number of sectors, including water, roads, electricity, and related planning and organisational management. Similarly, the housing sector has not featured strongly in the Irish Aid programme but individual projects have been supported in particular circumstances, for example, in rehabilitation and refugee resettlement programmes.

In summary, Irish Aid is committed to supporting the efforts of poor people to bring about sustainable improvement to the environment in which they live. The focus is on poverty reduction and the enhancement of the capacity of poor people to control their own environment. These aims are pursued consistently in international discussions and negotiations and through multilateral and bilateral development assistance.

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