



**Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly**

# **2023 Annual Report**



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre  
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly





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# Message from An Cathaoirleach

## It is my pleasure to present the ninth Annual Report for the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

In 2023, the Assembly continued to successfully deliver on its strategic goals and statutory functions. Members of the Assembly displayed a high level of engagement as evidenced by their participation to our Assembly meetings and SPA meetings. I wish to express my thanks to all the Members for their work and commitment in contributing to the fulfilment of EMRA's responsibilities and objectives. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank my Leas Chathaoirleach Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald for her support and my predecessor Cllr Rob Power for his dedication during the first half of the year and his support.

During the year, Members made submissions to local county and city development Plans and draft Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP) and also non-statutory submissions in relation to national plans, programmes, strategies and guidelines, thus ensuring that the Regional voice is taken into account in those plans. 2023 was the fourth year of implementation of the RSES and was marked by the adoption by our Assembly of our second Monitoring Report presenting the progress achieved in supporting the objectives of the strategy.

Members welcomed the official launch of the EU Just Transition Fund Programme and the publication of the first calls for proposals marking the beginning of the implementation of the Programme. Members' engagement with the EU remained high throughout 2023 with a delegation taking part in a two-day visit to Brussels to meet with representatives of the various European institutions and Members of the Irish delegation to the Committee of the Regions continuing to be very active on the European scene. This strong engagement at the European level contributes to raise the profile of our Assembly and to position our Region as a key player in Europe.

2023 saw the first edition of the Region in Focus seminar and training event organised by the Association of Irish Regions in Monaghan which brought together Assembly members and local elected representatives from all across Ireland and provided a welcome platform to explore and discuss the role of Regions in Ireland.

Throughout the year, the Assembly strived to support the development and growth of our Region and the progress achieved will support us further in the attainment of our corporate objectives and in the delivery of concrete results on the ground. For all their work, I would like to thank and commend the dedication of the team and their A/ Director Clare Bannon and also acknowledge the contribution made by Jim Conway during his years as Director.

**Cllr. Kate Feeney,**  
Cathaoirleach





# Message from the Director

## The Annual Report 2023 sets out EMRA's actions, initiatives, and engagements undertaken to deliver on the vision and goals outlined in the Corporate Plan 2019-2024 for the organisation.

2023 was another busy year for the Assembly. At the Annual General Meeting held in July, Cllr Kate Feeney was elected Cathaoirleach of the Assembly and I would like to thank Councillor Feeney and all the Assembly Members for their sustained engagement and support throughout the year.

This year saw the adoption of our second Monitoring Report, taking stock of the progress made in the implementation of the RSES. A key highlight of the Monitoring Report is that 59 organisations (local authorities, government departments and state agencies) carried out activities that contributed to the delivery of the EMRA RSES, demonstrating how much has been achieved to date, through the coordination efforts of the Regional Assembly and buy-in from stakeholders.

EMRA continued to develop the Regional Development Monitor (RDM). The RDM won the Research & Innovation Award at the Irish Planning Awards in September and is testament to the quality and usefulness of this datahub. It continues to provide a valuable reference and informational tool for all regional assemblies, local authorities Government departments, public bodies, education, community groups, business and industry, as well as members of the public and the media, seeking accurate information on national and regional trends across a range of economic, social and environmental fields.

The role of Managing Authority for the EU Just Transition Fund was at the fore of the Assembly's activities throughout a year that saw the launch of the Programme at the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre in Co. Longford. The Assembly also continued to take part in the management and delivery of other EU-funded Programme, especially the Southern, Eastern and Midland ERDF Programme which was also launched in 2023.

EMRA as URBACT national contact point launched the new Programme in Ireland at the beginning of the year and EMRA was appointed as National Contact Point for the European Urban Initiative, thus strengthening EMRA's capacity and expertise in sustainable urban development. EMRA continued its involvement with European projects: while Next2Met and Progress concluded this year, EMRA joined ORIGINN a new Interreg-funded project aimed at promoting rural economic and social transformation through innovation.

The Irish Region European Office (IREO) continued to support the members of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions. The IREO organised a very successful study visit to Brussels for EMRA members who had a chance to meet with MEPs, representatives from the European Commission and the Irish Permanent Representation among others, thus reinforcing the role of the IREO and EMRA as a regional bridge between the local and European level.

2023 was another year rich in achievements and opportunities for the Assembly, all of which helped us to achieve our strategic goals and deliver for the benefit of the Region and I would like to thank our Members and the team for their contribution to this year's successes.

### Clare Bannon

Acting Director





## Introduction

**The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) is one of the three Regional Assemblies established in Ireland in 2015 following on from the enactment of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.**

Part of the local government structure, the EMRA operates independently to provide a range of functions for the Region which include policy making, monitoring and oversight and promoting enhanced co-ordination in our Region.

The Region incorporates 12 city and county councils and is comprised of elected members (councillors) who are elected by their peers in the 12 councils to represent them regionally or as members of the Irish delegation to the Committee of the Regions.

The Region is the smallest in land area of the three Irish Regions but the largest in population size with over 2.5 million people. The region has approximately 270 km of coastline from Carlingford in Louth to Kilmichael Point at the Wicklow-Wexford border. The main settlement is the capital city of Dublin which is home to 1.45 million people and is supported by a network of regional and county towns and an extensive rural hinterland.



## Functions of Regional Assemblies

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly aims to play a key role in the development of the Region for the benefit of its citizens. This role revolves around three axes: strategic planning and sustainable development, European affairs and effectiveness in local government.

These three areas constitute the core of EMRA's functions.



### Strategic Planning & Sustainable Development

- **Make policy -**  
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Region
- **Provide oversight -**  
statutory observations on local authority development plans and variations



### EU Affairs

- **Manage funds -**  
EU Just Transition Fund, ERDF Regional Programmes and INTERREG Monitoring Committees
- **Provide supports -**  
Committee of the Regions and Irish Regions European Office in Brussels and Contact point role



### Effectiveness in Local Government

- **Promote co-ordination -**  
between EU/ National/ Regional and local governance
- **Develop knowledge -**  
Research and evidence base for implementation and monitoring



## The Irish Regions European Office (IREO)

The IREO, managed by EMRA, provides a shared service for the three Regional Assemblies and 31 local authorities of Ireland (LRAs) and focuses on bringing the EU closer to the local government sector and vice versa. The IREO strategy aims to ensure that the office delivers timely, strategic advice and information on EU policy developments to the three Regional Assemblies and local authorities in Ireland.

### This strategy is delivered by:

- Raising awareness and communicating the opportunities for participation in EU funding programmes
- Seeking opportunities for influencing EU policy developments
- Building capacity, networks and partnerships with other regions in the EU
- Signposting to the National Contact Points based in Regional Assemblies, highlighting their role in providing pre and post project development support
- Raising the profile of the strengths of local and regional Government in Ireland to European partners and to the EU institutions.

# 2023 - the year in highlights

## AGM and Cathaoirleach election

At the AGM on Friday, 14th July 2023, Cllr Kate Feeney, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council was elected as EMRA Cathaoirleach and Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Laois County Council was elected the Leas Chathaoirleach.



Outgoing Cathaoirleach Cllr Rob Power with newly elected Cathaoirleach Cllr Kate Feeney

## AIR seminar and training event "Regions in Focus" in Monaghan

The Association of Irish Regions held its first training in Monaghan on 7 and 8 February.



EMRA members and staff at the AIR seminar and training event

## Launch of the EU Just Transition Fund Programme 2021-2027

The EU Just Transition Fund Programme was officially launched on 28th April at the Corlea trackway visitor centre (Co. Longford) in the presence of six Government Ministers and Representatives from the European Commission.



Minister Peter Burke TD, Sofia Alves - European Commission, Minister Sean Fleming TD, Minister Anne Rabbitte TD, Minister Malcolm Noonan TD, Minister Pippa Hackett, Minister Eamon Ryan TD and Cllr Rob Power - EMRA Cathaoirleach

## IPI planning awards

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly were joint winners of the IPI Planning Awards 2023 under the Research and Innovation category for the Regional Development Monitor.



Cathaoirleach Kate Feeney and Acting Director Clare Bannon holding the award, surrounded by the three Regional Assemblies' teams



### Members study visits to Brussels

A delegation of EMRA members took part in a study visit to Brussels in June.



EMRA members attending a presentation at the CoR

### Kick-off of the ORIGINN project

EMRA is a partner in this new EU-funded project focusing on Economic and social transformation in rural areas through industrial innovation.

Interreg  
Europe



Co-funded by  
the European Union

ORIGINN

### Appointment of EMRA as the European Urban Initiative contact point

EMRA is now the national contact point in Ireland for the European Urban Initiative programme.

EUROPEAN  
U R B A N  
INITIATIVE



# Assembly Meetings & Membership

Assembly Members are nominated by the constituent Local Authorities in the region in proportion to the size of the Local Authority's population. In addition, Councillors who are members of the Irish delegation to the Committee of the Regions become de facto Members of the Regional Assembly.

## Assembly Membership 2023

### DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL



Daryl Barron

Mary Freehill  
*Resigned April '23*

Alison Gilliland



Deirdre Heney



Janet Horner



Vincent Jackson



Dermot Lacey

Declan Meenagh  
*Appointed April '23*

Larry O'Toole

### DUN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL



Emma Blain



Kate Feeney



Jim Gildea

Mary Hanafin  
*Resigned Sept '23*Justin Moylan  
*Appointed Nov '23*

Peter O'Brien



Una Power

### FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL



David Healy



Brigid Manton

Robert  
O'Donoghue

### KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Aoife Breslin



Fintan Brett



Padraig McEvoy



Robert Power

### LAOIS COUNTY COUNCIL

Caroline  
Dwane StanleyCatherine  
Fitzgerald

Aisling Moran

### LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL



John Browne



Colm Murray

### LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL



Emma Coffey



Conor Keelan

### MEATH COUNTY COUNCIL

Brian Fitzgerald  
*Resigned March '23*David Gilroy  
*Appointed March '23*

Paddy Meade

Caroline O'Reilly  
*Appointed Dec '23*Damien O'Reilly  
(RIP) Until Sept '23

### OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL

Eamon Dooley  
*Resigned Dec '23*Eddie  
Fitzpatrick

Danny Owens

### SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



Laura Donaghy

Lyn Hagin  
Meade

Pamela Kearns

### WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL



Paddy Hill



Aengus O'Rourke

### WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL



Avril Cronin



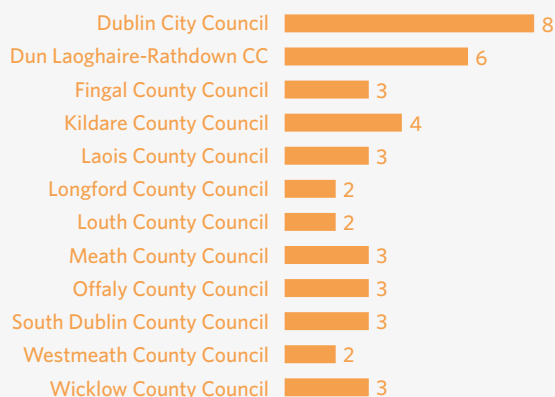
Tom Fortune



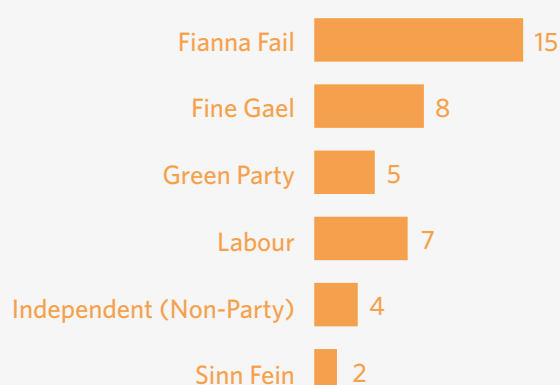
Gerry Walsh



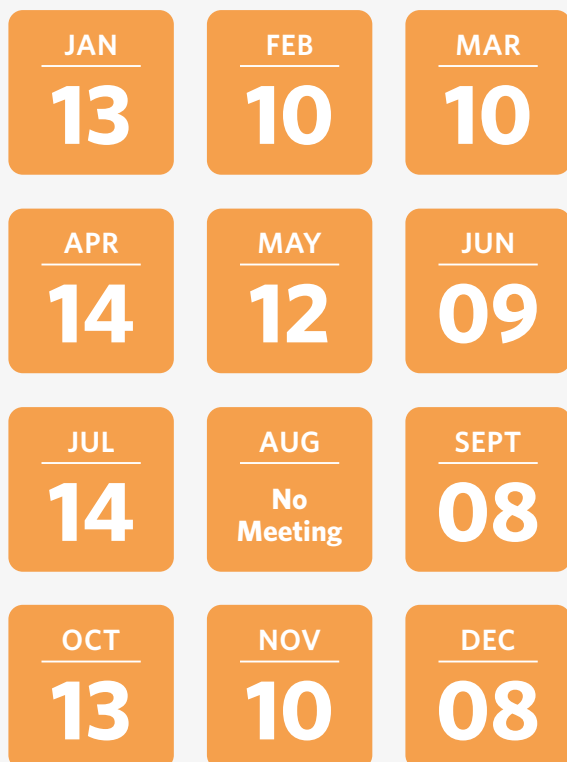
## Members per council as of 31/12/2023



## Members per party as of 31/12/2023



## Schedule of Meetings 2023



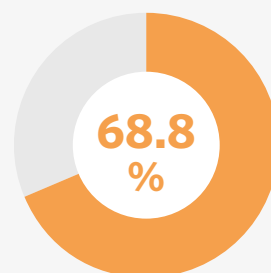
## Conferences & Training Attended in 2023

Title	Location	Representatives
McGill Conference	Glenties	Cllr Dermot Lacey
Regions in Focus - Association of Irish Regions	Monaghan	Several
Suck Valley Conference	Roscommon	Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald

## Meetings of the Assembly

The EMRA continued to use a hybrid format, allowing members to join in person or online (in line with SI no 446).

Overall, 11 statutory meetings were held in 2023. The average attendance rate over the year for meetings was 68.8%. (68.8).



## Election of An Cathaoirleach

The Annual General Meeting was held on 14th July 2023 and saw the election of Cllr. Kate Feeney as Cathaoirleach and Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald as Leas Cathaoirleach.



**Cllr. Robert Power**  
Cathaoirleach  
July 2022 to July 2023



**Cllr. Kate Feeney**  
Leas Cathaoirleach  
July 2022 to July 2023



**Cllr. Kate Feeney**  
Cathaoirleach  
July 2023 to present



**Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald**  
Leas Cathaoirleach  
July 2023 to present

## Meetings & Membership of Sub Committees

### EU Sub-Committee Meetings 2023

The EU sub-committee was created to allow Members to discuss and follow EU matters.

#### MEMBERS



Fintan Brett



Eamon Dooley



Kate Feeney



Alison Gilliland



David Healy



Conor Keelan



Padraig  
McEvoy



Aisling  
Moran



Robert Power  
until July

#### MEETINGS 2023

One meeting  
of the EU Sub  
Committee was  
held in July  
2023

### Strategic Planning Area Committees

Strategic Planning Area Committees provide a forum for the members of each respective Strategic Planning Area (SPA) to discuss issues relevant to that SPA. SPAs are defined at a NUTS 3 Level.

#### DUBLIN SPA (& MASP Area)

#### MEETINGS 2023

MARCH

28

OCT

10

#### MEMBERS



Pamela Kearns



Lyn  
Hagin Meade



Pamela Kearns



Alison Gilliland



Daryl Barron



Mary Freehill  
(March)



Declan Meenagh  
(October)



Larry O Toole



Dermot Lacey



Mary Hanafin  
(March meeting)



Deirdre Heney



Janet Horner



Vincent Jackson



Peter O'Brien



Emma Blain



Kate Feeney



Una Power



Jim Gildea



Emma Blain



Brigid Manton



David Healy



Robert  
O'Donoghue



Damien O'Reilly  
(March meeting)



Robert Power



Padraig McEvoy



Fintan Brett



Aoife Breslin



Paddy Meade



David Gilroy



Tom Fortune



Avril Cronin



Gerry Walsh



## EASTERN SPA

### MEMBERS



Aoife Breslin



Fintan Brett



Emma Coffey



Avril Cronin



Brian Fitzgerald



Tom Fortune



Conor Keelan



Padraig McEvoy



Paddy Meade



Damien O'Reilly



Robert Power



Gerry Walsh

### MEETINGS 2023

MARCH  
03

OCT  
20

## MIDLAND SPA

### MEMBERS



John Browne



Eamon Dooley



Caroline  
Dwane Stanley



Catherine  
Fitzgerald



Eddie Fitzpatrick



Paddy Hill



Aisling Moran



Colm Murray



Aengus O'Rourke



Danny Owens

### MEETINGS 2023

OCT  
24

## MASP Implementation Group

A special combined MASP Implementation Group and Strategic Planning Area meeting was also held, in person, at Dublin City Council Members Chamber, City Hall, on 19th October 2023 and was attended by representatives from the National Transport Authority, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, UCD, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Uisce Eireann, TII and relevant senior planners from local authorities within the Region.

### MEETINGS 2023

MARCH  
07



# Drive the Regional Agenda



# Drive the Regional Agenda

## Assembly Oversight & Functions

**During 2023 a key function of the Assembly was to ensure oversight and alignment of national, regional and local policy in the Region. This included ensuring consistency with the RSES across Local Authority plans and the strategies, plans and programmes of public bodies, including government departments, and key stakeholders.**

During 2023, twenty-two submissions were issued, with four of these submissions issued as a statutory function under Section 27 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended and five submissions issued as a statutory function under Section 66C of the Local Government Act 2001 (inserted by section 44 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014), as amended.

Six submissions were issued relating to Local Authority County and City Development Plans and Local Area Plans within the Region. In this regard, submissions were issued regarding Variation Nos. 1 to 4 of the Dublin City Development Plan, and pre-draft consultations on the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2024-2030 and the Mullingar Local Area Plan 2024-2030.

The Assembly, having regard to their function under Section 66C of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended, wrote to each Local Authority in relation to their forthcoming LECPs in Q1 and provided an LECP Online Information Session for Local Authorities on the 3rd of May 2023. Informal and high-level comments were submitted on the draft High-Level Goals of the draft Socio-Economic Statement of the draft Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown LECP, following a request from the Local Authority and EMRA met with Kildare County Council and Laois County Council, at their request, to discuss LECP progress. A presentation on the LECP process was given to Elected Members at the EMRA meeting in City Hall on 8th September 2023.

Five submissions were issued relating to draft Local Economic and Community Plans within the Region in 2023. In this regard, submissions were issued as a statutory function under Section 66C of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended regarding the draft LECPs for Meath, Wicklow, Longford, Laois and Louth.

**Non-statutory submissions were issued in relation national plans, programmes, strategies and guidelines as follows:**

- European Semester 2023 and the National Reform Programme (Department of the Taoiseach)
- Draft Planning and Development Bill 2022 (Joint Oireachtas Committee Housing, Local Government and Heritage)
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Statement of Strategy 2023-2025
- Issues Paper on the review of the National Planning Framework
- Issues Paper on Uisce Éireann's Water Services Strategic Plan 2050
- Phase 1 and Phase 2 Consultations for Uisce Éireann's Investment Plan 2025-2029
- Sustainable & Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities Proposed Policy Approach Consultation Paper
- Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II
- Joint submission of the Regional Assemblies on the Draft National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2023-2029
- Joint submissions by the Regional Assemblies on the Draft Local Government Chapter of Climate Action Plan 2024

## Inform Policy Making

In 2023, in order to inform policy making, the Assembly focused on ongoing bilateral and multilateral engagements with key policy and implementation stakeholders.

To this end the Assembly worked with the following stakeholders through dedicated forums, throughout 2023, to inform policy and implementation in line with the RSES.

Forum	Date	Attendees
Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Conway</li> <li>Anne-Marie</li> <li>Wood Wolfe</li> <li>Owen Douglas</li> </ul>
Midlands Regional Enterprise Plan	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Conway</li> <li>Terry Connolly</li> </ul>
National Adaptation Steering Committee	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne-Marie</li> <li>Wood Wolfe</li> </ul>
Eastern and Midland CARO Steering Group	Various	Jim Conway
Dublin CARO Steering Group	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Conway</li> <li>Anne-Marie</li> <li>Wood Wolfe</li> </ul>
National SEA Forum	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owen Douglas</li> <li>Pádraig O'Shea</li> </ul>
National AA Forum	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clare Bannon</li> <li>Eugenia Thompson</li> </ul>
Midlands Regional Transition Team (MRTT)	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Conway</li> <li>Terence Connolly</li> </ul>
OPR Plan Evaluation Forum	Various	Clare Bannon
Spatial Planning Steering Group- Regional Renewable Electricity Strategies	Various	Clare Bannon
Spatial Planning Working Group - Regional Renewable Electricity Strategies	Various	Padraig O'Shea
Sustainable Mobility Policy Leadership Group and Delivery Team	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Conway</li> <li>Clare Bannon</li> <li>Anne-Marie</li> <li>Wood Wolfe</li> </ul>
National Transport Demand Management Strategy Steering Group	Various	Anne-Marie Wood Wolfe
National Planning Framework Planning Advisory Forum	Various	Clare Bannon

Throughout 2023, the Assembly met with numerous government departments and agencies to inform policy in line with the RSES. This included, for instance, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and the Department of Transport (DoT) to consider opportunities for Transport Orientated Development (TOD) in Dublin, under housing for all and in line with the MASP and RSES. Also relating to transport, EMRA was represented on the cross-departmental Steering Group for the National Transport Demand Management Strategy and a number of sub-groups which met throughout 2023 to shape the development of the Strategy. EMRA is also part of a coordination group for the NTA's Forecasting Review Project. The purpose of the project is to update the NTA forecasting model to inform infrastructure provision throughout the Region. In addition to various meetings throughout the year, EMRA co-chaired a webinar with the NTA on 19th September 2023 for the local authorities who were invited to input into the modelling review. EMRA also met with the DoT to discuss the development of EV Infrastructure Strategies and mechanisms for their delivery and implementation under the ZEVI (Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland) EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

EMRA attended and contributed to the pre-legislative scrutiny of the Draft Planning and Development Bill 2022 at a session of the Joint Oireachtas Committee of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and attended the stakeholder meeting on the European Semester and National Reform Programme (NRP) hosted by the Department of the Taoiseach on 1st February 2023.

Hosted by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) EMRA attended a public consultation workshop held in Cork on 6th March 2023 on the Draft Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II (OREDPP). Other engagement with DECC included EMRA participation in the working group for the Local Government Chapter of Climate Action Plan 2024. The working group met twice and, on both occasions, combined comments and suggestions were provided by the Regional Assemblies.





EMRA coordinated and attended a regional roundtable discussion of key stakeholders from the Eastern and Midland Region with the OECD on 26th June. The OECD have been engaged by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to provide an independent analysis of Ireland's progress, opportunities and challenges towards the delivery of the National Planning Framework (NPF). The purpose of the roundtable discussion was to inform the NPF revision, by exploring with stakeholders how to implement policies and governance arrangements that deliver more balanced regional attractiveness. EMRA participated in a discussion with the other Regional Assemblies and the NPF Expert Group on 1st June. Areas of discussion included the role and powers of the Regional Assembly, how spatial planning priorities emerge, collaborative working and implementation.

EMRA met with the SMP Delivery team throughout 2023 and was updated on the actions under the SMP Programme, including updates on the 35 projects under the Pathfinder Programme. EMRA is leading and delivering Pathfinder 27 (formerly 30) for the Eastern and Midland Region under the Pathfinder programme. The project consists of a training, education and capacity-building workshop programme to assist Local Authorities, Councillors and Public Participation Networks to design and implement smart and sustainable mobility projects. The project was officially launched on 3rd May and consists of two main elements; an online platform (the 'Academy') and a series of capacity-building workshops. The online platform was launched on 1st September to enable the sharing of information across the local authorities and encourage collaboration on active travel schemes. The workshops for Target Group 1 (local authority staff) commenced on 27th September with a full-day in-person event.

The Dublin MASP Implementation Group met on the 7th of March 2023 and focused on the Pathfinder 30 Project under the Sustainable Mobility Plan; the NTA's Transport Strategy for the GDA 2022-2042, and; the Green Infrastructure Mapping Approach for Ecosystem Services developed as part of the Interreg Europe PROGRESS project. A special combined in-person meeting with the MASP Implementation Group and the Senior Planners/Directors in the local authorities within the Region was also held on 19th October 2023 in City Hall, Dublin. This meeting focused on the Monitoring Report 2023 of the RSES and the review of the National Planning Framework.

The Eastern and MASP SPA Committees met twice in 2023, while the Midlands SPA Committee met once. These meetings focused on RSES implementation and key national developments.

EMRA also met with various stakeholders to advance RSES and MASP implementation. These include Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor; Regional Enterprise Plans, Funding and Infrastructure Unit in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Construction and Enterprise Innovation Policy Unit in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and Climate-KIC in relation to the circular bioeconomy.

## Influencing European Policy

### The Assembly, through its members and the IREO, has pursued its engagement at EU level to shape European policymaking.

Coinciding with the 156th CoR plenary session, the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) undertook a two-day study visit to Brussels. The delegation, consisting of eight councillors and Director Jim Conway embarked on a whirlwind tour of the EU in their two-days meeting MEPS, EU officials and Irish Permanent Representation staff.

Starting their visit in the European Parliament, the delegation began by meeting Barry Andrews MEP, Colm Markey MEP, Ciaran Cuffe MEP, as well as Clare Daly MEP. Staff from both Frances Fitzgerald MEP and Maria Walsh MEP offices made themselves available to the delegation to speak about their work. The delegation then met with Michael Collins, Deputy Director of the CoR, for an overview of the work of the CoR as well as outlining the role of the Regional Assembly in the CoR's work.

The delegation had the chance to meet with representatives from DG Regio to speak about EU Regional Policy programmes including the Just Transition Programme, European Regional Development Funding and the New European Bauhaus programme. Finally, the delegation visited the Irish Permanent Representation on the second day of their visit to meet Fionnuala Bourke who spoke about her role as Cohesion Policy Attache as well as the need to increase the Irish presence in top jobs in EU institutions.

In February 2023, the Minister of State for European Affairs, Peter Burke met with the Irish Delegation to the CoR recently in Brussels. Keen to learn more about the role of local and regional voices within Europe, Minister Burke held a meeting with the Irish delegation to hear about their work representing Ireland on the Committee of the Regions. At the meeting, Members updated the Minister and raised concerns on issues including EU UK relations, the EU Nature Restoration law, the Just Transition and urban initiatives. The Minister spoke about his appreciation for the role of local government in the EU and committed to continued support to the work of the Irish Delegation.

The IREO has held regular meetings with the Irish MEPs and the Irish Permanent Representation to keep abreast of EU policy developments and has ensured to discuss the views of Irish local authorities and the regional assemblies. This has particularly been the case for cohesion policy, the potential Atlantic Area Macro Region, EU environmental legislation and nature restoration.

In March 2023, EMRA was represented at the EU Cities Forum held in Turin by the European Commission and bringing together key urban stakeholders at EU, national, regional and local levels.

In April 2023, Cllr Michael Murphy, Head of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions and Teresa Lennon, Head of the Irish Regions European Office met with Commissioner Mairead McGuinness to discuss the impact of the Irish Delegation to the CoR and to discuss the work of the IREO.

In May 2023, the IREO hosted a two-day visit for the EMRA Senior Management Team. This visit ensured that the region and the work of the Regional Assembly was presented to European Commission officials, the regions' MEPs and Committee of the Regions officials.

#### Building capacity, networks and partnerships

The IREO presented an update of its work and EU policy developments to the EMRA meeting on 12th May to mark Europe Day (9th May) and Ireland's 50-year membership of the EU. The IREO continued to meet with a range of organisations in Brussels to promote the work of the Irish regions. The IREO has joined the Capital Cities and Regions Network (CCRN) and aims to ensure the views of Irish Cities and Regions is presented to the EU institutions, particularly on regional policy.

The IREO meets with counterparts from across the UK through attendance at regular events with the Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish offices. This is to ensure that there is ongoing communication and exploration of any potential collaboration opportunities with local authorities and other stakeholders in the UK.

During 2023, the IREO worked with the Committee of the Regions to promote the Young Elected Politicians (YEP) programme across Ireland. This programme is a network of politicians who are no older than 40 and hold a mandate at regional or local level in the EU. A call for applications to join the programme is published each year and YEPs have the opportunity to get in contact with other young politicians through the YEP Community, to attend trainings on EU topics, and to participate in activities organised by the CoR, including meetings with rapporteurs, events and seminars organised by the CoR, and communication activities.



## Committee of the Regions

IREO is the secretariat to the Irish delegation to the Committee of the Regions and co-ordinates the work of the members of the national delegation to the Committee of the Regions (CoR).

The European Union's assembly of local and regional representatives, the CoR has 329 members from across the 27 EU Member States, all of whom are democratically elected and/or hold a political mandate in their home country. The CoR's role is to inform the development of EU legislation and future European policies through the input of those most closely representing communities, with a focus on those EU policy areas and proposals that most greatly affect regions and cities.

The CoR mainly presents its views through written opinions or resolutions, which are developed in one of six thematic commissions covering the following policy areas:

- Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX);
- Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER);
- Economic Policy (ECON);
- Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE);
- Natural Resources (NAT);
- Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC).

Each Commission generally meets on five occasions during the year to prepare the opinions for adoption at the 5-6 plenary annual sessions. Commissioners, Presidency Ministers and MEPs regularly attend CoR meetings, and there is an ongoing exchange between the institutions on policy issues.



## The Irish Delegation - Eastern and Midland Region Representatives

Below is a list of CoR representatives for the Eastern and Midland Region for 2020 – 2025.

Full Members	Council
<b>Cllr Kate Feeney</b>	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
<b>Cllr Eamon Dooley*</b>	Offaly County Council
<b>Cllr Aoife Breslin</b>	Kildare County Council
<b>Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley</b>	Laois County Council
<b>Cllr Una Power</b>	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

\*Retired from CoR on 18th December 2023

Alternate Members	Council
<b>Emma Blain</b>	Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
<b>Alison Gilliland</b>	Dublin City Council
<b>Pádraig McEvoy</b>	Kildare County Council

Further information on the Irish Delegation can be found at [www.emra.ie/committee-of-the-regions](http://www.emra.ie/committee-of-the-regions)



## Legislative Works

**Members of the Irish delegation to the Committee of the Regions (CoR) were again actively involved in the work of the Committee of the Regions in 2023.**

Cllr Una Power (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown) was Rapporteur on ambient air quality, which supports the European Commission's proposed limit values to be achieved by 2030 and calls for full and binding alignment with the 2021 WHO guidelines by 2035, so as to protect citizens' health and to contribute to achieving the zero-pollution objective set to be achieved by 2050. It also supports the introduction of a regular review mechanism of the air quality standards in line with the latest scientific evidence. Achieving these targets will be possible only if the EU and Member States agree and implement ambitious policies to tackle the sources of pollution at all levels.

Cllr Dan Boyle (Cork City) was Rapporteur on the European Consumer's Protection Package which seeks to amend the European Commission's proposals for a right to repair to include a local and regional perspective. The aim of the proposal is to ensure that consumers are empowered to make better informed decisions and play an active role in the ecological transition. Cllr. Boyle asserts in the opinion that granting consumers the right to repair would be instrumental in advancing Europe's industrial transition and strengthening its resilience and open strategic autonomy. The opinion was adopted in the CoR Plenary in October 2023.

Cllr Kate Feeney (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown) was appointed Rapporteur on the SME Relief Package and by end of 2023 had her draft opinion approved in the ECON Commission. The package is made up of a series of measures designed to provide companies with short-term relief, boost their long-term competitiveness and ensure fairness in the EU Single Market.

The Delegation also held meetings with Irish MEPs as well as with the Irish Commission representatives to voice the needs of the Irish local government on the EU stage. The Delegation, assisted by the IREO, continued observing all relevant policy dossiers and made interventions, via amendments as well as commission and plenary interventions.

## Overview of the work of the CoR in 2023

**The work of the CoR again focused on the Russian war against Ukraine which has caused an unprecedented influx of displaced people, affecting cities and regions in the EU unevenly. Despite stretched resources, local authorities focused not only on emergency measures but are also now turning their attention to long-term strategies for the socioeconomic inclusion of four million Ukrainian refugees.**

A cornerstone of the work of the CoR was to call for the reform of cohesion policy with a mission and place-based approach, applying the principle of "do no harm to cohesion" across all policies. Prosperity is not distributed fairly among the EU core regions and periphery. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian war against Ukraine have made it even more challenging for peripheral regions to catch up with the rest of the EU. Cohesion policy as long-term investment contributes to a better performing single market, closing the development gap between regions by providing them with social resources and infrastructures. However, regional differences remain large. As such, the CoR calls for the future of cohesion policy to be designed as an inclusive strategy engaging all people and stakeholders at all levels, addressing the current policy fragmentation and complexity across several funds.

Another important issue is the ongoing energy crisis which has hit all territories across Europe hard. The ambitious goals of the European Green Deal require unprecedented changes at an unprecedented speed in the years to come, which need to happen largely at local and regional levels. The CoR also placed a heavy focus on ensuring more support to implement the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development goals at local and regional level. Without the commitment of European regions and cities, 105 out of 169 targets set out by the SDGs will not be achieved by 2030. In relation to food safety, the CoR sought to support sustainable local agriculture and partner with local and regional authorities to help make European food systems more resilient and sustainable.

The CoR is seeking to ensure a multi-level governance approach to the energy transition. Only with increased EU funds can local and regional projects increase and improve their impact to meet the EU's climate ambition on the ground and strengthen acceptance for the green transition within local communities. European regions and cities are paying an increasing toll to disruptive climate events and climate change will deepen existing inequalities: Southern and Eastern Europe, European cities, islands, coastal and peripheral regions will be most affected in terms of casualties among populations, damage to critical infrastructures and the disruption of tourism, industrial clusters and agriculture production. To protect its regions from the harmful impacts of climate change, the EU would need to invest about EUR 40 billion every year, if the global temperature stays within a 1.5°C increase. This amount would rise up to EUR 120 billion and 200 billion per year to adapt to a 2°C or 3°- 4°C temperature increase. Only stronger investments in climate adaptation and mitigation can preserve cohesion among the EU and within Member States.

Another key priority for the CoR was calling for the unlocking of investments for the green and digital transitions, supporting people and reducing inequalities, while also fostering the industrial competitiveness of European regions.

In relation to EU democracy, the CoR has been calling for the EU to take advantage of citizens' trust in regional and local representatives to reinforce European democracy better and to a greater extent.

Members of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions participate in many of the working groups of the CoR including the EU – UK Contact Group, the Brexit Inter-regional group, the Green Deal Going Local Working Group, the Digital Futures working group and the Broadband platform.

## ENCORE

Another way for the Assembly to influence policymaking at EU level is to participate in networks and other collaborative initiatives to collectively represent the voice and interest of our Region. For several years, EMRA has been a key member of ENCORE.

ENCORE (Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe) is a political network where environmental ministers and other political leaders from across Europe can meet and discuss environmental and sustainable development issues in their regions. ENCORE enables the exchange of positions towards EU policies and legislation as well as experiences and good practices as a starting point for regional cooperation.

From the 21st-23rd March, EMRA participated in a multi-country workshop on mainstreaming biodiversity in regional policy and action. Organised by the European Commission in co-operation with the ENCORE network and the Occitanie region, the event took place in Montpellier, France. EMRA participated in a meeting of the ENCORE steering committee which took place alongside the workshop. The aim of the workshop was to bring together regional biodiversity experts, regional agencies and other national, regional and local public administrations from across Europe to exchange knowledge and best practice. The workshop addressed challenges and opportunities to reinforce biodiversity in environmental policies, with a strong focus on the new global framework for biodiversity after COP 15; implementation of regional and local strategies for biodiversity, and how they interact with other policies and strategies, and how action for biodiversity and action for climate are sometimes in conflict (green vs. green) and the need to address this.

This event clearly demonstrated that regions play an important role in safeguarding and strengthening biodiversity in the context of climate change and that all participating regions are facing similar challenges, outlining a clear need for peers to collaborate.

EMRA was represented by the Director at a meeting of the ENCORE Steering Committee in Pilsen, Czechia in June. Successful pilots and good practice examples were shared in relation to climate action, circularity and biodiversity. In line with EU Commission objectives, the group addressed the problems of sustainability on a large scale with a view to making concrete proposals to the European Commission.

From 27th – 29th September, three members of the Assembly travelled to Arnhem (NL) to attend the ENCORE conference organised by the Province of Gelderland which also marked the 30th anniversary of the network. The conference focused on circular economy and biodiversity and culminated in the signature of the Arnhem declaration through which ENCORE members recognise the importance of international and interregional cooperation to address climate change and the related challenges and acknowledge the need to move from small-scale to larger and scale-up projects to achieve their goals in the fields of climate action, biodiversity and circular economy. The conference was followed by a YouthCore event. This youth forum of ENCORE brings together young people from the ENCORE regions to share their experiences and develop a common message of what future they want. Two Irish representatives took part in the two-day preparation workshops and presented their ideas to a panel of experts comprising of elected representatives, among others.



CLRs David Gilroy, Jim Gildea and Gerry Walsh

EMRA attended the ENCORE steering group meeting in Aarhus, Central Denmark on the 21st and 22nd of November. The meeting included an evaluation of the ENCORE and YouthCore Conference; working group sessions on climate action, biodiversity and circular economy, and discussions on the future of the network.





**Deliver  
concrete impact  
on the ground**

# Deliver concrete impact on the ground

## RSES Implementation

### Regional Development Monitor (RDM)

Developed by the Regional Assemblies, led by EMRA, in collaboration with the All-Ireland Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University and Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) via the GeoHive platform, the Regional Development Monitor (RDM) is a national mapping and visualisation tool with a range of analytics dashboards, designed to enhance our understanding of key societal trends in Ireland to aid better decision making. The RDM is a key tool used by the Regional Assemblies to monitor the performance of each of the three regions in terms of achieving objectives outlined in their respective Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. The RDM is also assisting government departments, local authorities, planners, policy makers, researchers, elected members and members of the public in gaining a greater insight into social, economic and environmental trends to aid better decision making.

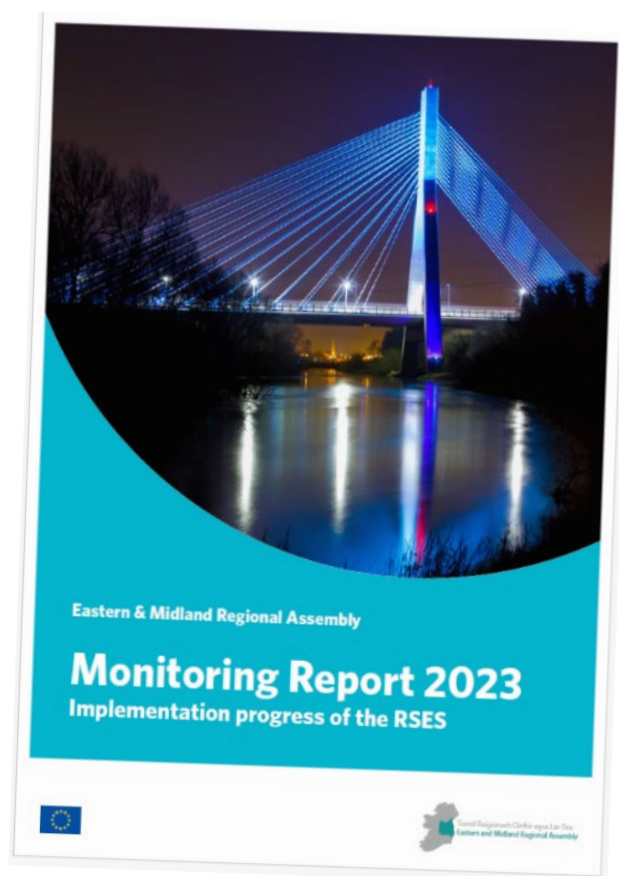
In 2023, indicators and CSO data for the Regional Development Monitor were updated on the RDM hub to reflect new Census data released throughout the year. Work also continued to advance the inclusion of smart specialisation (S3) indicators as part of the RDM. In 2023 EMRA and AIRO met with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) to advance the inclusion of smart specialisation (S3) indicators as part of the RDM. DETE presented 11 indicators for commentary feedback and noted Regional Assemblies can also include additional indicators if required.

EMRA provided an overview and demonstration of the RDM to the LGMA (Forum for Planning Director of Services) and preparation was also progressed in relation to the in-person training on how to use the Regional Development Monitor to be provided by AIRO within each region, to local authority staff and elected members in 2024.

As noted in the highlights for 2023, the Regional Development Monitor won the Research & Innovation Award at the Irish Planning Awards 2023 which took place in Clontarf Castle on 28th September 2023. The Irish Planning Institute is the largest professional membership body in Ireland representing planners engaging in physical and environmental planning. The IPI awards acknowledge a diverse range of projects and plans nationally taking place at a local, county and regional level in complex and dynamic environments. The 2023 Awards recognised innovation and excellence in Irish planning in eight categories.

### Monitoring Report 2023

In line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, EMRA produced the Monitoring Report 2023. The Act outlines that, in respect of the regional spatial and economic strategy of a regional assembly, government departments and each local authority within the regional assembly area shall, every two years, prepare and submit a report to the assembly setting out progress made in supporting objectives of the strategy. Accordingly, EMRA wrote to all the government departments and local authorities, collated their responses received and prepared a Draft Monitoring Report, monitoring progress made in implementing the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. The draft report was presented to the Assembly at the July meeting. Following discussion and feedback from members, the Monitoring Report 2023 was adopted, subject to a number of clarifications and amendments.





## Participate in projects

EMRA is involved in several externally funded projects with a wide range of Irish and European partners. These projects enable us to showcase our successful initiatives and to learn from our partners' best practices which in turn enable us to deliver concrete results for our Region. In 2023, EMRA took an active role in the following projects.

### PROGRESS

**PROGRESS** is an Interreg Europe funded project with the objective of promoting improved governance for regional ecosystem services. The project brought together six regional partner organisations from Ireland, Italy, Spain, Latvia, Romania and Hungary to identify and implement policy solutions.

Through local stakeholder network activity and the development of a dedicated Action Plan, the objective of the PROGRESS partnership for EMRA was to improve the implementation of RSES and MASP objectives for ecosystem services and green infrastructure.

In 2023, EMRA participated in all project activities including full implementation of the project Action Plan. EMRA participated in the final project event in Barcelona on the 23rd and 24th of March, with in-person attendance and panel participation by Ms. Bridget Loughlin, Heritage Officer at Kildare County Council, Ms. Gemma Weir from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy, member of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.



Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy, EMRA, participating in the 'Neighbourhood level actions' Panel at the PROGRESS project final conference

Four thematic policy briefs and a suite of infographics were finalised and published in April and a final update on the project was provided to the Regional Assembly at the June meeting. The project formally concluded on the 31st of July 2023 and final project reporting was completed in September. The results of the project Pilot Action were presented by EMRA at the Autumn Conference of the Irish Planning Institute on 6th October 2023. Project results and outputs will inform the review of the RSES in relation to ecosystem services, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.



PROGRESS study visit on sustainable forest management in Catalonia



## Next2Met

**Next2Met is an innovative interregional exchange project which aims to increase the attractiveness of the Midlands Region as a place to live, work and visit, focusing on soft digitalisation measures. The project explores ways of attracting and retaining qualified people and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in areas that are located in the shadows of metropolitan areas.**

EMRA is a partner in this Interreg Europe project which brings together six regional and local actors and one advisory partner – from Finland, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Poland, Spain and France – sharing this common challenge and working together to implement policy solutions.

In 2023, EMRA successfully led the implementation of the Next2Met project Action Plan and closed off the project. To do so, a workshop was held on 14th of February with key project stakeholders to gather inputs for a new digitalisation roadmap. The inputs from the workshop provided clear support from local stakeholders for the alignment of local, national and European level strategies with a digitalisation roadmap for the Midlands Region, as inspired by the Lower Austrian good practice example. EMRA used all the inputs from the workshop to draft the Regional Digitalisation Roadmap in a way that is applicable to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The initial draft document was presented to the Assembly on 9th of June. The final version of the Regional Digitalisation Roadmap for the Midlands can be found on EMRA's website.



EMRA presenting project outcomes at the Next2Met final project event

EMRA attended and presented project outcomes on 14th of June at the final project event in Greifswald, Germany. The project formally concluded on the 31st of July 2023 and final financial and technical project reporting was completed in September. Project results and outputs will inform the review of the RSES in relation to digital solutions for regional attraction. The themes from the Next2Met project are continued in the Interreg Europe project ORIGINN.



Next2Met project partners and local stakeholders at the final event in Greifswald, Germany

## QGasSP

QGasSP was an ESPON Targeted Analysis Project for which EMRA is lead stakeholder. The aim of this research project was the development and delivery of a robust, simple and proportionate method for quantifying and forecasting the relative GHG impacts of alternative spatial planning policies, with pan-European applicability. The intended output was a flexible, user-friendly web application to use in modelling GHG emissions for differing spatial planning policy options and to inform decision-making processes, including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Following the publication of the final project report in Q3 2022, the Greenhouse Gas Impact Assessment (GGIA) Tool (and user manual) was launched in Q1 2023 and integrated into the ESPON Policy & Knowledge Platform. Further to the conclusion of the project in Q1, EMRA continued to engage with ESPON and the Office of the Planning Regulator on the quantification of greenhouse gas emissions. The project results were presented by EMRA at the Autumn Conference of the Irish Planning Institute on the 6th of October 2023.



## ORIGINN



ORIGINN project partners in Östersund (SW)

ORIGINN is an Interreg Europe project focused on strengthening regional policy for the promotion of rural economic and social transformation through innovation, with a focus on the agri-food sector. EMRA is one of seven partners from across Europe (from Sweden, Romania, Estonia, Italy, Slovakia, and Spain) engaging in this knowledge-exchange project. This initiative for interregional cooperation will inform policy improvements in the participating regional authorities. The geographic focus of the project is the midland counties of Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, and Laois, all of which boast promising examples of innovation across the rural economy. Running from March 2023 to May 2027, the ORIGINN project is divided into semesters and will address four themes during its lifecycle; Digitalisation, Green Economy, Soft Innovation, and Social Innovation.

The project was presented to the Regional Assembly at the June meeting, during which the discussion focused on the main challenges to be addressed through the project. As agreed by the Members, these are: population decline, particularly among young people; people leaving the agri-food sector; adding value which stays in local communities; and maintaining and growing rural Ireland's clean, green image. The first in-person meeting of the partners was held in Östersund, Sweden, on the 20th and 21st of June. The partners engaged in a joint review of relevant Interreg Europe projects, and subsequently EMRA drafted a roadmap of objectives for our participation in the project. In August, EMRA submitted Food Vision 2030: Ireland's Integrated Systems Approach for a Sustainable Agri-food Sector as a Good Practice to the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform, where it was published as a positive example for other regions to emulate.

In September, the second semester began with a focus on Digitalisation. A dedicated ORIGINN webpage on the EMRA website was published. The Project Officer attended a variety of meetings and conferences to begin the development of a stakeholder network across the project themes. In addition, Good Practices in digitalisation for rural development were identified in the region. Preparations were made for project activities in the remaining two months of the Digitalisation semester, including sharing these Good Practices through the project webinar and the second study visit to Estonia in early 2024. Longer-term planning was also initiated in relation to the third study visit of the project partners to the Eastern and Midlands Region in the summer of 2024.



## Leadership in EU funds delivery

### EU Just Transition Fund

After the adoption of the EU JTF Programme for Ireland in December 2022, EMRA as Managing Authority worked throughout 2023 to get the implementation of the Programme under way.



Participants to the 1st EU JTF PMC in Tullamore

EMRA organised three meetings of the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) in March in Offaly, in May in Laois and in November in Roscommon. The Programme officially launched on 28th April at the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre, Co Longford.

Over the course of the year, PMC members approved the nine implementation plans for the nine actions of the Programme, thus enabling Intermediate bodies (IBs) to kickstart their activities. Information sessions about specific actions were organised for PMC members to ensure all questions could be answered before approval of the implementation plans.



3rd EU JTF PMC in Athlone

EMRA, as MA, worked in close collaboration with the Member State (Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications), all IBs and delivery partners to prepare for the launch of the first calls for proposals under the Programme.



### In 2023, the following calls for proposals were launched:

Action	Call name	Date
<b>3.3 Installation of publicly available charge point infrastructure at community centre sites</b>	Community Facilities Electric Vehicle Charging Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened: 28 July 2023</li> <li>Closed: 28 September 2023</li> </ul>
<b>1.3 Support research, development and innovation in the bioeconomy sector</b>	Bioeconomy Demonstration Initiative Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened: 16 August 2023</li> <li>Closed: 13 October 2023</li> </ul>
<b>1.1 Support to the economic diversification of the local economy through the development of the regenerative tourism sector</b>	Investment Grant-Aid Scheme for Private & Community SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened: 30 August 2023</li> <li>Expressions of Interest closing: 30 June 2024</li> <li>Formal application closing date: 31 December 2024</li> </ul>
<b>1.2 Support the implementation of local and regional economic strategies</b>	Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened: 13 October 2023</li> <li>Two closing dates depending on application pathway: 8 December 2023 &amp; 23 January 2024</li> </ul>

The MA engaged with delivery partners on the launch of further calls for roll out at the start of 2024.

The MA's work involved drafting several key documents such as the Service Level Agreements to be signed between the MA, DECC and each IB, the systems description and the evaluation plan. EMRA also worked with the appointed service provider to develop the IT system which is to be used for the reporting on all operations of the Programme.

Throughout the year, EMRA met regularly with all IBs, DECC, the audit authority but also the European Commission. EMRA provided the European Commission with the required programme and financial data at the agreed dates. EMRA also attended the Annual Implementation Review meeting held in Dublin in November with the European Commission, DECC and DPENDR to present the state of play of the delivery of the EU JTF Programme.

### Communications and publicity

The highlight of the year for the EU JTF was the launch event which took place on 28th April 2023 at the Corlea trackway visitor centre (Co. Longford). The event was attended by the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Minister Eamon Ryan TD along with five Ministers of State, Local Authorities Cathaoirigh, Members of the Oireachtas and European Commission representatives and local residents of the Midlands. Along with healthy coverage on social media platforms, the event had a good deal of local and regional media coverage including print, online and radio as well as a main segment on the national evening news. The communication activities around the launch resulted in an estimated reach of 2.3 million people.



Miia Jouppi – European Commission and EMRA team at the EU JTF launch event

The Programme was featured in the Europe Day supplement of the Sunday Independent (published on 9 May 2023) and at the National Ploughing Championships (19-21 September 2023) where the Programme was showcased alongside other European programmes under the EU Commission tent.

EMRA engaged in numerous outreach opportunities for direct engagement with stakeholders. The MA organised a series of open information sessions for the general public about the Programme and took part in the scheme-specific applicant information sessions organised by the IBs. EMRA met with representatives of several of the county councils included in the Territory ahead of the launch of the call for Local and Regional Economic Strategies Support Scheme. EMRA also regularly presented on the Programme and progress in its implementation to the Assembly and to the members of the MRTT (Midlands Regional Transition Team). The MA presented the status of the Programme to the Oireachtas EU Affairs Committee at Government Buildings on 18th October.

EMRA, as MA, regularly updates its website, the eufunds.ie website and the EU JTF dedicated social media channels to share news and funding opportunities offered by the Programme. A dedicated programme newsletter also serves to provide targeted updates to programme stakeholders and interested individuals. A total of eight newsletters were sent in 2023 to 205 subscribers with an average open rate of 60.4%.

## European Regional Development Fund

Following the adoption of the Southern, Eastern and Midland ERDF Programme in November 2022, 2023 saw the first steps of the implementation of the Programme. The Programme is managed by the SRA and EMRA has been given an “enhanced role” in its delivery.

In 2023, EMRA took part in the ERDF SEM Programme launch event in Kilkenny Castle and attended the first Monitoring Committee meeting.



EMRA Director Jim Conway, Miia Jouppi – European Commission and SRA Director David Kelly

Throughout the year, five funding calls were launched and closed and a further 6th was launched with a closing date in 2024, all related to Priority 1 of the Programme “Smarter More Competitive Regions”.

## European Territorial Cooperation programmes 2021-2027

The Assembly has been invited to join the governance instances of several European programmes to ensure their smooth implementation. EMRA members sit on the PEACE+ Monitoring Committee while the executive of EMRA sits on the following: North West Europe, Atlantic area and URBACT. Besides, EMRA assesses projects proposals under the Atlantic Area and North West Europe programme.

EMRA also takes part in the assessment of project applications for the North-West Europe and Atlantic area programmes and as such reviewed 19 applications under the Atlantic Area call and 147 projects across three calls under the North West Europe programme.



### EMRA Elected Members representation on Programme Monitoring Committees

Programme	Representative	Meeting Dates
Southern, Eastern and Midland Regional Programme (ERDF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr. Mary Hanafin (Full)</li> <li>• Cllr. Gerry Walsh (Full)</li> <li>• Cllr. Dermot Lacey (Alt)</li> <li>• Cllr. Aisling Moran (Alt)</li> </ul>	24th January, 25th April
EU JTF Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Rob Power (until July 2023)</li> <li>• Cllr K Feeney</li> </ul>	8th March, 31st May, 28th November
Peace +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr. Conor Keelan (Full)</li> <li>• Cllr. Mary Freehill (Alt)</li> </ul>	
National Partnership Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathaoirleach Cllr Rob Power</li> </ul>	No meeting in 2023

### EMRA officials participating on Programme Monitoring Committees

Programme	Participant	Meeting Attended
National Partnership Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Jim Conway, Director then</li> <li>• Clare Bannon, Acting Director</li> </ul>	No meeting in 2023
Employment, Inclusion, Skills and Training Programme (European Social Fund - ESF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Helena Stromberg, Senior Staff officer</li> </ul>	21st March, 30 November
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Bernie Roe, Assistant Director</li> </ul>	28th March
Southern Eastern and Midland ERDF Regional Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Jim Conway, Director then</li> <li>• Ms Bernie Roe, Assistant Director</li> </ul>	24th January, 25th April
Northern and Western ERDF Regional Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Jim Conway, Director then</li> <li>• Ms Bernie Roe, Assistant Director</li> </ul>	10th May
Regional Operational Programme Quarterly Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Jim Conway, Director</li> <li>• Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer EU and Corporate Affairs</li> </ul>	September
Asylum, Migration and Integration (AMIF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Bernie Roe, Assistant Director</li> </ul>	25th September
CAP Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer EU and Corporate Affairs</li> </ul>	31st July
PEACE steering committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Bernie Roe, Assistant Director</li> </ul>	24th October
Interreg Atlantic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer EU and Corporate</li> </ul>	No meeting attended
Interreg North-West Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer EU and Corporate</li> </ul>	22nd-23rd March, 20th-21st April
URBACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms Laure Antoniotti, Administrative Officer EU and Corporate</li> </ul>	30th-31st May, 21st-22nd November



## Be a resource hub for the Region

**A key ambition of the Regional Assembly is to become a resource hub for the Region and to provide guidance and support for all stakeholders wishing to access EU funding. To achieve this goal, the Irish Regions European Office (IREO) and EMRA's expanding responsibilities as National Contact Point play a key role.**

### Raising Awareness and Communication

**2023 saw the Irish Government launch a campaign EU50 to mark Ireland's 50-year membership of the European Union. Throughout the year, the IREO played a role in this campaign by updating branding and making presentations on the benefits of EU membership to Ireland. In February 2023, the IREO presented the work of the IREO and updated delegates on the work of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions at the annual Association of Irish Regions training seminar which was held in Monaghan.**

On 19th April 2023, the Irish Regions European Office (IREO), in conjunction with the three Regional Assemblies of Ireland and the Irish Delegation to the EU Committee of the Regions held an EU funding conference "Connecting, Communicating and Collaborating – Irish Regions Cooperating across the EU: How local authorities can engage in European Programmes". This one-day national conference was attended by over 130 delegates and it aimed to communicate the opportunities for local government to participate in EU funding, particularly in the European Territorial Cooperation programmes, the Horizon Europe Missions and the LIFE programme.

Keynote speaker, Paschal Donohoe, Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Programme and Reform noted that "INTERREG and other EU programmes play an important role in supporting the process of creating links, exchanging views, understanding differences, working together, and promoting and maintaining peace". Cllr Michael Murphy, Member of Tipperary County Council and Head of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions called on Government to support a strategy to enhance the engagement of local councils in EU funding, by enhancing the support for the Irish Regions European Office in Brussels and funding an EU officer in each local authority in Ireland.

The conference featured nine different EU funding programmes and concurrent information sessions were held during the afternoon. These sessions informed and guided potential participants through the application process for the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme, the North West Europe Programme, the Atlantic Area programme, the URBACT, the ESPON and the INTERREG Europe programmes. One to one sessions were also held on several of the Horizon Europe Missions and the LIFE programme for protecting the environment and combatting climate change.

One of the highlights of the day was the launch of the IREO and Regional Assemblies interactive map which provides details of all ETC projects for the 2014 – 2020 period and further details of this map can be found on the Regional Development Monitor website: <https://rdm.geohive.ie/pages/our-regions-economy>.



Panel at EU funding conference

Throughout the year, the IREO advised local authorities on a regular basis on the types and forms of networks that can assist with understanding EU policy and funding programmes, as well as assist with building partnerships.

## URBACT National Contact Point (NCP)

**Another way for the Assembly to play the role of resource hub for Irish stakeholders is through our role as National Contact Point for the URBACT programme which promotes integrated sustainable urban development.**

This entails several functions, including the following: communication of URBACT events, network results, funding calls; supporting the URBACT secretariat in the running of training and upskilling events; advising Irish cities in their engagements with URBACT; and meeting with Irish cities participating in URBACT projects and disseminating the results of those projects.

An URBACT Ireland Information Day occurred at the Customs House, Dublin in January. It was well attended, and its agenda included the launch of URBACT IV in Ireland and the first call, for Action Planning Networks (APNs). The attendees also heard from a variety of speakers at the national, regional, and local level, and engaged in plenty of networking. The Info Day generated several follow up one-to-one online meetings and phone calls, discussing specific local authority queries regarding participation in the programme. The NCP supported several local authorities with the partner search platform and with subsequent queries around their final APN applications. The NCP worked with other NCPs and consultants around Europe in helping situate Irish towns and cities within consortia underpinning eventual APN applications.



URBACT NUP Karl Murphy presenting at the URBACT info Day

Following this call, Irish local authorities were successful in becoming partners to 7 of the 30 APNs which began their activities in June 2023. These include Limerick City (2), Ennis, Clare (1), Ballymahon, Longford (1), Sligo Town (1), Navan, Meath (1) and, Balbriggan, Fingal (1). Fingal County Council became the first ever URBACT Lead Partner in Ireland.

Following the commencement of their APN journeys, the NCP had online, or in-person chats with each of the new Irish partners to detail the supports available to them from EMRA as Contact Point entity. All Irish partners met with one another and with the NCP during the URBACT University in Malmö, Sweden in August. This event kick started the APN journey, helping partners comprehend the URBACT tools with which to tackle their urban challenge, joined by their respective transnational partners. In December, five of the seven Irish partners joined the NCP online and gave project updates to one another, before discussing synergies between the projects, identifying any extra support they required.

The NCP later visited all the locations of the Irish project partners as part of the visit of the Lead Partner and Lead Expert to each locality. The purpose of these visits was to establish the baseline situation in determining the change that was being sought in each locality as part of their APN journey. These visits occurred between July 2023 and December 2023, with visits to Balbriggan (a second time) and Sligo also taking in the visit of each town's transnational partners. For these two larger visits, some 25 to 30 partners from across seven to nine other European towns and cities arrived in our Irish towns to learn about the locality, how the urban challenge was set and how change was envisaged.

The Programme was presented in person and online to elected members and the local authority sector on several occasions during 2023. These included: to the EMRA members in January, to SRA members in February, to the AIR Conference in Monaghan in February, to an European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) event in Wexford in March, during an IREO Funding Conference in Athlone in April, to a meeting of EU programme stakeholders (Access Europe, the Wheel) in May, to an Association of Town and City Management meeting in Drogheda in November, and to an Access Europe showcase event at the RDS in December. The NCP also presented the Programme online to other European programme contact points for Ireland in September, facilitated by the Access Europe team. In October, alongside other Interreg Contact Points in Ireland, the NCP gave evidence to the Oireachtas' Joint Committee on European Union Affairs re the topic of unlocking EU funding.

In February the NCP also attended the launch of the Integrated Action Plan for Sustainable Development Goals network in Trim, Meath. This related to a previous URBACT Global Goals for Cities network which concluded in 2022. The NCP joined the Spanish Info Day online, presenting Irish towns and cities' thematic interest regarding the APN call, helping identify commonality between the Irish and Spanish towns and cities.

Several meetings occurred between the NCPs from around Europe and the URBACT Secretariat through the year. The NCP attended the Secretariat's presentation of the APN call in January, the NCP coordination webinar in April and the in-person coordination meeting in May in Paris. The NCP also attended the online kick-off session at the beginning of the APN networks in June (morning and afternoon), the pre- Malmö Summer University chat with the Secretariat in August and a further online NCP coordination meeting in November.

### URBACT Communications

- URBACT in Ireland publishes newsletters every second month. Seven newsletters were published during 2023.
- News articles are also published on the Ireland webpage on the URBACT website. Seven were created during 2023.
- Regular and more real time updates were provided during 2023 on the X Platform (formerly Twitter). The page has just over 1100 followers, and this continues to be the primary forum (jointly) for both the URBACT and EUI programmes in Ireland.

### URBACT-EUI coordination

In advance of EMRA being officially appointed as Contact Point for the European Urban Initiative (EUI), information on the programme was disseminated widely. The EUI was presented to EMRA members in quarter 4, including how EUI and URBACT would be presented jointly as a complete menu of options for our local authorities. Via the IREO, the EUI Secretariat was also invited to the abovementioned funding conference in Athlone in April. EUI news and opportunities were further presented in six of seven URBACT newsletters during the year.

In March EMRA attended the Cities Forum and met with several local and regional actors in Ireland and Europe. The EUI was formally launched at this event.

EMRA signed the official agreement with the EUI Secretariat and thus became Urban Contract Point (UCP) for Ireland.







# Grow as a Region

## Communicating and showcasing EMRA's assets

### Website and social media

In 2023 we have continued to expand our online presence on various social media channels. We currently have accounts with three platforms:



Eastern and Midland  
Regional Assembly



@EMRAAssembly &  
@IrishRegions\_EU



Eastern and Midland  
Regional Assembly

Twitter/X remains the most important dissemination platform for EMRA as most of our stakeholders and partners have a presence there. Our Twitter audience gained 132 new followers between January and December. The growth was fully organic (non-paid for). Our LinkedIn profile had 500 followers on 31st Dec 2023.

A dedicated account has also been set up on X (formerly Twitter) for the EU Just Transition Fund Programme (@EUJTF\_ie). At the end of 2023 this account had 378 followers, had made 121 posts with 125.1K impressions.

Throughout the year we have continued to maintain our website [www.emra.ie](http://www.emra.ie) and update it with relevant information. We used the website to disseminate information about our involvement in the EU Interreg projects and implementation of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and to fulfil EMRA's new communication obligations in relation to the EU Just Transition Fund Programme. Work has been underway during most part of the year to redesign the Assembly website to update its functionality and better reflect the organisation's work with a view to launch in 2024.

### Raising the profile of the strengths of local and regional Government

The Association of Irish Regions (AIR), the representative body for the three Regional Assemblies, held its first seminar and training event on 7-9 February 2023 in Monaghan. The event explored the role of regions in navigating present and future challenges and opportunities. The seminar and training event was a platform for regional perspectives for policy making, economic and spatial development and how the Regional Assemblies are a key delivery mechanism for strong regional development. Over the three days, over 260 participants, including councillors and local authority executive staff, engaged with and enjoyed discussions on enhanced regional planning, strong regional economic development, connected regions and EU affairs. Speakers included journalist and environmentalist John Gibbons, entrepreneur Eddie O'Connor, OECD Policy Analyst Michael Flood, Anne Graham, Chief Executive Officer with the National Transport Authority, Professor Niamh Moore-Cherry, Professor of Urban Governance and Development at University College Dublin, Niall Cussen, Chief Executive and Planning Regulator at the Office of the Planning Regulator, and Helen Healy, Head of Regional Policy at Ibec.

The OECD report on rethinking Ireland's regional attractiveness was launched alongside the event and a half-day seminar was held on emerging EU policy and funding opportunities that included presentations and two panel discussions with representatives from a range of EU Funding programmes.



EMRA members and staff at the Region in Focus training event

Following the successful visit by the Senior Management Team of Dublin City Council at the end of 2022, the IREO was delighted to take part in a study visit for elected members of Dublin City Council in January 2023. The group visited the European Parliament, met with Irish MEPs, European Commission officials and the IREO provided a briefing on the importance of an all-Council approach to applying for EU funding.

The IREO participated in an event organised by Dublin City Council to mark European Week of Regions and Cities. This event, held in November 2023 was presented the work of the Council in building a circular economy in the city.

Finally, EMRA was featured in the Autumn 2023 edition of the Public Sector Magazine. The article 'EMRA: Driving A Regional Agenda' highlighted the significant contributions the Regional Assembly made in 2023 to support development in our region.

### IREO Communication

During 2023, articles about the work of the IREO and the Irish Delegation to the CoR were published in the Local Government Review and in the AILG newsletter.

The IREO published 6 editions of the newsletter during 2023. This bi-monthly newsletter keeps Irish Local Authorities and Regional Assemblies up to speed with the latest developments on the work of the IREO, the EU policy arena as well as the EU funding landscape. The newsletter highlights the important work of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and showcases EU projects and initiatives involving Irish local authorities.

## Corporate, HR and Finance

In 2023, the Corporate Section continued to provide the administrative and organisation support services for the Assembly and the ongoing management of same. Functions such as Finance, Corporate Services and Human resources are delivered in line with organisational objectives.

The Corporate Plan 2019-2024 presents the functions of the Assembly and sets out EMRA's vision, objectives, and values. In line with the Corporate Plan, over the course of 2023 the Regional Assembly pursued three main strategic goals:

1. Drive the regional agenda by ensuring ongoing and meaningful engagement with stakeholders to ensure coherence of regional development and shape policy-making
2. Deliver concrete impact on the ground by delivering projects and be a resource and support for the region
3. Grow as a region by raising our regional profile and strengthening the organisation



Those goals are translated annually into a Programme of Works. The 2023 Programme of Works was adopted by the Assembly in February 2023 and circulated to the constituent Local Authorities.

Reports on the progress towards the achievement of these goals are reported to Members quarterly through updates on the Programme of Works and every year through in the Annual report. The 2022 annual report was drafted by the executive team and adopted by the Assembly at the June meeting.

### Human Resources

**The Human Resources Section continued to implement the adopted Workforce Plan for EMRA and worked with management across the organisation to deliver on their resourcing requirements in the context of the objectives of the Corporate Plan 2019-2024.**

In 2023, EMRA appointed a third Senior Executive Planner to complete the planning team. An Assistant Staff officer and a Clerical officer joined the EU JTF MA team and an EU project officer was recruited to deliver the ORIGINN project. EMRA also launched a recruitment campaign for the role of executive planner. Finally, 2023 saw the retirement of the Director of the Assembly in July, with the Assistant Director/Senior Planner acting up as Director in the interim period.

Human Resources engaged with the Local Government Management Agency's HR Officers Network which facilitates knowledge exchange in relation to HR policies.

Staff members undertook necessary training throughout the year in areas of EU funds management, Financial Management System, Data protection, State aid, Health and Safety and application of internal policies.

### Staff Support Services

EMRA maintained its provision of staff support services as part of an overall employee assistance programme throughout the year.

### Freedom of Information

During 2023, the FOI officer co-ordinated management of requests received under the Freedom of Information legislation.

The Assembly received no FOI request in 2023.



## Finance

The main functions of the Finance section in 2023 included:

- Preparation of the Annual Financial Statement 2022 (Adopted by the Members in April 2023)
- Financial Management, procurement and control
- Payment, recoupment and reconciliation of accounts
- Financial administration of the IREO in Brussels
- Administration of EMRA payroll and superannuation through the local government payroll and superannuation shared services centre (MyPay)
- Preparation of the annual Budget for 2024 which was adopted by Members in November 2023.

The Corporate team facilitated the annual audit performed by the government auditor which took place in quarter 4 of 2023.



## Regional Assembly energy usage

There are no individual meters installed in Ballymun Civic Centre offices, hence we report only on the usage throughout the entire building.

Utility	2022	2023	%
Electricity (Mw)	1212	1093	-9.5%
Water (M3)	5867	5792	-1.2%
Gas (M3)	189200	176118	-6.95 %

2023 upgrades include:

- Operating hours of Chillers
- Adjustment of water temperature of chiller from 6°C to 10°C (this resulted in reducing operating time of chillers)
- Upgraded High Level Atrium lights with LED Fittings

A scenic photograph of a coastal town, likely in the East of England, featuring a harbor with numerous sailboats, a rocky breakwater, and a cluster of colorful buildings. The town is situated on a peninsula, with the sea on three sides. The foreground shows a grassy hillside overlooking the harbor. The image is partially obscured by a large orange circle and a teal background with a network pattern.

# Annexes

## List of Staff 2023



**Jim Conway**

Director  
(Retired July 2023)



**Clare Bannon**

Assistant Director and Senior  
Planner then Acting Director



**Anne-Marie Wood Wolfe**

Acting Assistant Director and Senior Planner  
(Planning and Economic Development)



**Bernadette Roe**

Assistant Director  
(EU JTF and Corporate)



**Teresa Lennon**

Head of IREO



**Padraig O'Shea**

Senior Executive Planner



**Eugenia Thompson**

Senior Executive Planner



**Owen Douglas**

EU Project Officer then  
Research and Policy Officer



**Laure Antoniotti**

Administrative Officer  
EU and Corporate Affairs



**Terence Connolly**

Administrative Officer



**Simon Musial**

Senior Staff Officer



**Helena Stromberg**

EU Project Officer then  
Communications Officer



**Karl Murphy**

EU Affairs Officer



**Ruth Kilcullen**

EU Project Officer  
(Started August 2023)



**Rory O'Sullivan**

Staff Officer  
(Started May 2023)



**Tadhg Browne**

EU Support Officer



**Alan Lambe**

Assistant Staff Officer  
(Resigned May 2023)



**Geraldine Kenny**

Clerical Officer



**Ross Higgins**

Clerical Officer



**Sarah Campbell**

Clerical Officer



**Kiara Abbey**

Clerical Officer  
(Started July 2023)



## Annual Financial Statement 2022

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	
Expenditure	EMRA 2022
Salaries	611,759
Office Equipment & Supplies	7,972
Information Technology	38,814
Communications & Postage	8,621
Members Annual Allowances	46,661
Travel & Subsistence Allowances:	
I - Members Travel & Subsistence	11,104
II - Members conferences	1,248
III - Staff Travel and Subsistence	17,930
Rent	117,648
Insurance	6,585
Training	9,006
Consultancy & professional Fees	82,033
Facilities, Energy & Rates charges	70,299
Advertising	1,673
Audit Fee	6,994
Miscellaneous	10,708
EU Affairs & IRO (COR)	192,346
Communicating Europe	0
JTF	151,582
URBACT	26,953
National Practice Transfer Initiative (Urbact)	45,777
Next2Met Interreg Programme	49,114
Progress Interreg project	78,568
<b>Expenditure total</b>	<b>1,593,395</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Local Authorities Contributions	1,160,990
Other Income	53,364
Superannuation	14,536
Committee of the Regions	190,682
COR Misc	1,664
Communicating Europe	0
National Practice Transfer Initiative (Urbact)	45,498
URBACT	26,500
Next2Met Interreg Programme	49,114
Progress Interreg project	78,568
JTF	151,582
<b>Receipts total</b>	<b>1,772,499</b>
<b>Difference between Income + Expenditure</b>	<b>179,104</b>
<b>Opening balance at 01/01/2022</b>	<b>1,317,510</b>
<b>Closing Balance at end of year Surplus</b>	<b>1,496,614</b>

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	
Expenditure	EMRA 2021
Salaries	802,013
Office Equipment & Supplies	6,687
Information Technology	30,875
Communications & Postage	14,117
Members Annual Allowances	41,005
Travel & Subsistence Allowances:	
I - Members Travel & Subsistence	142
II - Members conferences	0
III - Staff Travel and Subsistence	5,164
Rent	68,519
Insurance	5,572
Training	21,471
Consultancy & professional Fees	113,885
Facilities, Energy & Rates charges	61,819
Advertising	7,100
Audit Fee	12,588
Miscellaneous	5,138
EU Affairs & IRO (COR)	173,849
Communicating Europe	6,574
Encore Network Conference 2021	35,200
URBACT	25,176
National Practice Transfer Initiative (Urbact)	23,324
Next2Met Interreg Programme	58,311
Progress Interreg project	70,588
<b>Expenditure total</b>	<b>1,589,118</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Local Authorities Contributions	1,301,322
Other Income	156,193
Superannuation	21,827
Committee of the Regions	173,834
COR Misc	14
Communicating Europe	5,000
National Practice Transfer Initiative (Urbact)	23,324
URBACT	25,176
Next2Met Interreg Programme	49,526
Progress Interreg project	59,924
<b>Receipts total</b>	<b>1,816,142</b>
<b>Difference between Income + Expenditure</b>	<b>227,024</b>
<b>Opening balance at 01/01/2021</b>	<b>1,090,486</b>
<b>Closing Balance at end of year Surplus</b>	<b>1,317,510</b>

## Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly		
Balance Sheet	2022	2021
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
IT Equipment	€5,000	€5,000
Furniture & Fixtures	€0	€0
Heritage Assets	€10,000	€10,000
	<b>€15,000</b>	<b>€15,000</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at Bank	€1,279,976	€1,066,640
Debtors	€401,128	€383,171
Petty Cash	€13	€130
Prepayments	€1,427	€1,473
	<b>€1,682,544</b>	<b>€1,451,412</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Creditors & Accruals	€173,413	€133,902
Deferred income	€12,517	€0
Bank Overdraft	€0	€0
	<b>€185,930</b>	<b>€133,902</b>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>€1,496,614</b>	<b>€1,317,510</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>€1,511,614</b>	<b>€1,332,510</b>
<b>Financed by</b>		
Balance @ 01/01/22	€1,317,510	€1,090,486
General Reserve	€0	€0
Inherited Fixed Assets from old DRA	€15,000	€15,000
(Deficit)\Excess of Income over Expenditure	€179,104	€227,024
	<b>€1,511,614</b>	<b>€1,332,510</b>


## Members Allowances & Expenses 2022

Members (Cllr.)	Fixed Allowance	Training	Committee of Regions	Conferences
Daryl Barron (Dublin)	€ 375.82	€ -	€ -	€ -
Emma Blain (Dublin)	€ 447.40	€ -	€ -	€ -
Aoife Breslin (Kildare)(CoR)	€ 1,231.40	€ -	€ -	€ -
Fintan Brett (Kildare)	€ 731.95	€ -	€ -	€ -
John Browne (Longford)	€ 2,103.19	€ -	€ -	€ -
Emma Coffey (Louth)	€ 187.19	€ -	€ -	€ -
Avril Cronin (Wicklow)	€ 1,034.02	€ -	€ -	€ -
Eamon Dooley (Offaly)	€ 2,444.18	€ -	€ -	€ -
Laura Donaghy (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ -	€ -	€ -
Caroline Dwane (Laois)(CoR)	€ 1,610.49	€ -	€ 630.21	€ -
Kate Feeney (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ -	€ -	€ -
Brian Fitzgerald (Meath)	€ 731.95	€ -	€ -	€ -
Tom Fortune (Wicklow)	€ 415.21	€ -	€ -	€ -
Catherine Fitzgerald (Laois)	€ 1,681.31	€ -	€ -	€ -
Eddie Fitzpatrick (Offaly)	€ 1,593.94	€ 275.50	€ -	€ -
Mary Freehill (Dublin)	€ 786.11	€ 177.61	€ -	€ -
James (Jim) Gildea (Dublin)	€ 606.97	€ -	€ -	€ -
Alison Gilliland (Dublin)	€ 596.53	€ 241.50	€ -	€ -
Lyn Hagin Meade (Dublin)	€ 382.90	€ -	€ -	€ -
Mary Hanafin (Dublin)	€ 578.46	€ -	€ -	€ -
David Healy (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ -	€ -	€ -
Deirdre Heney (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ -	€ -	€ -
Deirdre Heney (Cathaoirleachs Allowance)	€ 5,850.00	€ -	€ -	€ -
Janet Horner (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ -	€ -	€ -
Vincent Jackson (Dublin)	€ 524.96	€ -	€ -	€ -
Pamela Kearns (Dublin)	€ 447.41	€ -	€ -	€ -
Conor Keelan (Louth)	€ 403.31	€ -	€ -	€ -
Dermot Lacey (Dublin)	€ 596.55	€ 683.64	€ -	€ 419.07
Brigid Manton (Dublin)	€ 663.67	€ -	€ -	€ -
Tony McCormack (Offaly)	€ 647.79	€ -	€ -	€ -
Jimmy McClearn (CoR)	€ -	€ -	€ 774.40	€ -
Padraig McEvoy (Kildare)	€ 804.87	€ -	€ -	€ -
Declan McDonnell (Galway)(CoR)	€ -	€ -	€ 273.85	€ -
Paddy Meade (Meath)	€ 1,016.91	€ -	€ -	€ -
Aisling Moran (Laois)	€ 1,553.62	€ -	€ -	€ -
Micheal Murphy (Tipperary)(CoR)	€ -	€ -	€ 2,831.81	€ -
Colm Murray (Longford)	€ 2,065.31	€ -	€ -	€ -
Danny Owen (Offaly)	€ 344.21	€ -	€ -	€ -
Peter O'Brien (Dublin)	€ 447.41	€ -	€ -	€ -
Robert O'Donoghue (Dublin)	€ 254.39	€ -	€ -	€ -
Damien O'Reilly (Meath)	€ 629.80	€ 305.40	€ -	€ -
Aengus O'Rourke (WestMeath)	€ 1,684.86	€ -	€ -	€ -
Robert Power (Kildare)	€ 856.95	€ -	€ -	€ -
Robert Power (Cathaoirleachs Allowance)	€ 2,925.00	€ -	€ -	€ -
Una Power (Dublin)	€ 447.40	€ -	€ -	€ -
Gerry Walsh (Dublin)	€ 842.25	€ 258.50	€ -	€ -









**Eastern & Midland  
Regional Assembly**  
3rd Floor  
Ballymun Civic Centre  
Main Street  
Ballymun  
Dublin 9  
D09 C8P5  
+353 (0) 1 807 4482  
[www.emra.ie](http://www.emra.ie)



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre  
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly