

NUI Galway submission to the National Planning Framework

April 2017

NUI Galway, ranked among the top 250 universities globally, welcomes the opportunity to engage with the National Planning Framework. Driving the regional economy since 1845, the university is committed to continue to meet the twin goals of excellence among global peers while retaining, sustaining and developing its key role as a driver of regional economic, social and cultural growth.

Vision for 2020

NUI Galway's vision for 2020 as set out in its strategic plan Vision 2020¹ seeks to be ranked among the top 200 universities globally. In doing so, the university will seek to foster a vibrant community of students and staff, where distinguished learning, impactful research, and creative thinking are shared with the world.

To support regional and national development, NUI Galway will engage with social, economic and cultural partners, through teaching, learning and research – working with large businesses, SMEs, professional bodies, and others. Knowledge transfer, entrepreneurship, commercialisation, and liaison with industry and communities are key elements of this process.

Vision for 2040

NUI Galway will continue to lead in education, approaching the 200th anniversary of the university's establishment in 2045. During this period, many aspects of the delivery of, and programme content will change, but the university's commitment to global excellence balanced with regional needs will remain.

In practical terms, a sustainable funding model for education, a critical mass of industry for collaborative research, and communication and transport networks for service delivery are essential to continue the university's contribution at a regional and national level. NUI Galway is equally committed to regional and national policy input, formation, and implementation, as evidenced in recent years through the development of a multi-campus university stretching from Clare to Donegal. The university community, students, staff and alumni will be at the core of delivering this commitment to an ambitious National Planning Framework towards sustainable, balanced development.

The submission profiles NUI Galway, and then considers, in turn, the current context in 2017, the view to 2020 and beyond to 2040.

¹ Vision 2020, NUI Galway strategic plan <http://www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020/>

A profile of NUI Galway

NUI Galway, as set out below, is a multi-campus university, with sites from Clare to Donegal across the west and north-west of Ireland. The university has five medical academies, three Ionaid Ghaeltachta (Gaeltacht Centres) and three research centres at locations beyond Galway city. In 2015, the Minister for Education Jan O’Sullivan TD marked the integration of Shannon College of Hotel Management into NUI Galway. St. Angela’s College Sligo is to integrate with the university in September 2017.

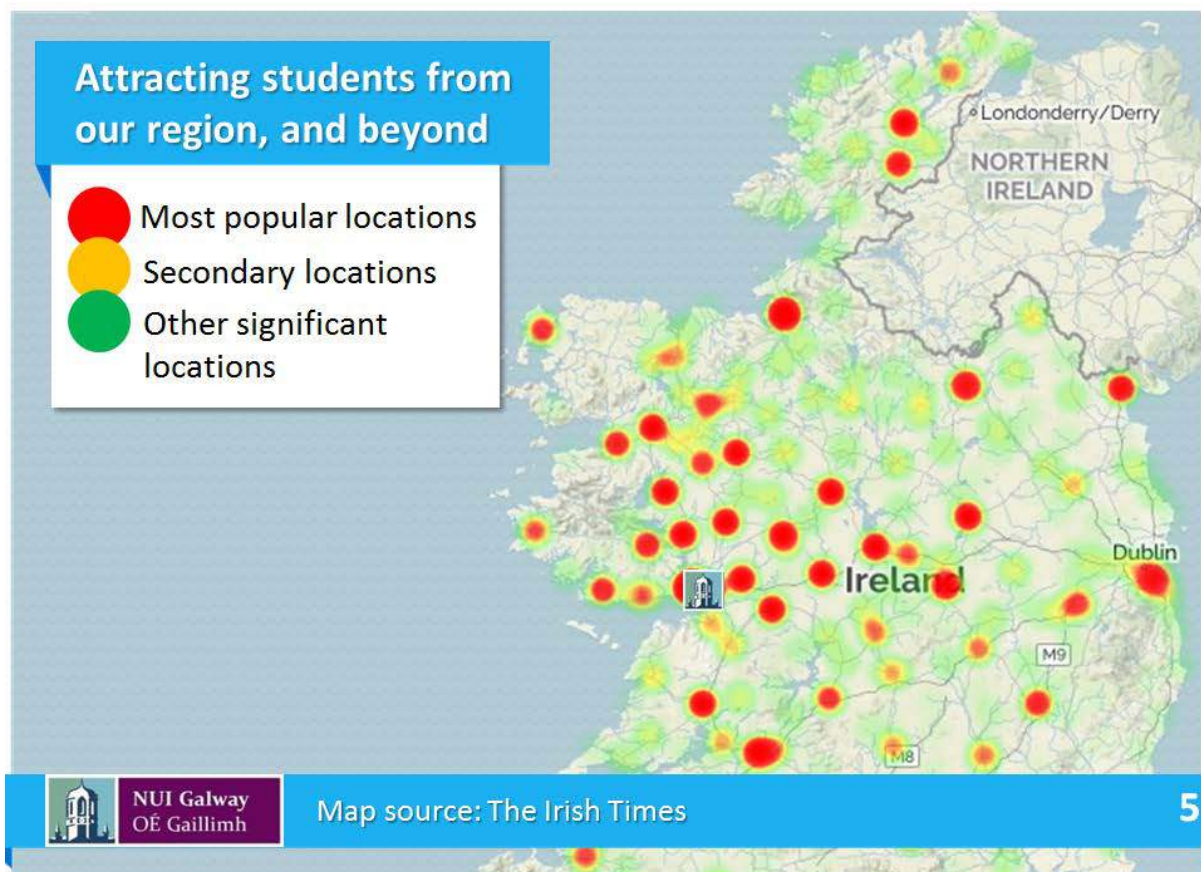
The highly dispersed student population of the West of Ireland presents a challenge for education providers in this region. NUI Galway, working with partners in the West/North West Regional Cluster, has set out to address this demographic challenge by providing for a dispersed student population through multi-campus delivery. This emerging multi-site University provides for cohesion in meeting the region’s needs; a multi-site University addresses the reality of our dispersed student population.

This cohesion will mean higher education engaging with national policy with one voice, as is set out in this submission to the National Planning Framework. The strategic development of the West and North West region requires a HE capability that can deliver the intellectual capacity to realise the benefits of infrastructure and other investments.



These geographical locations combine with independently acknowledged excellence on a global stage; ranked among the top 250 universities globally by both the Times Higher and QS rankings, 20 subject areas listed by QS; Earth and Ocean Sciences, Geography and Medicine among the top 200, English Language and Literature among the top 150 and Nursing among the top 100 globally.

NUI Galway makes a significant contribution to the regional and national economy. The university has an annual income of €215 million and a capital spend of circa €40 million.² The university is the second largest employer in Galway city, employing 2,509 staff, who with over 17,542 students, make up the university community. More than 2,500 students come from other countries, making NUI Galway the most international university in Ireland. The student body as set out below is drawn from across Ireland, both from the west, northwest and beyond.



Vision 2020, NUI Galway's Strategic Plan to 2020, articulates an ambitious vision delivering learning and knowledge efficiently across the region, in a way that meets regional needs, but that is dynamic to make the best use of existing institutional resources and offers a coherent, cohesive face to the region and the world.

² Report of the President 2014/2015

http://www.nuigalway.ie/president/documents/nui_galway_presidents_report_201415.pdf

NUI Galway believes that, as the leading educational institution in the West and North West region it must play a central part in the development of the region. A strongly engaged university can act to rebalance challenging regional demographics by encouraging FDI, the development of indigenous companies and economic activity in the region. NUI Galway's strategy is to be an engaged university, working at the heart of an ecosystem made up of industry, employers and educators, all working together to develop an effective cluster.

NUI Galway has set clear strategic goals under its strategic plan, Vision 2020. The university is committed to becoming a top 200 university by 2020. The region has a mixed economy, but huge strengths in Med-Tech, IT, the Creative Industries, Tourism, Aquaculture and Fishing. The key regional entrepreneurial strengths in Med-Tech and ICT are reflected in the flagship BioInnovate³ programme and the more recently established TechInnovate⁴ programmes at NUI Galway that identify and then seek to address unmet industry needs, nurturing innovation entrepreneurship in multi-disciplinary teams. The University has mirrored the dynamism of these regional strengths, responding to industry needs with intensive programme for companies seeking to scale up to the next level.

In both cases, the existing industry base in the twin pillars of Med-Tech and ICT has fostered a growing enterprise ecosystem. The university is now targeting a third pillar; the creative economy, to sustain and develop the west coast's internationally acknowledged creative vigour. Galway city will be the European Capital of Culture in 2020 on on-going collaboration with the Galway International Arts Festival and Druid Theatre Company.

NUI Galway has continued to collaborate closely and strengthen our relationship with industry as evidenced by our investment in strategic research leaders linked to industry clusters, the range of programmes developed to provide graduates for industry and the incubation services provided that support the commercialisation of innovation. The integration of Shannon College of Hotel Management and St Angela's College, Sligo into NUI Galway will create new and further opportunities for engagement – with the food sector, SME business support services and community care sectors.

This engagement across the quadruple helix of government, industry, academia and civil society is the palpable energy at the core of NUI Galway and the university's role as one of the key drivers of economic growth and entrepreneurial capacity in the region.

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| Teaching & Learning | Measures of success include embedded graduate attributes with 80% of undergraduates receiving work-based learning, 30% of student body studying for postgraduate degrees, 20% of students on part-time, flexible and blended learning programmes and 24% of students from under-represented groups |
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³ Bioinnovate Ireland <http://www.bioinnovate.ie/>

⁴ Techinnovate <http://www.techinnovate.org/>

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| Research & innovation | Measures of success include securing €100 million of research funding from EU programmes, €60 million direct research funding annually, 30 spin-outs, 75 licenses, 40 patents and a citation count per academic of 35, up from 26 |
| NUI Galway & the world | Measures of success include being ranked in the Top 200 universities, with 25% of students from outside Ireland and providing opportunities for international engagement on all programmes |
| Our communities | <p>Measures of success include involving alumni in a range of University activities: including career support, volunteering, fundraising, mentoring, and adjunct appointments. Through Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta to provide a dynamic higher education environment rooted in the Irish language and its cultural heritage.</p> <p>There is a commitment to deepen our links with business and industry, professional and State bodies, and community and cultural agencies for mutual benefit, to identify and deliver supports required by SMEs, based on regional need and institutional capacity.</p> |
| NUI Galway's priority research themes | <p>The University has prioritised five cross-disciplinary research themes, building on international success to date. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied Social Sciences and Public Policy Biomedical Science and Engineering Environment, Marine and Energy Humanities in Context, including Digital Humanities Informatics, Data Analytics, Physical and Computational Sciences |

The full list of key performance indicators in NUI Galway's Strategic Plan 2015-2020 is available at <http://www.nuigalway.ie/vision2020/>

Towards a National Planning Framework

Government

Context, 2017

As set out in Vision 2020, NUI Galway engages with our communities in many ways: by supporting industry, businesses and the community with expertise and advice; by commercialising research; by engaging in public debate and service; by supporting the development of policy in key areas; and by stimulating and supporting cultural and sporting activities.

NUI Galway has, and is, integrating Shannon College of Hotel Management and St. Angela's College Sligo. The network of medical academies, is aligned with the footprint of the Saolta Hospital Group. The Ionaid Ghaeltachta are located in two largest Gaeltacht areas nationally, in Donegal and Galway.

NUI Galway has an ongoing regional political and policy engagement with, among others, departmental initiatives such as the Action Plan for Jobs, the National Planning Framework, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and further sector specific initiatives across the university's areas of expertise.

Local government initiatives and statutory processes such as the Local Economic and Community Plans of regional county councils and Rural Development Fora.

Ongoing research and policy engagement with state agencies including the Western Development Commission, the Northern & Western Regional Assembly and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

This engagement operates in parallel with the West / Northwest Cluster of Higher Education institutions, as part of the multi-annual compact cycle with the HEA. This builds on the multi-faceted organic collaboration between students, staff and communities in GMIT, Sligo IT and Letterkenny IT. The Cluster supplements an existing partnership with UL.

To 2020

The university is committed to regional coherence and to fostering engagement between government and academia, through research, alumni, use of its infrastructure and meeting regional education and knowledge needs.

The university is committed to ongoing collaboration of the West/Northwest Cluster of

GMIT, Sligo IT and LYIT. However that collaboration and sits uneasily with those three institutions' stated aim of forming a technological university in the region.

NUI Galway has recently submitted a response to the HEA's call for submissions on funding in higher education. Clarity regarding a sustainable funding model will allow for ongoing capacity building across teaching, learning and research and ensure planned programme provision across the region, meeting the needs of students, society and industry.

To 2040

NUI Galway will continue to engage with the National Planning Framework and other initiatives, through use of the university's infrastructure, sharing institutional knowledge and continuing to recognise the contribution of staff who support initiatives within their areas of knowledge and expertise.

The university, as the leading educational institution in the West and North West region, must play a central part in the development of the region and to do so will require a resource allocation model that reflects the strategy to develop the region. Recognising that there will be significant changes to the delivery of education, and the need for the necessary infrastructure to adapt and compete.

Acknowledging that education is a collaborative endeavour and transport and communication links will be needed to facilitate both physical and virtual engagement across a region remote from the growth centre(s) of Ireland and Europe.

Cohesive regional communication and engagement, must be structured to facilitate the, at times, contrary needs of urban and rural dwellers across the region. The administrative and political boundaries must allow for, and facilitate, this dynamism.

The challenges faced by a region on the periphery of Europe, post Brexit and the potential breakup of the United Kingdom, in ensuring a robust political structure at regional and national level to continue to play a leading role in securing EU funding for research and the free movement of people, knowledge, goods and services.

Industry / Economy

Context, 2017

In 1971, Galway had 27,000 people. In the 2016 Census there were 79,000 people, over three times the growth rate of Dublin or the country as a whole. Galway is the fastest growing city in Europe. The west and northwest is in the most peripheral region of the most peripheral country in Europe. Galway shows however, that geographic peripherality can be overcome. Galway's success derives from a combination of a scientific environment that supports the development of high tech, high value added businesses, a strong creative and cultural life, with a beautiful and rich environment that attracts people to live here.

However the headline statistics for the region are challenging. Since 2012 the Western Region has had jobs decline in 7 out of 14 sectors, in the rest of the state has had decline in only 1 out of 14. Unemployment numbers declining steadily in region, but share of long-term unemployment growing. Western Region has higher unemployment rate in all age groups (except 65+ & 25-34) and particularly among youth.⁵

NUI Galway has a significant breadth of enterprise development and industry engagement, which is increasingly influential in informing both programme content and student placement.

In 2015, NUI Galway launched Blackstone Launchpad, a campus based entrepreneurship programme, designed to support and mentor undergraduate students, staff and alumni. Blackstone LaunchPad (<http://www.nuigalway.ie/blackstonelaunchpad/>) supports a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship and is the first Global Launch for the Blackstone programme outside of the US, providing €2 million part funded by Galway University Foundation.

Regional entrepreneurial strengths in med-tech and ICT are reflected in the flagship BioInnovate programme (<http://www.bioinnovate.ie/>), and the more recently-established TechInnovate programmes (<http://www.techinnovate.org/>) - that identify and then seek to address unmet industry needs, nurturing innovation entrepreneurship in multi-disciplinary teams. The University has mirrored the dynamism of these regional strengths, responding to industry needs with intensive programme for companies seeking to scale up to the next level.

⁵ Western Development Commission <http://www.wdc.ie/how-is-the-western-region-doing/>

To 2020

The existing industry base in the twin pillars of med-tech and ICT has fostered a growing enterprise ecosystem. NUI Galway is targeting a third pillar; the creative economy, to sustain and develop the west coast's internationally acknowledged creative vigour. Galway city will be the European Capital of Culture in 2020.

NUI Galway, in particular, is developing strong and proactive Industry and Innovation Hub that links the University with industry, employers, SMEs and business partners in the western region and beyond. NUI Galway hosts the Regional Skills Forum, which is establishing durable two-way channels of communication between industry and education providers and seeks to establish a baseline of industry engagement to map trends into the future.

To 2040

There is a critical need to develop a regional response to regional needs; building on the existing industrial strengths and regional skills capacity. To do this requires significant investment in data capture and analysis, not within silos but across all the stakeholders in the region. NUI Galway has the capacity and ambition to play a key role in this.

Ensuring access to education and knowledge within the region that will facilitate the sustainable development of the region and equip learners to work both at home and abroad, but crucially to be enabled to do so by choice, and to offer opportunities to entice them home should they wish to do so.

Dublin and the East coast is the existing focus on much of our country's FDI. This is driving a skills shortage and is also driving accommodation prices. A skills shortage drives the cost of skilled workers upwards and accommodation shortage drives accommodation prices upwards, creating a self-sustaining cycle. Ultimately this will challenge Ireland's competitiveness for FDI, in addition to the challenges posed by Brexit and potentially volatile exchange rates.

To address this challenge it is necessary to create other major hubs of innovation and population. By enhancing education services in the west it would mean that students who grow up in the west could study in the west (removing some of the Dublin accommodation pressure). An increased availability of local skilled talent will attract FDI, an approach echoed by local IDA and industry leaders.

FDI has a multiplier effect in generating complementary industries. Investing in the west and north west will provide not only local benefits but will address the current social and economic challenges faced in the Greater Dublin area. The capacity to deliver learning and knowledge, efficiently across the region, in a way that meets regional needs, but that is dynamic to make the best use of existing institutional resources and offers a coherent,

cohesive face to the region and the world.

An example of regional coherence delivering excellence in skills and industry alignment is the Research Triangle Regional Partnership⁶ based in North Carolina, US between Charlotte, Durham and Raleigh. Their mission, as it is set out: *keeping the Research Triangle Region economically strong by collectively marketing the region's competitive advantages and providing support to and facilitating collaboration among its member institutions and a wide range of partners. The region's 11 world-leading, technology-based clusters offer a critical mass of companies, leading-edge research from some of the world's top research universities and private labs, business support and specialty services that help cluster companies move to the next level, and talent; highly skilled, highly educated knowledge workers.*

Communities / Culture

Context, 2017

NUI Galway has been at the centre of the regional community and economy since 1845. The university's expanding footprint has extended that network across the west and northwest, and a significant number of the university's alumni body of 90,000 students, c.30,000 of whom we have ongoing virtual contact with through online engagement are at the core of that network.

Through sport and cultural networks this impact is ongoing. The university's Community Knowledge Initiative is pioneering new forms of community-university partnership. The ALIVE volunteer programme continues to grow, and is giving more of our students practical applications to their learning, boosting civic engagement and supporting local organisations to a value of at least €1 million in work hours annually.

The campus, which has seen an investment of €400m in the last ten years is open to the community, the city and the region to facilitate ongoing growth. Further development will see two new buildings open in the coming months; The O'Donoghue Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance and the new Human Biology building will accommodate the disciplines of Anatomy, Pharmacology and Therapeutics and Physiology.

NUI Galway has a unique commitment to the Irish language, playing a leading role nationally in the provision of university education through Irish, responding to the educational, economic and cultural needs of Irish-speaking communities, in the Gaeltacht, nationally and internationally.

⁶ Research Triangle Regional Partnership <http://www.researchtriangle.org/about-rtrp>

To 2020

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An EU education and training benchmark aims for 15% of 25-64 year-olds to participate in lifelong learning by 2020. Ireland's National Skills Strategy, 2025 sets out as one of its six key objectives, the aim of engaging more people across Ireland in lifelong learning. However, at 6.7% (HEA data from 2014), Ireland's lifelong learning participation rate is significantly lower than the EU average of 10.7%.

At NUI Galway, over 3,000 students engage with CPD, lifelong and flexible learning annually. To encourage participation in HE from under-represented students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and students with a disability, the university continues to expand non-traditional routes of entry to higher education.

NUI Galway's approach has always been to take account of regional 'challenges and opportunities' and seek strong and enduring partnerships with stakeholders. Arising from that, the university will focus on Med-Tech, Marine Environment, Data Analytics, Creative Arts, Irish language provision, as areas that make sense in the context of our region and its development.

The Institute for Lifecourse and Society⁷ brings together existing work in relation to targeted populations, such as older persons, children and families, and persons with disabilities into one domain of research, teaching and policy.

To 2040

The further development of the 'third pillar' of the creative economy, sustainable development, tailored to the region to engage with a global market. This capacity will equip workers and industry with skills, products and services across the globe.

Access to education across all sectors of society, and at all stages of life. This access must be delivered beyond existing campuses, particularly in rural areas. While broadband connectivity will allow for engagement, strengthening and serving local networks and

⁷ Institute for Lifecourse and Society <http://www.nuigalway.ie/ilas/>

communities to sustain them and allow the transfer of knowledge is vital.

Public service (including education) delivery to community nodes beyond existing urban centres is vital to sustain the unique rural way of life, both linguistic and cultural, in the west and northwest. This is a key challenge to planners at national, regional and local level.

Through the university's Institute for Lifecourse and Society to continue to identify and engage with the challenges for life and living both in the region and across the world. This allied with the university's research in data analytics and Med-Tech will allow for holistic solutions and analysis.

NUI Galway will continue to engage with children at a young age through initiatives such as the Youth Academy⁸ to make them aware of the benefits and opportunities offered by further and higher education. This will equip the coming generations to travel the world, but crucially, should they so choose, offer them to scope to return.

⁸ NUI Galway Youth Academy http://cki.nuigalway.ie/youth_academy/