

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





WELCOME...

to the KLP Annual Report 2021

In 2021, KLP continued to deliver in a very effective manner its varied developmental programmes and initiatives, despite the continued concerns, and adjustments having to be made for COVID. The company had a productive year measured to its various programme targets despite all of the restrictions, having adapted its methods and systems of operation working from home, teleconference meetings, etc.) at the onset of the pandemic in 2020, this adapted working practice continued into 2021, with a slow opening up, in late 2021 and early 2022.

KLP achieved its targets in existing projects, and has expanded to introduce new programmes, such as Social Prescribing Service and the new European Innovation Partnership (EIP) aimed at 'Farmer Well-being' in 2021. Late in 2021, the Board of KLP made the decision to tender for the newly introduced Local Area Employment Service for the Lot area 8 of the combined counties of Carlow and Kilkenny.

Annual General Meeting

The Company's Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in September 2021, by means of the Zoom teleconference package, which was well attended by the membership with the Annual accounts and report for 2020 being presented by the Company Auditors. Deputy Malcolm Noonan TD, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, attended the meeting as a guest speaker. The Minister acknowledged the work undertaken by KLP in the county and outlined the vast area that his own portfolio covered. Economist Jim Power also made a presentation to the meeting on the theme 'Rural Ireland: Recovering from COVID looking to the future', he provided an interesting and informative presentation, which stimulated a good discussion.

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COMPANY GOVERNANCE

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

KLP Board has retained its structure as a 15-person Board, with a membership of 120 community groups, small businesses, and some individuals.

The company is managed via:

- Board meetings held monthly there were, eleven in 2021.
- Finance/Audit Sub-Committee which review the annual accounts and company finances monthly, there were ten in 2021.
- Management Sub-Committee are held monthly.
- HR Sub-Committee meetings are held based on needs relating to HR issues.

On a daily basis the CEO manages the company on a daily basis, with the assistance of the Assistant CEO and the Financial Coordinator.



Declan Rice
CEO



Martin Rafter
Assistant CEO



Bernie Thorpe
Financial Coordinator



SYSTEMS

KLP uses the Quick Books accounting system for its day-to-day accounts management, and Thesaurus Payroll for its salary management. KLP utilizes several CRM Systems provided by the various program funders to report, expenditure, KPI's and other activities during the year.

Staff in 2021 also trained in using the Microsoft Project Management programme, which will be useful in planning for the company going forward.



PROCEDURES & POLICIES

The company has a detailed procedures manual, which it updated in 2021, and the Board approved the amendments in October 2021. KLP also updated its Health and Safety Statements in November 2021, to include procedures for COVID formally, to allow for future events of that kind.

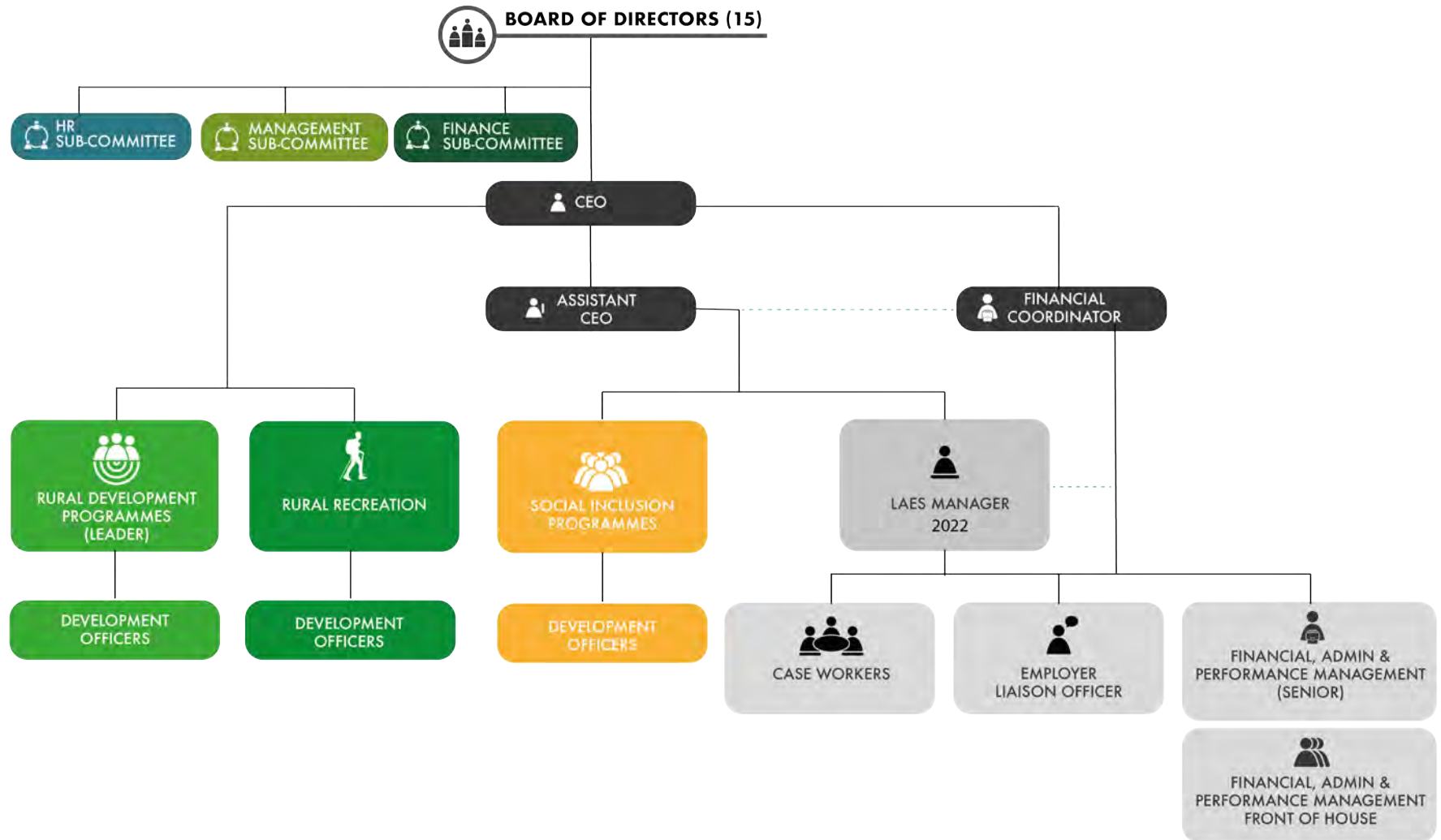
The company retains a risk assessment, and this was revised in 2022, prior to tendering for the LAES, as the risk of taking on such a contract had to be considered. Also, the need to remove risks attached to programmes which have now ended. KLP staff are all fully aware also of the Company's Data Protection Policy and the requirements under the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and all new documents, included in the company policy and procedures, are drafted with GDPR in mind.

Other policies which were updated in 2021:

- **KLP Safeguarding of vulnerable adults'** policy was updated and approved by the Board in September 2021
- **Equality Work, Customer Charter, Code of Practice and Feedback Policy** approved by the Board in September 2021

Reports to its various funders, delivering programmes as per their procedure guidelines, and requirements, were delivered on time. During 2021 KLP received regular inspections on RDP projects and administration, which were achieved as per guideline. In early 2022 KLP has been notified of several inspections to be carried out on SICAP, TUS, RSS and RDP. In late 2021/early 2022 KLP secured the services of Peninsula HR, to provide guidance on HR and Health and Safety matter, to ensure that the company was keeping up to date with changing regulations and handling sensitive staffing issues appropriately.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



IN REMEMBRANCE OF PATRICK LYDON



Patrick Lydon
Callan, Kilkenny

Patrick Lydon of Callan (formerly of Camphill Communities in Ballytobin) passed away early 2022 following a long illness bravely borne. Patrick was the main driver of a string of community development projects in the region over 40 years. KLP, and before that BNS had many engagements with Patrick, particularly in the social, cultural, environmental and other sectors. He was always a man full of ideas, ambition (for community-never himself), generosity, energy and patience: an uncommon combination of virtues. In later years following the dissolution of the partnership Camphill model in the least half decade, Patrick and Gladys, his wife and partner in so much of what they achieved, lived in Westcourt outside Callan, where he died this evening.

Patrick was born in the Boston area to an Irish-American family; attended (by achievement of a scholarship) the exclusive Exeter Academy in New Hampshire and then to the equally prestigious Yale University. While still a teenage student in the late 1960s and early '70s, he reported for national newspapers such as the New York Times and the Boston Globe, covering such seminal events as the Woodstock Music Festival and the trial of Black Panther Bobby Seale. Shortly afterwards he left America to travel in Europe.

He met his wife, Gladys in Scotland on his travels and they decided to devote their lives to care of people with disabilities. They came to Ireland in the late '70's. Patrick trained as a farmer and they both eventually joined the new Camphill Community in Ballytobin (outside Callan) and were very prominent in its growth to be a beacon of not just care for people with disabilities, but of sustainable living. Following his work in Ballytobin, in the early 2000's Patrick and Gladys moved to establish the Camphill community in Callan town and developed the KCATS Art Centre.

Patrick preferred to walk-the-walk and inspire by example-though he would be embarrassed to here that said or thought. He was also genuinely humble and intensely curious for new ideas and new way of doing things. He was a dynamic inspiration to all who worked with him. Personally, Patrick has been an inspiration to me and not just in ideas, but in how to deal with adversity and reverse in work and life. I am humbled and proud to have known him and been his friend. And I know I'm not alone. He left a rich, inspiring and slightly intimidating legacy after him, for those who follow him. Right to the end of his life this week, Patrick was trying to see the completion of projects he was involved in. The oft quoted Irish phrase ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann ("we shall not see his likes again") can truly be said to be true in Patrick's case. May he rest in peace.



ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021 BY PROGRAMME

Rural Development Programme/ LEADER

Rural Development Programme/LEADER: this programme has moved into a transition phase, with KLP having committed all the initial 2014-2020 funds on project, with communities, private enterprise, transport, broadband, and environmental projects. KLP was awarded transition funds in early 2021, which will cover the company till the end of 2023.

In 2021 KLP paid out €1.4m in grants to projects under the above programme, and expect to exceed that in 2022, as projects come to an end. By the end of March 2021, KLP had fully committed to projects, the initial funds as per the contract 2014-2020. Following which it commenced committing the additional transition funds and which is expected to be fully committed by the end of 2022 as required.

KLP will however also apply for the follow-on programme from 2024-2027 which is expected to tender in late 2022.

PROJECT SAMPLES

- Better Broadband for Piltown
- Lingaun Valley: Where Ancient History Meets Technology
- Nore Vision





BETTER BROADBAND FOR PILTOWN

KLP has been very aware that a omission in the National Broadband Plan (NBP) meant that smaller towns and villages in Ireland would be left without NBP investment, on the understanding of a judgement made over a decade ago that the broadband speeds they have are adequate at 30 megabytes per second (mbps). This was designated by the EU as Next Generation Access around 2011. Twelve years of the rapid development of bandwidth-hungry technology and Covid 19 change of working habits, has taught us that only the NBP's benchmark of 100 mbps is download is sufficient. This effectively dictates that the broadband technology be the future proofed one of 'fibre to the premises' (FTTP): a fibre optic cable going from the home, without break, all the way to the internet!

The fibre optic cable must be carried on poles or be buried in ducting underground; that is where the expense is for commercial operators in labour, wayleaves, materials, and time. The NBP's now famous map of its intervention area (see Kilkenny section here) is coloured amber for those parts of the country which are eligible for national grant-aid from the commercial developers for FTTP. Those areas coloured blue will not get NBP support, so will have to wait until the market gets around, if ever, to have the equivalent standard of their neighbours. Larger towns will get commercial investment, because they have the size and 'payload' to justify the investment. Smaller towns and villages will not get support in the near or probably medium-term future to bring them to FTTP standard. KLP calls these latter settlements- Blue Towns. KLP has noted there are approximately 25 such communities in Kilkenny. Piltown- Fiddown in south Kilkenny close to the Tipperary and Waterford borders, is one of these Blue Towns.

The community of Piltown- Fiddown has been researching the potential of high-speed broadband and the development of a basic business plan for their community. Voluntary Group, Broadband 4 Our Community (B4OC) set out to develop a FTTP (Fibre To The Premises) network to the entire area in the 2020-2021 period. The business plan development required a huge level of community commitment and physical labour contributions. The committee sought support and funding from KLP to retain the services of an appropriately qualified party to carry out a study and advice on how to develop an indebt plan for implementation of their FTTP network.

The report was successfully completed with a design model outlining the architecture, the underground and overground ducting, transmission equipment, cable choice, enclosure choice, training, labour together with future development possibilities. Physical work started on June

28th at O'Shea Farms where a total of 480 metres of blown fibre ducting was buried. This ducting carried the fibre to serve both Piltown- Fiddown. In conjunction with Kilkenny Co. Council a further 120 metres of ducting was laid for fibre underneath a new footpath between R698 and Piltown AFC. The next phase of the project could not be funded under the Rural Development Programme but was significantly funded by Tomar Trust funds.

Phase 1 of this project is nearly complete with 70 households and businesses getting connected. Further work is ongoing. B4OC continues to utilise the assistance of fibre consultant to overcome day-to-day complexities of the project. Discussions with a selection of operators continues to address connection to their fibre ring to accelerate connectivity for live testing. Once the initial project is completed this fibre ring can be installed to strengthen and secure the network for the future. The communication cable is being installed at the moment which will facilitate further roll out of the project to the rest of the Blue Town area of the parish.

Continuing engagement with local residents and businesses is helping to solidify trust among the community and preliminary customer signups continue to rise. While there are many examples of good practice in fibre network design, there are also many compromises to be made with respect to cost, efficiency, and available wayleave agreements for land access. This project is a great example of how a strong community can unite to improve the quality of life for the locality and become a model for other communities with future broadband projects. Tomar Trust's support gave a welcomed boost to help the Piltown community achieve their goals.

The project will develop further in 2022, as KLP proposes to organise a workshop and seminar for other interested Blue Towns and villages in Kilkenny to learn and possibly emulate the example of Piltown- Fiddown. We hope that Piltown- Fiddown is a pioneer and exemplar rather than an exception.





LINGAUN VALLEY: HISTORY MEETS TECHNOLOGY

The Lingaun River Valley is a sacred place. Nestled between the Slievenamon hills of south Kilkenny and the mighty River Suir at the southern end of the long border between sporting rivals Tipperary and Kilkenny, it unites rather than divides its shared community. The micro-region is defined firstly by its geography and then by its spiritual heritage. The Lingaun River which rises below the prehistoric cairn flows east, before turning south to join its big sister the Suir a couple of kilometres to the east of the major town of Carrick-on-Suir. This ancient region contain a panorama of 5,000 years of spiritual artefacts, clusters of high crosses and sacred burial grounds. The area offers a microcosm of the Fáilte Ireland's Ancient East and it is hoped to develop the area as such.

KLP submitted an application with support from the Lingaun Valley Tourism Committee and Kilkenny County Council to bring Kilkenny's first Augmented Reality (AR) heritage App into fruition. This initiative proposed as being an environmentally sustainable project combined with the use of 'smart' technology and traditional heritage tourism practices. KLP also developed a collaboration with Pôle territorial Ouest Charente - Pays du Cognac France to develop, implement and commission this visitor experience using AR technology accessed through visitors own smart phones and tablets in three specific heritage sites displaying the sites attractions as they would have been experienced at or soon after their construction.

Three sites were selected in the Kilkenny part of the overall Lingaun Valley region: Kilkieran High Crosses, Knockroe Passage Tomb and Killamery High Cross.

The APP is a 'turn key' visitor experience for the region using Augmented Reality (AR) Platforms to bring the Lingaun experience to users through their mobile devices by displaying the site's attractions as they would have experienced in the late Stone age.

In 2019, Walton Institute and their team of historians, designers and software developers started the initial research and development for the Lingaun AR experience. Throughout the year, they developed the visitor experience software, illustrating the sites from its most interesting perspectives for tourists in search of the historic gems Kilkenny has to offer. On the 22nd July 2021 the Lingaun Valley App was launched at the Kilkieran Cottage Restaurant, beside the four crosses at the Kilkieran site. The guest of honour, Professor Muiris O'Sullivan, of UCD noted his pleasure at seeing the recently installed road signs designating the visitor's entry to the Lingaun Valley. He spoke of the uniqueness of the entire Lingaun region, in its cultural and heritage senses. Professor O'Sullivan explained that the relatively short Lingaun River, and the mountain



of Slievenamon, where its' source sprung, probably, based on an analysis of the archaeology, formed a special and region to Neolithic people. He explained that later in early Christian Ireland, the presence of high crosses was a ready indicator of the site being a monastic settlement. He praised the AR app initiative, stating, that having being informed today of its many functions, he realised he had only really, "Started the tractor engine" on its capabilities. The professor also recalled the archaeological research he led on the Knockroe site in the early 1990s.

Declan Rice, CEO of KLP stated at the launch, "This is the first in Ireland, with even very few international examples!" he continued, "The Walton Institute of WIT have done a magnificent job on creating the app. It allows any visitor with a smart-phone- Apple, Samsung or Android, to see a huge amount of dynamic images of the former appearance of these internationally prestigious sites."



NORE VISION: PROTECTING KILKENNY RIVERS

Nore River Catchment Trust

The Rive Nore and its many tributaries is located in a diverse and very beautiful landscape from the uplands in Tipperary to the wooded valleys at the lower reaches in South Kilkenny. Biodiversity (or nature as we use to call it!) has never been so topical as it is now, and rightly so as loss is being experienced in every corner of our planet. The Nore and its catchment is no different and pressures on water quality, habitat loss and threatened species continue to increase. It is also true and heartening to say that there has never been so much interest and concern for our habitats, plants and animals.

The various lockdowns over the last two years have given us the opportunity to connect with and appreciate our local environment. This connection now needs to be turned into actions which will work towards protecting the River that we value. It's easy to feel powerless in the face of huge tasks. The hope of the Nore Vision was to make those tasks possible for communities and individuals to tackle and contribute as community-led movement.

KLP drove the lessons of the Nore Vision community training project into the establishment of The Nore River Catchment Trust (NRCT): a not-for-profit company. The NRCT is a community-based organisation working with individuals and groups in the Nore catchment with the vision of A healthy and vibrant Nore catchment that is appreciated and enjoyed by all. The Trust held its first board meeting in early 2021 with Michael Starrett, retired Heritage Council CEO as Chairperson. Its strategy for 2022 – 2027 was launched in November 2021 with a catchment wide consultation. The strategy outlines objectives and actions under three pillars; Environment and Heritage, Land-use and Enterprise and Recreation and Amenity. NRCT is currently being supported in terms of staffing by co-funding from KLP and Tomar Trust. The NRCT plan and proposals is for mainstream funding from state agencies. Proposals have been made to various bodies and discussions are in train to that end.

Following on the success of the initial Nore Vision training programme in 2020 and 2021, Kilkenny Leader Partnership and Laois Partnership Company in conjunction with NRCT are running a second training in action programme. The training programme is aligned with a number of the objectives of the NRCT Strategy.

Amenity Development

Training programme got off to a good start early this year with the Amenity Development Training using a blend of online and in person sessions to engage with paddlers, swimmers and other outdoor enthusiasts from Laois and Kilkenny. One of the really positive aspects of this training is that the groups are now engaged at a catchment level and can work together for the development of the amenity value of the River Nore.

Biodiversity

Ecologist and TV presenter, Eanna Ni Lamha lead the first of the biodiversity walks at the wonderful Abbeyleix on Saturday 12th February. There is a full schedule of walks and talks which will run right through to May 2022.

Water Quality and Invasive Species Management

The Water Quality session begun online in later February, again these are very well attended. The onsite field sessions at six locations will commence later in the spring as water levels drop and weather improves. Invasive species, particularly Himalayan Balsam continue to be a problem in the Nore Catchment. The current training programme will give renewed focus to group already involved and aims to encourage participation on the tributaries in Laois to initially determine the presence or absence. This year we are specifically recruiting young people in sports clubs eg Thomastown paddlers to take part in the removal of the balsam.

DCU Water Institute Partnership

Nore River Catchment Trust have partnered with DCU Water Institute for a programme of water quality monitoring at over twenty sites on the Nore and its tributaries in Co Laois. Training commences on Saturday 12th March and the testing will continue through spring and summer. Group and individuals from all town and villages in the catchment have been invited to participate and there is great interest and signup.

Butler Gallery Pearl Mussel

NRCT have joined with the renowned Butler Gallery in Kilkenny to take part in a project which will culminate with an artistic feature of the threatened native species.

Natural Flood Management

As global warming continues to exacerbate sea level rise and extreme weather across the world, Ireland will also feel the effects of more erratic weather events including flooding. A number of towns in the

catchment have experienced significant flooding in recent years. NRCT in partnership with KLP and Inishowen Rivers Trust is progressing a project to use natural flood methods in a sub-catchment in the Freshford area. NFM can be used successfully in the small tributary streams where they act to slow the flow and manage the flood waters in a natural way. The project has invited members of the Flow Partnership in the UK to carry out a workshop here with landowners and the community.

Waterways College

There are clear links and synergies between the new Waterways College and Nore Vision/ NRCT. The first Waterways College training course (Ecology Ambassador Training) based in the town of Graiguenamanagh on the banks of the River Barrow, gave 19 people in strong introduction to basic ecology, habitats and flora and fauna. A number of the trainees have water-based business e.g., kayak tours and others who take part in NRCT citizen science events. This knowledge gained will assist in the delivery of projects throughout the Nore catchment. But the lessons of the Waterways College are transferable to other waterways in Kilkenny and further afield, Cork, Waterford, Clare, NRCT are in the process of securing funding for the operational costs of the running of the trust. This is essential for the delivery of the strategy over the next five years.

KLP believes that the protection and use of our local waterways is one of the great under-appreciated natural assets in Ireland. Kilkenny has the 'Three Sister' rivers flowing through its territory. We need to cherish them and ensure that their future is one that ordinary people feel they have an interest in and are committed to protecting their rivers.



ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021 BY PROGRAMME

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP):

Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP): this programme has run from 2018 and will continue into 2023. The target groups for this programme are, Unemployed, People living in disadvantaged areas, Disadvantaged young people, economically inactive, Low-income Worker/household, New Communities, People with disabilities, Lone Parents, Travellers, Disadvantaged Women, Emerging Needs Groups and Roma.

The SICAP team in 2021 had a caseload of 481 (exceeding the KPI target of 468) individuals the majority of whom where in the younger age range e.g., 34% 15-24 years and 22% in the 25-35 age range, of who 59% were either long term unemployed or in short term employment. These people are helped into employment, to set up a business, and into courses including unaccredited courses, accredited courses and industry led courses. (Figure 1)

KLP worked with 32 Local Community Groups, exceeding the targeted KPI's of 26. The programme also assists Local community groups to become more active, by building capacity, supporting participation support for social and equality issues and more. 75% of the groups KLP worked with during 2021 were community or area focused, with another 9% being health and wellbeing focused. (Figure 2)

In early 2022, KLP also moved some of their staff to working specifically with the Ukrainians, and their immediate needs at short notice taking a lead on the coordination of those arriving in the county, an indication as to how agile the company can be. It is also expected that there will be a tender for the follow-on programme for the period 2024-2027 in late 2022.

PROJECT SAMPLES

- Kilkenny Men's Shed
- Mid Leinster Farmer Wellbeing Programme Nore Vision

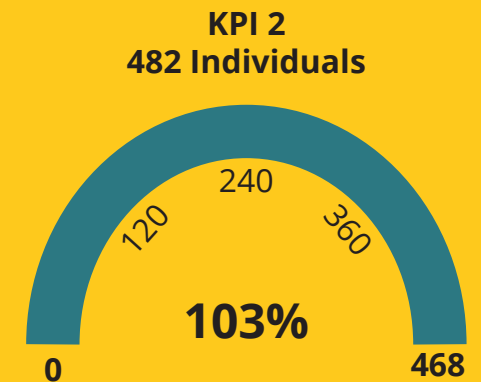


Figure 1

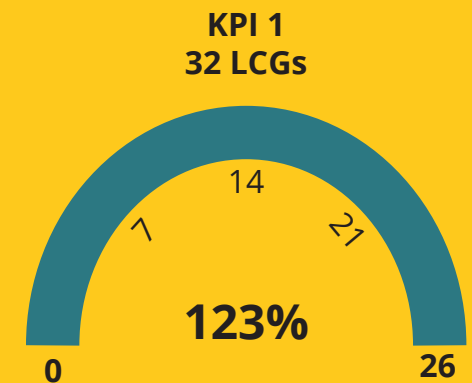


Figure 2

KILKENNY MEN'S SHEDS

A HUB TO SHARE EXPERIENCES

The Men's Shed is a community based project, where members can come together share experiences, build solidarity and become involved in joint initiatives. Since January 2021, members of the shed have participated in several online classes, funded by Kilkenny and Carlow Education Training Board. Participants got training on how to use zoom, smartphones, beginners and advanced computer classes and Health & Wellbeing sessions.

Overall Progress

Though the impact of Covid-19 restricted the growth of sheds to some extent, there is constant and gradual progress with the support from SICAP and the commitment from the local men sheds to achieve their respective and collective initiatives. Some sheds are in the planning process of redesigning their sheds. Others are refurbishing their workshop spaces, attaining lease for land and applying for funding for new builds. Over the year a number of new sheds launched. Men's Shed launched in Danesfort-Cuffsgrange & Kells , Graiguenamanagh and Fen Men Shed.

Participant Support

Although 2021 was a challenging year for Kilkenny's Men Sheds, the enthusiasm and determination of active members has demonstrated the growing confidence that the project has brought to participants and the significance this project has had on communities around the county.

Pictured: Finn Men's Shed





KILKENNY TRAVELLERS SUPPORTS

The Traveller Primary Health Care Programme (TPHC) is continuing their great work of communicating key health care messages to members of the Travelling Community. Statistically the numbers of travellers accessing pre-screening programmes continues to increase, improve knowledge and bring awareness to the three main target areas in health; Heart, Diabetes 2 and Mental Health and Well being. This programme is well established in Kilkenny, with a team of Traveller Community Health Workers (TCHW) who act as liaison between services and the community to bring about an increase in the uptake of services and improve the health status of Travellers in Kilkenny.

During the Covid pandemic this has been especially important. Messages, both on social media and appropriate means of outreach, from Travellers to Travellers has been well received by the community in Kilkenny City and County. This enabled the Health Project to get involved in dialogue not just about the restrictions but also in relation to physical and mental health messages. Engagement from the Traveller community increased during the year and the project was extremely busy with health-related queries.

The role of the Traveller Community Health Worker is especially important in supporting and encouraging families to attend appointments issued by the health service providers. TCHW's also work with families to identify barriers in service uptake and offer support to families in dealing with correspondence from health and other services. The flu vaccine for both adults and children this year was of real importance and the Traveller Health Workers played a crucial role in getting the information out to families. Because they are delivering information to their peers, they understand the fears better than the settled population but also have the training to encourage and converse about the benefits of vaccines.

Another huge benefit is to have a Traveller voice representing their community on local, regional and national committees, working groups and other agencies. Once again during this pandemic this has been so important for health-related services to hear first-hand the fears and barriers facing Travellers. In Kilkenny the team has a Traveller Wellbeing Awareness Worker. This position has been central to allowing insight to attitudes and beliefs and opening dialogue with members of the Travelling community that we may not otherwise have had access to. It has resulted in increased engagement from the community and a more open approach to mental health topics. The project also offers education on healthy lifestyles and diets through health and wellbeing groups, as well as its one-on-one work with members of the Traveller community. The primary health care team address a range of health issues: women's health, men's health, child and family wellbeing, the health needs of older people, and mental health for all.



TRAVELLERS PRIDE WEEK 2021

Traveller Pride Week 2021 was a great success as the community celebrated their culture with singing and dancing. The event commenced with the recordings with the Traveller Oral History project in the renown Butler Gallery. Another stunning event took place in St Canice's Cathedral. Senator Eileen Flynn, Dr Sindy Joyce and Helena Power had a compelling conversation with Vincent Browne (Journalist and The Irish Times columnist) about the meaning of culture.

Opening up Rosaleen said that 'culture is not buildings and institutions built but is what lies beneath the surface, its what we live every day that is culture' setting the tone of the conversation for the evening.'

ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021 BY PROGRAMME

KLP Programmes and Initiatives

PROJECT SAMPLES

- Farmer Wellness Programme
- Tus
- Rural Social Scheme
- Rural Recreation
- Social Prescribing
- NewStart



EIP MID LEINSTER FARMER WELLBEING PROGRAMME

In 2021, KLP was successful in receiving grant aid for the delivery of the Wellbeing programme, aimed at farmers. The project was initiated out of concern for the physical and mental health of a growing number of the farming community. Fatigue, stress, and isolation are, unfortunately, words that are used to describe many within this cohort, and as a result, has led to an increasing number of farmers presenting with both physical and mental health issues. Wellbeing is a key factor in the reduction or prevention of work-related accidents in the workplace, and farms are no different.

The programme set out to create a relaxed, safe environment for participants to learn or update themselves on traditional skills (Stonework, Hedgerow maintenance etc) and to partake in some of the fabulous outdoor amenities available in Castlecomer Discovery Park. Training and information sessions on Health & Safety practices, changes to the upcoming CAP Information Technology will be held in conjunction with the previously mentioned activities.

Originally, the programme was to begin in September 2021, but due to the ongoing COVID restrictions, a decision was made to delay until Spring 2022, this was run as a pilot with additional programmes to be run in Autumn 2022.





TUS COMMUNITY SERVICE

TUS: This is a programme whereby KLP received referrals from the Dept. Social Protection, relating to people who are unemployed. KLP TUS supervisors meet them and identify suitable community placements. The placement is for a year, and during that time the individual with the supervisor prepare a personal progression plan, and if possible, do some training under TUS or may be referred to the SICAP or other teams for training that may assist in progressing their move into employment or further education.

The Kilkenny Tús team consists of four supervisors from various backgrounds. The team works within the region of 120 people annually. Over the course of 2021, KLP worked with 133 participants, during the year, including new starters and leavers. The scheme provides benefits to the individual, as it gets them into a routine of work and back into a workplace, etc. but also to the community by providing a service, that is needed.



RURAL SOCIAL SCHEME FARMER SUPPORT

This scheme is aimed at small holders or their spouses, and in return for working 17.5 hours a week, it increases their combined on and off farm income. The placement on the scheme can be up until such time as retire, so long as they meet the financial requirements which are reviewed annually.

Their placements can be in community groups, in Kilkenny there is a dedicated team of RSS workers, maintaining KLP walking trails, other people work with community groups as caretakers, in admin etc. Again, providing a much-needed resource to community groups in rural areas. In 2021 KLP had 14 people on the scheme.

Due to the vastly increased numbers of walkers on Trail Kilkenny's walking trails, the RSS Trails Maintenance Team remained busy throughout the pandemic maintaining trail walkways. Despite the setback due to the pandemic over the past two years, the programme continues to go from strength to strength with benefits for both communities and participants.

RURAL RECREATION

TRAIL KILKENNY

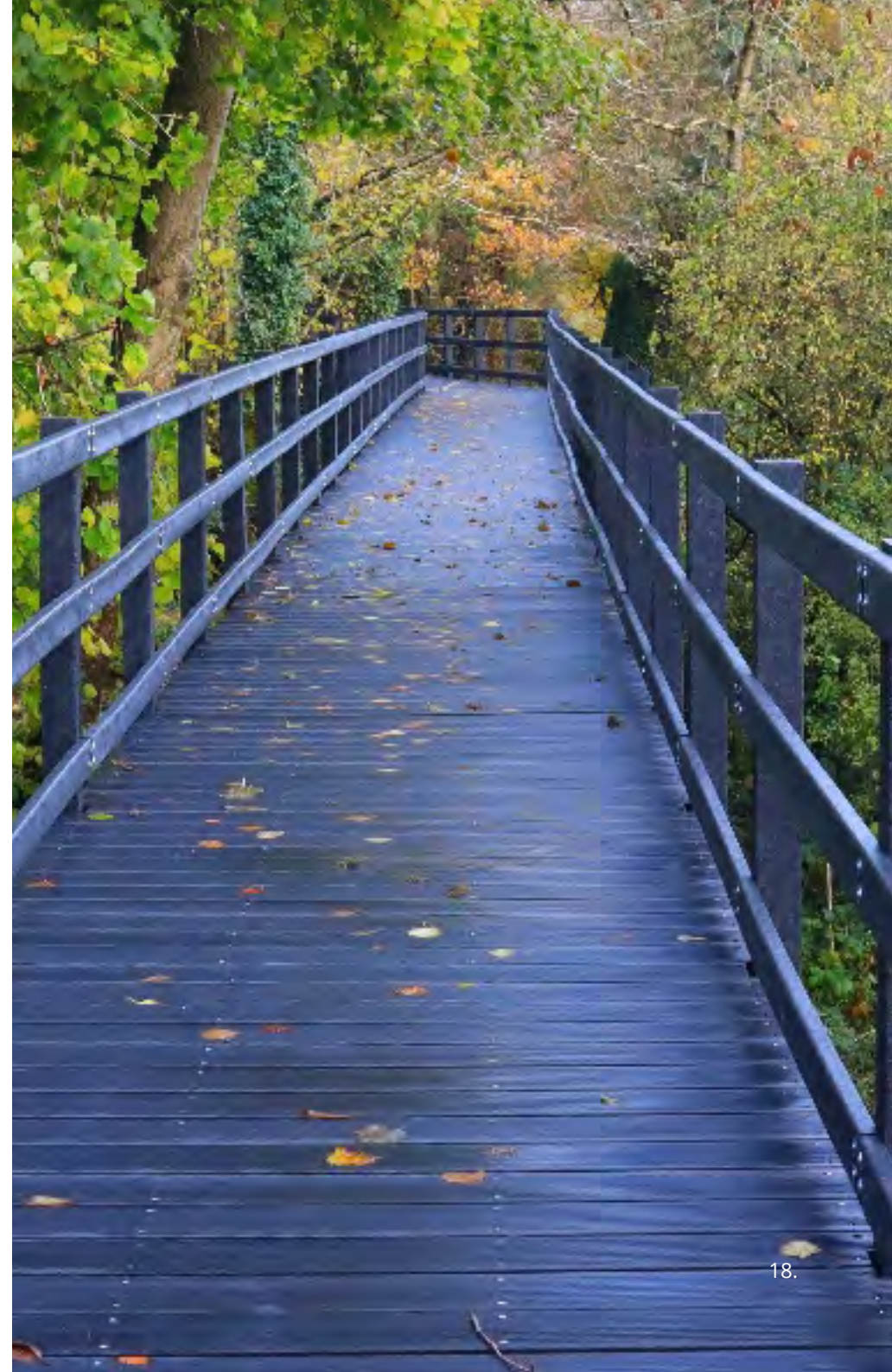
Rural Recreation Officer (RRO) : KLP has a rural recreation officer, who is the responsible for supporting the continued management of the Trail Kilkenny company. The RRO duties also involve working with landowners to gain access to develop trail walks. As part of this process, in 2021 KLP has been working with an additional 30 landowners, with a view to expanding the walks scheme, to two additional walks. This increase brought the total number of landowners to 60 this year. In return for access and maintenance to a workplan, the landowners receive payments twice a year, for work undertaken, thus adding value to their involvement in the scheme. The RRO also manages several cycling trails, small community-based trails and promotes a wide range of artisan food and craft producers. The RRO and ensures trail maintenance, with a team from the afore mentioned RSS Scheme.

Trail Kilkenny offers a real time navigation tool to assist walkers and cyclist along the trails with the HiiKER App. HiiKER is an Irish-owned company that has developed a user-friendly way of discovering, planning and navigating trails all over the world. HiiKER have partnered with Trail Kilkenny to aid in the management and maintenance of these trails under the HiiKER trail sustainability program.

Also in 2021 Silaire Wood walks received a major overhaul. Silaire Woods is a beautiful natural broad leaf woodland, located on the River Barrow on the edge of Graiguenamanagh. Within the woodland is a short loop walk that includes a 400m section of board walk along the river bank.

Unfortunately a number of years ago the board walk was very badly damaged when the river flooded. In a joint venture to restore the Silaire Wood Trails; Kilkenny County Council secured funding through the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme to replace the old timber board walk and Trail Kilkenny received funding through the LEADER Programme to upgrade all the trail surfaces and trail hardware within the woodland. The wood is now fully accessible and a treat for anyone to walk!

Funding was secured to implement a widespread upgrade of the Trail Kilkenny Walks portfolio in 2021 including: Kilmacoliver, Brandon Hill, Freshford, Gathabawn Loop Walks and the Nore Valley Walk.





SOCIAL PRESCRIBING FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

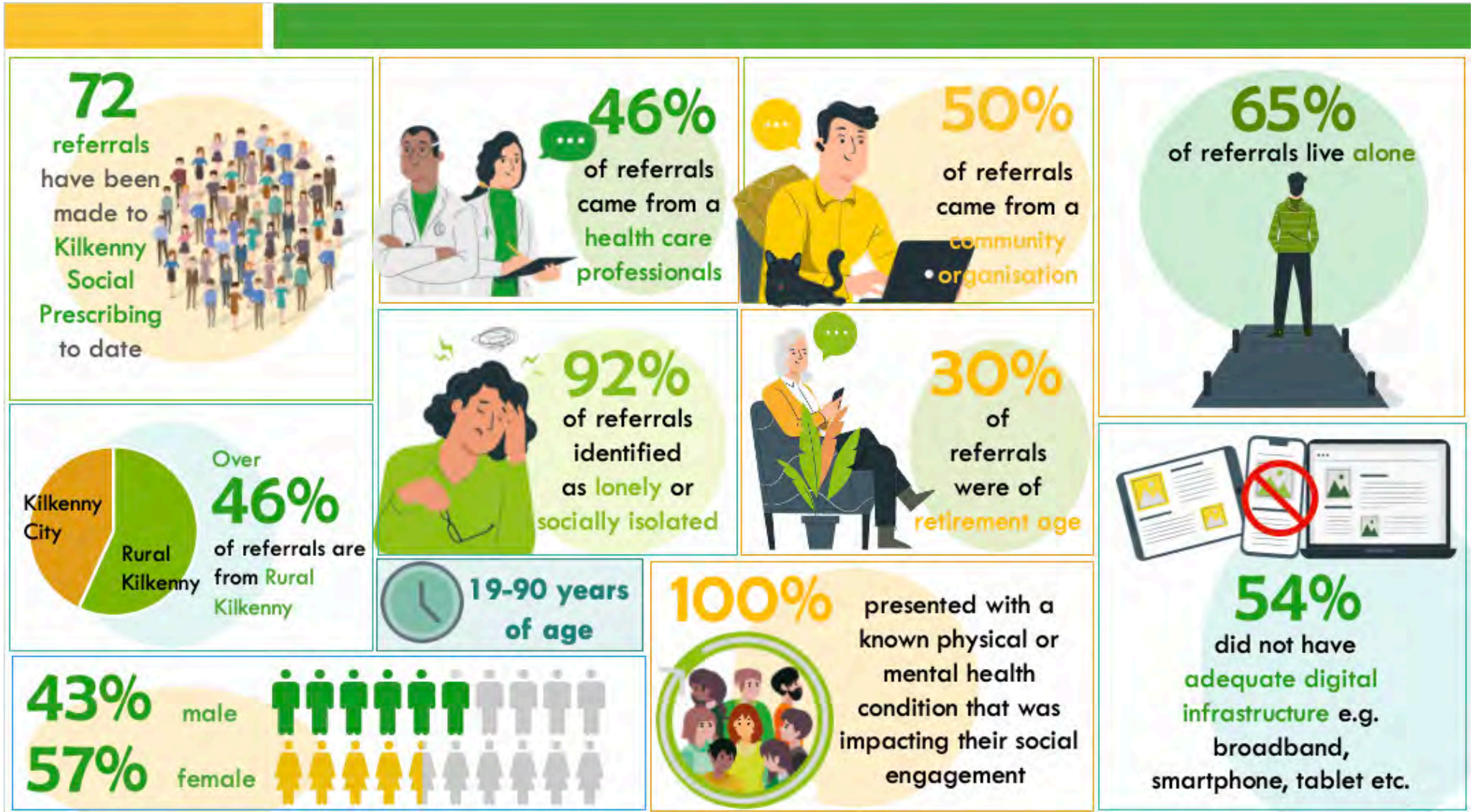
The Kilkenny Social Prescribing Service is a free and confidential service that aims to reduce social isolation and improve health and wellbeing. The Social Prescriber links clients with a variety of groups and services to increase their quality of life: exercise groups, volunteering services, support services and much more in the local area

This programme commenced in 2020 and is funded via the HSE. The programme continued in 2021 with the addition of the Reach Out Connect Kilkenny (ROCK) programme, which is a personal development programme. In 2021 there were 115 referrals to Social Prescribing, from healthcare professionals, community care workers and individual self-referrals. The programme also secured grant aid for the provision of 15 Acorn devise (age friendly tablets), which will be a significant support to older people who are isolated. The fund also provided grant aid for 35 new Lenovo tablets for older people, to access online services and support.

During COVID the service was carried out mainly by phone. 100% of those who participated in the ROCK programme had either a known physical or mental health condition, with one third of them living alone. The demand has increase so significantly that there was in late 2021 an average of 8 weeks waiting list for the service.

In 2022 it is proposed to expand the service. See infographic on following page.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING INFOGRAPHIC





NEWSTART MIGRANT SUPPORT

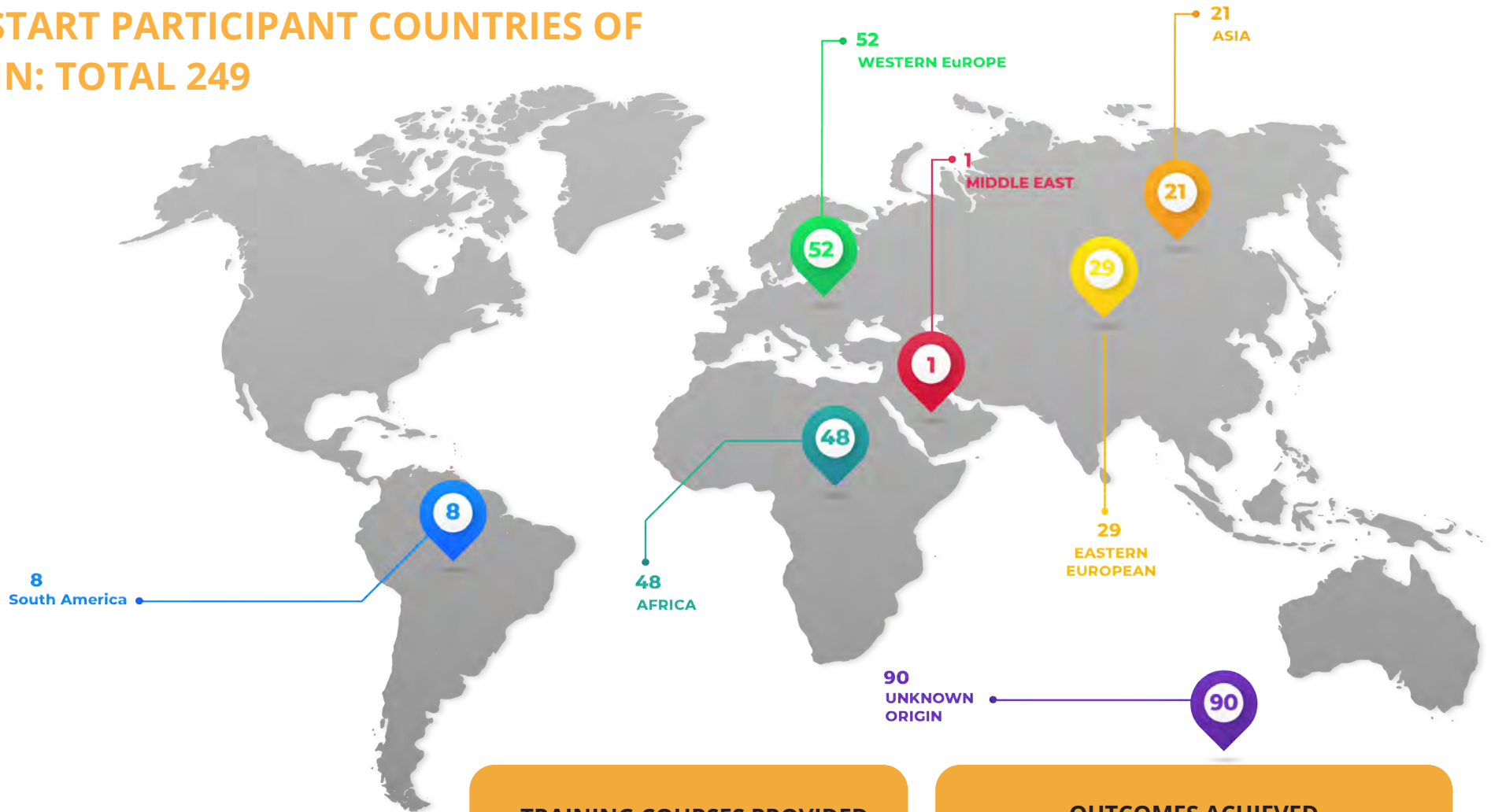
This programme ran for 3 years and ended in the 1st quarter of 2022. Over the course of the programme one development worker working part time on the programme, worked with 249 migrants, helping them get a new start.

This programme was funded by the Dept. of Justice and Equality. The offering to clients, depended on each individuals need, with a personal progression plan (PPP) prepared for each. The tables below give an indication of the origins of those taking part, the courses undertaken and the outcomes. Bear in mind that all clients, would have received support if needed to DSP registration, and referrals to other state organisations, including the provision of information regarding entitlements, when having their PPP prepared.

We must however take into consideration, many of the people referred were women and as such were also looking after children, this had an impact on their availability for programmes, and the options open to them at the time. But it is hoped that as they have linked in, they will take steps in the future when they are ready and contact KLP again at that stage.



NEWSTART PARTICIPANT COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN: TOTAL 249



MORE COURSE INFO:

TRAINING COURSES PROVIDED	
English	31
IT Skills	9
Kickstart	26
POD	9
Health Care	19
Employment Related	22
Total Programmes	116

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED	
Failite Isteach	7
Full time Education	6
ETB/VTOS	7
Other supports	18
Employment	43
Return to Country of Origin	3
Total Achieving Significant Outcomes	84



PLANS FOR 2022 AND THE FUTURE

KLP expected from the outset that 2022 would be a busy year, of rounding off several programmes, and putting in tenders for the delivery of others.

KLP commenced the year by making the decision to tender for the Local Area Employment Service, on behalf of the Dept. of Social Protection, as it was felt it would fit well with the existing offerings of KLP. The first quarter, saw the management team, and senior members of the SICAP team working together to prepare the contract and draft budgets, for approval by the KLP Board. The tender was submitted by April 2022 and in August 2022 the company was informed that it was successful in securing the four-year contract. Roll out of the programme will commence prior to the end of 2022.

In February and March, the impact of the war on Ukraine, was felt and staff across the company but particularly in the Social Inclusion team, as they became part of collaboration, to work with and support the Ukrainians as they arrived in Kilkenny. KLP SICAP team took the lead, in building trust and becoming key contacts, and point of information for the Ukrainians, assisting with DSP registration, basic items and clothing needs, immediate medical and other needs. This has developed further in 2022 as the year progressed, and awareness of the longer-term needs were discovered.

In addition, KLP is waiting on the call for the SICAP call tender for 2024-2027 which is expected in late 2022 along with the Rural Development Programme (LEADER) call to tender for 2024-2027 also late 2022 or early 2023. The preparation for these tenders, will expand in 2022.



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Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



European Union
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Development Fund



"The Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2018-2022 is funded by the Irish Government through the Department of Rural and Community Development and co-funded by the European Social Fund under the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020"

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