

About the N.D.P.

What is the National Development Plan?

The National Development Plan (NDP) involves an investment of over €50 billion (1999 prices), over the seven years 2000-2006. It is the largest investment plan ever drawn up for the State. The National Development Plan has four basic strategic objectives:

- Continuing sustainable national economic and employment growth
- Consolidating and improving Ireland's international competitiveness
- Fostering balanced regional development
- Promoting social inclusion

These objectives will be pursued through six operational programmes:

- Three Inter-regional Operational Programmes – Economic and Social Infrastructure, the Productive Sector and Employment and Human Resources
- Two multi-sectoral Regional Operational Programmes
- The PEACE programme which operates in the border counties and in Northern Ireland

What funds have been allocated to these programmes? (1999 Prices)

Programme	Budget € billion
Economic & Social Infrastructure	€22.4
Employment & Human Resources	€12.6
Productive Sector	€5.7
Regional Programmes	BMW - €2.7 S&E - €3.8
Peace Programme	€126
CAP Accompanying Measures	€4.3

What do these programmes involve?

More than one-half of total NDP expenditure will be devoted to Economic and Social Infrastructure. The focus will be on:

- transport infrastructure, including road, rail and bus
- environmental services, including water, sewerage and waste management
- housing
- health infrastructure

The Productive Sector Operational Programme is focused mainly on:

- Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RDTI)
- industry supports for indigenous industry
- development of foreign direct investment (FDI)

The Employment & Human Resources Operational Programme provides almost €13 billion:

- to promote employability and adaptability
- to support skills development
- to alleviate skills shortages

The Regional Operational Programmes investment will focus on local infrastructure:

- regional and local roads
- rural water services and other regional and local infrastructure
- local enterprise development
- agriculture and rural development
- social inclusion
- childcare measures

What is the role of the European Union?

While most of the public funding for this plan (90%) will be provided from domestic sources, the contribution from the European Union will be significant - €3.8 billion from the Structural and Cohesion Funds and €2.2 billion under the CAP Rural Development Plan.

The Community Support Framework (CSF) 2000-2006 is the legal agreement between the Irish Government and the European Commission outlining the role the Structural Funds will play in the Plan. Previous National Development Plans were written with a view to obtaining funds from the EU. The current National Development Plan includes areas of expenditure – housing and health – that are not eligible for EU funds.

The Plan will be funded by all four Structural Funds:

- European Social Fund (ESF)
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- Financial Instruments for Fisheries Guarantee (FIFG)
- Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)

Expenditure under the CSF amounts to just over €7 billion (current prices), comprising €3.2 billion in Structural Funds, €2.3 billion in national public expenditure and €1.5 billion in private expenditure.

The Regions (MAP)

For the purposes of the Plan, the country is divided into two regions:

Southern & Eastern Regional – S & E

Border, Midland and Western Region – BMW Region

An objective of the Plan is to ensure balanced regional development both between and within the Regions.

(1999 prices)	Billion	€ Per Capita
S & E Region	€34.7 (67.2%)	€13,015
BMW Region	€16.9 (32.8%)	€17,514
Total	€51.6	€14,212

How is the Plan managed?

The Department of Finance has overall responsibility for managing the Plan. The individual Operational Programmes are managed by Government Departments and newly established regional assemblies. Schemes funded under the Plan are managed by the Government Department or state agency with the given policy remit. So, for example, expenditure under the Plan on national roads is the responsibility of the NRA; expenditure on Foreign Direct Investment is the responsibility of the IDA; Bord Fáilte has responsibility for Tourism Marketing; and the County Enterprise Board for business start-ups.

Monitoring Committees have been established for each Operational Programme. These meet twice a year. Membership includes Government Departments, Regions, Social Partners, state agencies and the European Commission as advisors.