

Limerick, Ireland

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
PROJECT TITLE	Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership (LEDP)
Beneficiary	Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership (LEDP) and Family Tree Crèche
Duration of project	LEDP duration, 156 months; Family Tree Crèche, 78 months
Member State	Ireland, Southern & Eastern Region, Limerick
Geographic size	Limerick Southside social housing estates, approx 2 000 (<10 000); Limerick City Administrative Area 11 000-100 000 (56 779); Limerick City and suburbs ¹ 101 110 (2011 Census).
Funding	Family Tree Crèche funding: €1.08 million, 50% ERDF, 50% national. LEDP: €8.8 million. Total of approximately €10 million
Operational Programme	Social Inclusion Sub-Programme, Regional Operational Programme for the Southern & Eastern Region. Project supported under sub-measure: Capital Grant Scheme for Childcare Facilities (ERDF), Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP), National Development Plan 2000-2006.
Managing Authority	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Pobal (formerly ADM Ltd.) managed the day-to-day operations of the EOCP, including project appraisal and grant payments.
Cohesion Policy Objective:	Competitiveness
Main reason for Highlighting this case	The project involves the reuse of an old factory in a poor neighbourhood as a hub to provide opportunities for work and social inclusion. LEDP is a social enterprise. It is owned and managed by a partnership, led by the private sector, and demonstrates the potential snowball effect of a small initial investment.
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1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	
Overall objective / goals	Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership (LEDP) was set up in response to the closure of Krups-Moulinex with the loss of 500 jobs (1998). The objectives were: to provide replacement jobs through enterprise, upgrade the education and skills level of the population, and promote community development. The strategy focused on enterprise, skills and jobs.
Description of activities	The activities at LEDP are centred on: Commercial development, involving the redevelopment of the factory site, and attracting tenants in the business and services sectors. A business park (6.5 hectares) was developed, based on a village concept. Employment development, by attracting businesses to locate in the LEDP park, as well as new small business development. Small enterprise support includes

¹ For FUA populations see http://www.mdrl.ro/espon_cd2/Project_Reports/Preparatory_studies_and_scientific_support_projects/1.4.3_final_report.pdf

	<p>workspace, business advice and small loans to start-ups targeting socially excluded groups.</p> <p>Skills training. Two mainstream training providers operate from the LEDP site: Fáilte Ireland offers training in hotel and catering, and FÁS provides training in sectoral skills (construction and services) for the unemployed.</p> <p>Education projects. Projects for school children include behavioural support, art therapy and integrated vocational skills training. There is also personal development for young people at risk of early school leaving. Pre-school education, childcare and parenting support are provided in the Family Tree Crèche, while LEDP also works with the University of Limerick's outreach programmes to improve attainment in second level education (homework clubs) and access to third level education (mentoring, 'tasters', bursaries). LEDP works with local primary and second level schools to improve services and school management.</p> <p>Community projects, including a jobs club, estate management, family support, arts and sport.</p>
Recipients	Jobseekers and the unemployed; young people at risk of early school leaving; parents and young children (the crèche); residents of the local neighbourhoods; potential entrepreneurs, mainly people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.
Mainstreaming of gender equality and non discrimination	Mainstreaming gender equality has not been a priority for this project. All activities have a focus on social inclusion and non-discrimination.
Intended outputs and results	The key concern was to secure an 'anchor tenant' to rent a substantial part of the space, ideally to attract a relocating enterprise providing substantial numbers of jobs, and also to relocate training centres to the new LEDP site. The main outputs intended were: income from rents to achieve commercial viability; enterprise and jobs to create new sources of economic activity, especially for local people with a profile of disadvantage; and an upgrading of qualifications and skills for the local population. The Family Tree Crèche was constructed to provide 50 childcare places, offering quality childcare and pre-school education. Results expected were improved child outcomes in early years – emotional well-being, normal speech and language development and improved school readiness – and improved access by parents to education, training and work opportunities.
2. POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT	
National and regional framework for implementing ERDF funded urban development projects	Since 2000, development priorities and corresponding programme objectives are specified in a National Development Plan. In terms of EU Structural Fund implementation, the state is divided into two regions – the Border, Midlands and Western Region and the Southern and Eastern Region – with a regional operational programme and regional assembly for each region. Limerick is located in the Southern and Eastern region, which is the more advanced in its development. Ireland is also divided into eight planning regions, each with a Regional Authority. The Regional Authorities have no executive functions but act to coordinate the activities of the local authorities within their areas. Limerick City is located within the Mid-West Regional Authority area. This region is unique in having a regional development agency, Shannon Development, which is now responsible for small enterprise and tourism development. There is also a National Spatial Strategy (2002-2020) to promote sustainable and balanced regional development. This identifies 'gateways', which are defined as the key urban centres for national and regional scale economic activity, and 'hubs', which are towns that act as centres for county level activity. Limerick city is the largest urban centre in the Mid-West region and Limerick-Shannon is designated as a gateway in the National Spatial Strategy.

	<p>Limerick city has a profile of socio-economic disadvantage and a long-term trend of population decline. It is more socially segregated into affluent and poor neighbourhoods than other Irish cities. The city's large social housing estates are classified as extremely disadvantaged, based on a composite indicator of relative affluence / deprivation derived from census variables.</p> <p>The ERDF-funded project (Family Tree Crèche) was implemented under the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP), which operated through the regional operational programmes (2000-06). The sub-measure, capital grants for childcare facilities, was co-funded by the ERDF. Access was based on competitive procedures: proposals were appraised and grants awarded by a national intermediary body, Pobal, which is the agency responsible for local and community development programmes. Co-financing was provided by the national exchequer.</p>
<p>The planning context</p>	<p>At local level, the project operates in the context of the Limerick City Development Plan, which has a statutory basis and is approved by the local authority. It operates in an area targeted under the Limerick Regeneration Programme (Masterplan, 2008). At regional level, the planning context is established by the Mid-West Regional Strategic Plan, and in relation to EU Structural Funding it operates within the Southern and Eastern Region (with a dedicated operational programme and regional assembly).</p>
<p>3. IMPLEMENTATION</p>	
<p>3.1. PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING</p>	<p>The idea for the project came from three business people in the city – a property developer, the managing partner of an international accountancy firm and the general manager of Krups-Moulinex. This was motivated by a sense of commitment to the city, the former workforce of Krups and the needs of the socially disadvantaged population of the estates. The response of the Irish government to the closure of Krups was to set up an Inter-Agency Task Force to explore options for replacement jobs. The business people on the task force wanted it to support the purchase and redevelopment of the site. They entered discussions with a large UK company (a call centre) to relocate its operations to Limerick. The task force was not supportive of these proposals but was not making progress in finding replacement jobs. The prospect that nothing would be done with the old factory and for the local population was resisted by local partners. This group then pursued a parallel strategy to the task force that led to the creation of LEDP.</p> <p>The partners did not engage in a formal assessment of needs. The former manager of Krups-Moulinex knew the neighbourhood, the Krups workforce and many of the individual families. Krups located to Limerick in 1964 and at its peak (in the 1970s), employed 1 500 workers. There was a strong tendency for the workforce in factories like Krups to be drawn from specific neighbourhoods. The social housing in the city in the 1960s and 1970s was constructed to house an industrial workforce. As the industries closed, this impacted disproportionately on these neighbourhoods. This is the story of Krups-Moulinex and the LEDP. The largest part of the Krups workforce (70% female at that time) was drawn from Southill, an area with a profile of low levels of educational attainment.</p> <p>The private partners developed the concept and plans for the physical refurbishment of the factory. They agreed the purchase price with Krups-Moulinex (€3.5 million), paid a deposit of €320 000 and then raised the remainder of the funds through a mix of financial contributions from the other local partners (seven in total), bank borrowings, philanthropic funds and grant aid from the state.</p> <p>The Family Tree Crèche proposal was based on the need for childcare places, early education and the specific needs of the socially disadvantaged population. Assessments by school principals of children from the neighbourhood as they entered school showed that they were presenting with serious emotional and behavioural difficulties, as well as poor speech and language development, linked to social and economic deprivation and poor parenting.</p>

Programme objectives and the criteria to be used in the assessment of applications for childcare facilities (Family Tree Crèche) were specified. The aim was to establish childcare facilities for community based / not-for-profit groups. The specific objectives were: to increase the number of childcare facilities and places; to enhance the quality of childcare provision in the locality; to develop facilities to allow parents to avail themselves of education, training and employment opportunities; and to ensure that childcare facilities were coordinated at local level. Applicants were required to demonstrate financial viability, value for money, that the necessary management, infrastructure and training were in place for the effective operation of the facility, and the disadvantaged socio-economic and demographic profile of the area. The last criterion included the extent to which the project increased the number of affordable childcare places in disadvantaged areas.

There were risks related to the commercial viability of the whole project. The business people involved engaged in networking and sought support from government, and identified and negotiated with prospective investors and state training agencies to relocate to the LEDP site. The risk involved in the project was considered too high by some agencies in the government task force. The local business people consider that these players either questioned the motives of the business people or believed that the project was not commercially viable. Without the drive of business personalities, the project would not have happened.

LEDP was not developed as a pilot but rather as a project that would be viable and sustainable into the future. The design phase required the refurbishment and redesign of the large open space within the factory. Currently, energy efficiency measures are being carried out as part of a plan to reduce the carbon footprint of the business park. Rainwater is also being harvested using the roof space.

Family Tree Crèche was designed as a new-build, to meet the requirements of building regulations (which did not include specific energy efficiency measures). Energy efficiency measures are also planned for the crèche.

The Family Tree Crèche project would not have gone ahead without EU and national exchequer funding. Added value of the ERDF support included: scope to proceed with a project seen as necessary for a long time; the scale and quality design of the crèche; the criteria for support strengthened the model (i.e. local coordination of childcare facilities, links with opening up education and training opportunities for parents).

The LEDP project would not have been viable without grant aid from the government (€1.3 million), the philanthropic contribution from the JP McManus Trust (€1.7 million), and the securing of an 'anchor' tenant to rent a substantial part of the space.

The Family Tree Crèche is only funded by the ERDF.

Skills training is generally supported by the ESF in the framework of the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (2007-2013) and the previous Human Resources Operational Programme (2000-2006). FÁS, the state training agency, is the intermediary body for training and employment services. LEDP does not have a direct role in delivering training programmes – these are managed by the regional office of FÁS. A new national agency, SOLUS, with a remit in further education, training and employment services, is being set up to replace FÁS.

**3.2.
MANAGEMENT,
MONITORING
AND
EVALUATION**

LEDP is established as a non-profit organisation. It has a board of directors, drawn mainly from the shareholding partners (seven), and a small executive team (five full-time equivalents) led by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who was the former General Manager of Krups and the Chairperson of Shannon Development Agency.

SYSTEM

The boards of Limerick Enterprise Network (LEN), the private sector partner, and LEDP were amalgamated recently and these organisations now operate under the same board. Limerick Southside Ltd was set up as a separate non-profit entity by LEDP, Holy Family Parish Southill, Southside Limerick Regeneration Agency and Limerick City Council in 2008. Family Tree Crèche is also a separate entity with non-profit status (2005).

LEDP is the umbrella structure responsible for the strategy and management of the whole project. LEN's role is to oversee and mobilise 'soft' support for enterprise, management of the small loan fund for enterprise development and the prisoner support programme. Limerick Southside Ltd supports estate management, community development, and education and training.

The CEO is responsible for day-to-day management of LEDP. LEDP is run by a small team (six full-time equivalent staff directly employed, of whom two are employed by Limerick Southside Ltd). One full-time equivalent (2 part-time staff) has been responsible for the operations of LEN (jobs and micro-enterprise) but this team has been enhanced recently (May 2012) with the addition of one enterprise officer; one is the manager of Limerick Southside Ltd. leading on community development and estate management and a second member of staff is an educational specialist. The fifth staff member provides administrative and secretarial support. In addition, the Family Tree Crèche operates with one manager and 13 childcare/early education staff. Of the organisations on site with which LEDP has strong links, AK Ilen (Boatbuilding School) is overseen by a three-person project team, including the CEO of LEDP. It employs one trainer funded from philanthropic sources, mobilises teachers from local schools as supervisors of students during training sessions, and operates with a number of regular volunteers, mostly people with advanced skills in wooden boatbuilding. The University of Limerick (UL) Access Campus is managed by a Coordinator, a part-time staff member and a pool of volunteers who are university students. The Community Leadership through Arts and Sport Project (CLASP, funded mainly by FÁS and Limerick Southside Regeneration Agency) is managed by one coordinator and an assistant under Limerick Southside Ltd.

LEDP has very little staff turnover. The CEO, the managers of LEN (two part-time staff) and an administrator have been there from the start (12 years for four staff or 432 person-months). From 2000 to 2004, a community worker, co-financed by the PAUL Partnership, was in post (48 person-months). From 2008, the manager of Limerick Southside Ltd (60 person-months) from 2009, the educational specialist (48 person-months) and in the last month, a new enterprise officer is in place. This brings the core operation of LEDP/LEN/Limerick Southside to 588 man months over the 12 years of operation. In addition, the crèche manager and 13 staff have been in post from April (manager) and June 2005, involving approximately 1 082 person-months to date. There has been no turnover of staff at the crèche.

The development structure was the partnership. The key drivers were three individuals from the private sector.

There has been regular monitoring of the inputs and outputs of LEDP since it was established. This information is presented to the board on an ongoing basis. The monitoring data is used to inform the strategy and work programme of LEDP. The individual projects collect and review monitoring data (outputs).

There has been no formal evaluation of LEDP. Two independent reviews were undertaken – one in 2002 as part of a European action research project (by the Copenhagen Centre), and a second in 2010. Some projects have been evaluated (e.g. the UL Access Office / Homework Clubs; the AK Ilen Boatbuilding School, and the Community Leadership through Arts and Sports Programme). There is no formal system of quantification and review of targets and performance indicators.

The management structure has adapted over the years – to change when ideas did not prove feasible and to take on new issues. The management of LEDP regard this as normal practice in managing any enterprise. An example here is the creation of Limerick Southside Ltd, which was founded as a partnership of LEDP, Limerick City Council, the Southside Regeneration Agency and the local parish (Holy Family Parish Southill). It was set up initially to employ community officers on the estates (three workers). None of the partners wanted to employ the community officers directly as this could compromise their specific roles, and they felt that employment of workers in a separate structure would give an independent voice to the communities.

The approach at LEDP is ‘light’ management of activities outside of the overall commercial operation, which is tightly managed. Most of the activities on-site are managed at arm’s length. For instance, the wooden boatbuilding school is a not-for profit organisation operating under the umbrella of, but relatively independently of, LEDP. The same applies to the Family Tree Crèche, which has a management committee involving the manager and two crèche staff and the CEO of LEDP. The CLASP project has a similar arrangement in place.

Generally, LEDP does not get involved directly with the mainstream training providers but provides input to strategy on the content of training. With the lack of demand for skills in construction, LEDP is working with the Vocational Education Committee and national and local energy utility companies to develop training in green energy technologies to replace those offered in construction.

LEDP intervenes to advocate improvements in local services. For instance, schools in the neighbourhood have shown reducing enrolments and now have small numbers of pupils with serious social problems and poor attainment. LEDP with other stakeholders are working on a reorganisation of the schools (i.e. amalgamation of small schools to create a new school campus with improved services for children and parents). This project is progressing well after many years of effort. The Irish government announced (February 2012) capital funding to develop a new school campus, while other services in health and family support (the Health Service Executive) have committed themselves to integrated service provision using the school as a hub.

EU support from the ERDF for the crèche was a single-fund operation. ESF funds for training are managed separately by the national training and employment authority (FÁS). This does not involve LEDP or local players directly in funding arrangements. LEDP received funds under the Territorial Employment Pact, channelled through the local partnership company (the PAUL Partnership).

**3.3
GOVERNANCE:
PARTNERSHIP,
PARTICIPATION
AND
EMPOWERMENT**

LEDP involves seven partners – one private sector, 3 public sector and 3 voluntary: Limerick Enterprise Network (LEN), the private sector investor in LEDP, the Irish Business and Employers’ Confederation (IBEC) / Foundation for Investment in Communities, Limerick City Council, Limerick County Council, Shannon Development, the PAUL Partnership and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Limerick.

Over the years, the partnership has consolidated and broadened. LEDP works with many organisations, including: FÁS, Fáilte Ireland, third level educational institutions, Limerick City Vocational Education Committee, the Health Services Executive, the Department of Education and Skills, schools in the neighbourhood, the Prison Services and other voluntary and community organisations.

The CEO and one of the Directors of the LEDP are on the board of the Southside Limerick Regeneration Agency. One of the founding directors also manages the JP McManus Trust (a charitable trust set up by a successful business personality from Limerick, which is now an important source of funding for local social and community projects) and LEDP staff are on management /project committees of several projects on site (e.g. AK Ilen Boat Building School, Family Tree Crèche, CLASP).

Each of the seven partners provided funds for the purchase of the factory. The

partner organisations have specific roles in economic or social development and, as such, involvement in LEDP is in their interest. The running costs of LEDP as an enterprise (LEDP, LEN, Limerick Southside Ltd) are funded from rental income. There is surplus income from rents to cofund social and community projects. Other partners (e.g. Limerick City Council) and stakeholders (e.g. Limerick Regeneration Agencies) cofund projects with LEDP. Working with LEDP provides possibilities for partners to work directly with their target groups within the structure of a well-managed enterprise. Through co-location of activities at LEDP, there are greater possibilities for service integration.

The concept of the project came from the private sector individuals; they continue to provide the creative impetus behind the initiative. Some of the founding directors, for instance, approached the telecommunications company, UPC Ireland (formerly Chorus), and invited it to relocate to LEDP. All new developments – the crèche, the UL Access Campus office and the homework clubs, the Wooden Boatbuilding School and training centres – located in LEDP as a result of efforts by the executive and/or directors. For instance, FÁS and Fáilte Ireland were approached to relocate their training centre from the suburbs to LEDP. Following relocation, there was an immediate increase in trainee numbers, with approximately half of the trainees coming from the local neighbourhoods. LEDP is currently in negotiations with energy utility companies to become involved in developing training in green energy on site at LEDP.

Expertise to implement projects has come from partners and wider stakeholders (e.g. training providers, schools) and from within LEDP's structure of the board and executive.

LEDP has made efforts to engage local residents. In 2000, LEDP set up an Inter-Parish Forum (five parishes on the south side of the city) facilitated by a community coordinator. This was to act as the vehicle for community representation on the board of LEDP. At this time, a new national local development initiative for disadvantaged urban areas, RAPID (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development) came on stream and community consultation and community involvement in Area Implementation Teams were prioritised. LEDP contributed to this process.

Local community engagement was strengthened when the Limerick Regeneration Programme started and two new agencies, the Southside and Northside Limerick Regeneration Agencies, were set up (June 2007) for a period of five years. The agencies have recently finished operations (June 2012) and the regeneration project is now embedded in the local authority (Unitary Authority for Limerick City and County). The CEO and a Director of LEDP were on the board of the Southside agency. At this time LEDP set up Limerick Southside Ltd to promote estate management and community development. Local Regeneration Committees have been set up by the regeneration agencies involving local residents (supported by the Community Officers) and public service providers including the local authority, the Limerick Regeneration Agency, the police, health services, school principals, etc. These committees provide opportunities for residents to raise issues and receive feedback on the regeneration programme.

LEDP has taken steps to open up the site to the local population – including by providing pedestrian access from the local neighbourhoods; ensuring visibility of training centres to encourage participation; promoting involvement in the art corridor project, which encourages local children to paint murals celebrating local interest in horses (part of the Irish traveller culture, and there are two traveller halting sites adjacent to Southill); encouraging the location of a coffee shop in the LEDP premises used by local residents and people who work in the neighbourhood, including in businesses and public services such as the local police. The coffee shop, as a meeting place, is important in reducing barriers between the local population and local service providers.

The local authority, Limerick City Council, was involved as a founding partner and the manager of the city council is on the board of LEDP. Political support

from the local authority was very important at the start. This example of leadership from the local authority, agreeing to provide a financial contribution, led to the other partners coming on board. Over the years, support from local government has wavered from direct and strong to passive and relatively weak at various stages. This also applies to other founding partners. In 2002, the LEDP model and the need for a regeneration plan for the south side of the city were presented to Limerick City Council (local politicians). The city council agreed that LEDP should be given a mandate for this. However, the city council did not have the resources to follow through with a regeneration plan. A criticism of the city council is that it has been preoccupied with budgetary issues rather than transformation. Local government in Ireland has a limited remit (e.g., no competences in social and economic policy) and no independent source of income from local taxation. In addition, Limerick City Council's housing policies, linked to implementation of national housing policy, and estate management were seen to have undermined the stabilisation of the estates. Over time, the estates got worse, were characterised by extreme deprivation and, in later years, criminality. During the years of the economic boom (1996-2006), large numbers of residents whose financial situation improved relocated elsewhere. Some of those employed in LEDP businesses and projects were originally from the neighbourhoods but no longer live there.

The leadership came from the private sector. At the start, there was strong support from Limerick City Council. The partnership functioned especially well at the start as the local partners felt national government agencies 'were doing nothing' to assist the city when it faced the jobs crisis. There have been tensions between the partners over the years – some linked to different styles of working and some to substantive issues (e.g. where the focus of effort from LEDP should be) – and these are part of the normal processes in the functioning of a multi-sectoral local partnership. Despite the tensions, the partnership has functioned well in that agreement is reached on the overall strategy and there are many examples of co-operation in and co-funding of specific projects. In terms of the debates which shape the discussions within the partnership, the private sector tends to be critical of bureaucracy and the slow responsiveness of the public partners. Some public and voluntary bodies consider that the business partners do not understand the process of social inclusion. The private sector is less concerned with the process and more focused on results. Some partners consider that LEDP should focus more on the economic agenda arguing, for instance, that social inclusion is a 'crowded space' but there is a vacuum in leadership in economic development and this is where LEDP is most useful. The private sector partners, however, insist that LEDP has a social inclusion mission and has proved its commitment to its social agenda (economic and social inclusion of people from the local neighbourhoods). Some partners were critical of LEDP's preoccupation with the physical and commercial aspect of the project at the start. However, the private sector insisted the project must be commercially viable in order to promote their wider agenda and to have capacity to cofinance social and education projects.

The innovative aspects of partnership working were: a partnership targeting social and economic inclusion led by the private sector; a cross-sectoral partnership with non-profit status operating as a social enterprise; the level of autonomy exercised by the executive of LEDP (to build new relationships with other stakeholders and to take on new issues).

4. INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS AND NOVEL APPROACHES

4.1 INNOVATION

Innovative aspects of design and implementation are as follows:

- In LEDP, a local community-led partnership of private, public and voluntary sectors, came together to purchase and redevelop the factory as a new centre for social and economic activities addressed at the inclusion of people from the most disadvantaged local neighbourhoods. The adaptation of the old factory is innovative in the Irish context. A

	<p>legacy of such buildings results from the decline of industries brought to the state through successful inward investment policies, particularly from the 1970s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEDP generated and tested new ideas including mobilising social capital to set up a community time bank of business people providing free advice and mentoring to new start-ups, promoted by people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. • LEDP applied 'old ideas' (workspace, loan funds for business start-ups) in new ways (new groups). • The clustering on one site and integration between many elements – micro-enterprise, inward investment, training, education, social and community projects. • The financial engineering of the site development, the mix of public, private and philanthropic funding, and management of the venture as a social enterprise.
<p>4.2. KEY IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS-</p>	<p>The direct approach in seeking inward investment, and in negotiating with public agencies to relocate training activities to the LEDP site, were not the normal practice. LEDP brought public agencies into a partnership and applied its own style of management to the project.</p>
	<p>LEDP has used traditional methods to disseminate the project's work and results. Stakeholders are approached directly to discuss opportunities for collaboration. LEDP has hosted visits by politicians, managers of public agencies, visiting delegations, business people and philanthropists. Recently (2011), a US Ireland Funds delegation (philanthropic funding for social and community projects) visited LEDP. Some directors consider that the LEDP could do more to promote wider awareness of the project.</p>
	<p>LEDP is seeking to promote wider awareness of the model using media such as YouTube (interviews with key personalities in the city).</p>
	<p>LEDP made a formal presentation to Limerick City Council in 2002 on the relevance of the LEDP model to the regeneration of the south side of the city. State support for a regeneration programme targeting the local authority estates was agreed by government in 2007, following a serious incident of social disorder (the burning of two children in a car in a petrol bomb attack by young people) on one of the estates. From this time, LEDP has been intensively involved in regeneration, particularly on the south side of the city.</p> <p>Following the closure of Dell's manufacturing operation in Limerick (2009), the LEDP engaged in local meetings to discuss strategies to create replacement jobs. There are still possibilities for LEDP to provide constructive input here.</p> <p>LEDP has been involved in international meetings (e.g. a transnational project promoted by the PAUL Partnership involving a review of partnership models). It hosted a visit by Romano Prodi, European Commission President and Pat Cox, President of the European Parliament, in April 2004.</p> <p>LEDP has not produced publications about its activities.</p>
	<p>The first challenge related to getting a commitment from the partners to jointly purchase the factory. The private sector showed their commitment by putting their own cash into the project. Finding the additional funds and mortgage credit to purchase and refurbish the site was also challenging.</p> <p>LEDP promoted initiatives that did not prove feasible – such as the construction of a Southside school campus in 2000. When this did not prove feasible because of lack of support, LEDP concentrated on related activities (e.g. built relationships with local schools, funding activities such as psychological assessments of children and new posts in schools to facilitate work with parents, etc.). The Southside school campus project was revived and is now coming to fruition.</p> <p>LEDP had conflicts with Limerick City Council in relation to housing and estate management policies that led to the deterioration of the neighbourhoods.</p>

SOLVING PRACTICES	<p>Housing policies pursued by council, however, were shaped by national housing policy. New initiatives in estate management (e.g. the creation and the work of Limerick Southside) were taken by LEDP, working with the city council and others. While new structures are in operation in the framework of the regeneration programme, community and estate management are on-going challenges. Progress has been made but there is a view that ongoing capacity building is needed.</p> <p>The reshaping of training provision in view of the downturn in demand for construction skills is being addressed by LEDP, in cooperation with private companies and training providers. With economic recession, LEDP has placed renewed focus on new enterprise and job creation. It has recently recruited a new member of the team in this area.</p>
4.3. THEMATIC FOCUS	<p>The thematic focus is Europe 2020 Inclusive Growth. The project is a good example of a multifaceted initiative to support social and economic inclusion through education (from the earlier stages), training and retraining, enterprise and jobs targeted at a most disadvantaged population.</p>
5. FUNDING	
	<p>The purchase and renovation cost came to €8.8 million (including borrowings of €4.4 million by the end of November 2000). Approximately €1.3 million came from the partners, a further €1.3 million came from an enterprise fund established by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, €1.7 million came from the JP McManus Trust (philanthropic donation) and there was also a small contribution from a trade union fund at Krups-Moulinex. An 'anchor' tenant, UPC Ireland, was secured by 2000, providing an annual rental income of £360 000 (€457 000). With the sale of land on the site for development (hotel, shops), LEDP became debt free in 2006.</p> <p>The Family Tree Crèche received €1.08 million from Pobal (total cost); 50% from the ERDF and 50% from the national exchequer. The Family Tree Crèche now operates on a break-even basis. Funding for running costs comes from private contributions (fees for childcare from parents) and a mix of fees and subventions from government for parents with entitlements to social welfare.</p> <p>The total investment of just under €10 million leveraged additional capital investment of approximately €65 million.</p>
6. PROJECT ASSESSMENT	
6.1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	<p>The ERDF funding (€504 000) and public funding generally have been relatively small. The partners took risks and these have come to fruition in that LEDP is a viable commercial project. LEDP generates gross rental income of €750 000 per annum and invests approximately €300 000 annually in social and community projects in the disadvantaged areas of the city, mainly the Southside estates. It has sustained this level of reinvestment into social projects in the disadvantaged communities, even in these difficult times of economic crisis. Indeed, this source of funding is even more important now in view of the shortage of public money generally and to maintain social and community initiatives.</p>
6.2. TRANSFERABILITY	<p>The project did not start in a previous funding phase and continue in a new funding phase of EU programming. It took advantage of EU funding opportunities when they fitted with its strategy (the Family Tree Crèche). At the time of application for ERDF funding for the crèche, this project was important to LEDP's mission.</p> <p>The LEDP project did not start as a pilot and the example has not been picked up by a mainstream ERDF or other programme.</p> <p>There has been wider interest in LEDP in Limerick and internationally, most recently in Limerick with the closure of Dell Computers' manufacturing operation and the loss of 1 900 jobs (2009). A Globalisation Fund grant was agreed for the ex-Dell workforce but it proved difficult for redundant workers to take full advantage.</p>

	<p>age of it. There were also local misunderstandings about how the Globalisation Fund could be used. LEDP at that time was not in a position to take on the 'Dell project' as it prioritised consolidation of its own operation. Certain aspects of the Dell closure made LEDP involvement difficult at that time (e.g. scale of job losses, very large factory buildings in the suburbs, considerable cost in local taxes for the building before any development work could be done, lack of mortgage credit) but more consideration is being given to this now. In view of the situation of economic crisis and its severe impact on employment in the city, LEDP has enhanced its team to include a new member dedicated to job creation and micro-enterprise initiatives. The private sector directors of LEDP are involved in economic development strategies including the redevelopment of the core of the city (Limerick City Council's City Centre Strategy) and in a task force to revive and further develop the role of the regional airport (Shannon). The CEO of LEDP participates in the network of private sector organisations set up to promote the economic development of the region (The Atlantic Way). This informal network has also been enhanced with a recent appointment of a full-time development officer.</p>
<p>6.3 ISSUES AND PROBLEMS</p>	<p>There were issues encountered in the design and early implementation phase. Securing the funding for site purchase and renovation was the first major challenge. The redesign of the old building was also challenging (very large factory space, cold and inefficient in terms of heating). This needed to be broken down into small units and access to utilities re-engineered. The interior corridor was redesigned as an art corridor. The scale of debt (bank borrowings) was a concern in the early years (1999-2004). Sale of land on the business park brought in the financial resources to make LEDP debt-free (by 2006). There have been tensions over the years with partners and other stakeholders. These relate to activities taken on by LEDP, some aspects of the style of operation and the partners becoming more passive than active. LEDP has its own resources to invest in social and community activities and has continued to pursue activities consistent with its strategy. It sees itself as an advocate for inclusion and city regeneration.</p>
<p>6.4 PROJECT OUTPUTS & RESULTS</p>	<p>The main outputs and results are summarised below.</p> <p>An additional €65 million has been invested in the LEDP site. By 2006, the project reached commercial viability. There are now 35 tenants on the site and an estimated weekly footfall of 10 000 to 12 000 in the business park (work, shopping, services). Of the 35 tenants, 14 are private sector including UPC Ireland (the largest employer), a hotel within the Maldrone chain, an Aldi supermarket and small businesses in retail and services, including the café. The remainder are public agencies in the field of training for the unemployed and the office of the Regeneration Agency / City Council and community / social economy projects including workspace.</p> <p>There are approximately 700 jobs in businesses and services in the business park. The largest employer is UPC Ireland (450 jobs). There are new enterprises in sectors such as the management of warehousing and financial services (small in employment numbers). Efforts are made to bring local people into employment. This has worked in retail, hotels, other services and some manufacturing but has been difficult for the higher skills posts in some businesses. Almost all staff in the crèche (11 of the 14) are from the local neighbourhood.</p> <p>The Limerick Enterprise Network set up a Community Time Bank of 140 individuals in business and professional services (legal, financial, property) who give free advice to new start-ups and existing small businesses. Approximately 3 000 hours have been provided, with an estimated value of about €250 000 per annum. Support activities resulted in some 200 new start-ups and 260 new jobs. The loan fund has provided small loans of €425 000, enabling the creation of over 60 jobs (mainly subsistence jobs). A Prisoner Aid programme assisted eight ex-offenders to start up a business and advice on start-up is offered to</p>

	<p>some people who are still in prison.</p> <p>Up until recently (2011), the mainstream training centres provided 400 training places annually (255 in catering and hospitality and 150 in vocational skills, including construction and personal services). Some 50% of training places were taken by unemployed people from the neighbourhood. Training in catering skills has an excellent jobs placement record (80-90%).</p> <p>The community crèche (Family Tree Crèche) provides 50 full-time equivalent places, has 63 children enrolled and employs 14 staff. It offers pre-school education as well as childcare for children from three months to four years old. School principals report that children transferring to school are more advanced in terms of school readiness (speech, behaviour) compared with other children from the neighbourhood who never attended the crèche.</p> <p>The wooden boat building school, at any one time, offers weekly training workshops to 35-40 participants. Positive outcomes for young people include improved concentration, better performance and behaviour in school, and boatbuilding skills (initially at FETAC levels 2 and 3) that can be developed through further training and education.</p> <p>The homework study clubs for second level students (60 places) run throughout the school year and have good success rates in terms of young people staying on at school, levels of attainment in state exams and numbers going on to third level education. Some students in the study clubs were the first in their families to complete second level education. Bursaries to attend third level education are offered to students from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (selection procedures are in place for this).</p> <p>While it might be argued that much of the project's success is due to the relocation of existing activities from other parts of the city or region and that overall, this is zero-sum game, a deeper understanding of the project indicates that there is a genuine added value to the local economy. It was not a foregone conclusion that Chorus, the first large enterprise to relocate to LEDP, would locate to Limerick City. Its location in LEDP was the outcome of extensive efforts on the part of LEDP at the time. This was a magnet to attract other enterprises and services, creating a critical mass of activity here, based on a mix of investment by large retail (Aldi) and hotel (Maldron) industries, local enterprise and a new layer of community, public and private services. There was also added value in relocating training centres to LEDP. The main training centres were in the suburbs; they were not accessible by public transport from the neighbourhoods and there was no tradition of commuting across the city to such activities. When the training centres relocated to LEDP, the numbers in training increased and, as outlined above, 50% of places were taken by the disadvantaged population of the neighbourhoods. In the absence of this local facility, it is most unlikely that there would have been this level of engagement of local unemployed people in training.</p>
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7. CONCLUSIONS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED

	<p>The key success factors are as follows:</p> <p>The leadership, networks and skills of the key personalities in the partnership. The private sector partners were prepared to take risks and had a track record of success in business. The CEO had experience of managing a large enterprise (Krupps), was also involved in regional and enterprise development (as Chairman of Shannon Development) and is active in a network of the private sector to promote the economic development of the region (The Atlantic Way) . Personalities in the shareholding partners had high status in their organisations, and personal networks with significant resources (financial, political, social capital).</p> <p>LEDP facilitates initiatives run from its premises by other organisations. It developed links across these initiatives (training, employment and education)</p>
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	<p>without controlling them, giving flexibility to the overall project and autonomy to the constituent parts. While LEDP managed the commercial aspects of the enterprise tightly, project-based activities operate with considerable autonomy. LEDP was embedded in the local environment from the start (linked to its physical presence in Krups) and brought relevant initiatives, facilities and services into the local environment. LEDP recognised the need to involve the communities but has found this challenging. This has been slower than envisaged at the start.</p> <p>There was an element of luck in LEDP's commercial success as the purchase of Krups-Moulinex coincided with an economic and property boom. The early attraction of the training providers – FÁS and Fáilte Ireland – and UPC Ireland were critical success factors. The commercial viability of LEDP is a very important part of its success. Commercial success means that the LEDP complex is a valuable asset. It gives LEDP the financial independence to host a team and invest in local projects.</p> <p>In terms of lessons:</p> <p>This project would not have happened in the absence of a risk-taking culture. This came from the private sector partner and personalities. The partnership arrangement mitigated the risk to some extent. The private sector, acting alone, could not have taken the risks while the public sector would not have taken them.</p> <p>Partnership is challenging and needs nurturing and a renewal of commitment over time. It worked well at the start, perhaps because of the crisis and the quality of leadership in the local authority. Over time, the strategic partnership became weaker when the project was 'going well'. Some partners wavered from strong and proactive engagement to more passive involvement at different stages. This is in a context, however, where the project has made significant achievements, is commercially viable and there is little risk for the individual partners. Beneath the strategic partnership, practical project-oriented partnerships have also yielded successes. In the current situation of economic crisis, the partnership is going through a process of renewal and re-engagement.</p> <p>A complex project of this nature requires the combination of good management of the overall project, with flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, and a degree of autonomy of the component parts.</p> <p>Even good and successful local projects can be limited in terms of results achieved if difficulties in the wider context are not successfully addressed.</p> <p>A lesson from LEDP is that the project was not sufficient to 'turn round' the disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This is partly because local and national public policies were not sufficiently adapted to address the needs of those who did not benefit from the economic growth, while some aspects of policy unintentionally made the situation worse. The combined effect was that the neighbourhoods deteriorating into 'sink estates'. A specific problem is the centralised decision-making and lack of a joined-up approach in national government policy, particularly in key areas of social policy such as education, health and children and families. As the national and local economy was doing particularly well in the boom times with no shortage of jobs, the focus was not on the problems of the disadvantaged estates.</p>
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8. FURTHER INFORMATION

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