



Tionól Réigiúnach
an Tuaiscirt & an Iarthair
**Northern & Western
Regional Assembly**

Economist (Grade VII)

Information Booklet

Closing Date: Friday 28th February 2025 @ 4pm



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Có-mhaoinithe ag an
Aontas Eorpach
Co-funded by the
European Union

The Organisations

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) plays a pivotal role in driving strategic regional development. This responsibility is enshrined in national legislation and delivered through the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which aligns with Project Ireland 2040, the Climate Action Plan, and the National Planning Framework.

The NWRA is uniquely positioned as Ireland's only region classified as "in transition" by the European Commission, highlighting both its potential for growth and the pressing challenges it faces. These challenges include:

- A GDP per capita significantly below the EU average,
- Persistent deficits in infrastructure investment compared to other regions, and
- Structural economic challenges, such as lower productivity and educational attainment.

Addressing these disparities requires evidence-driven strategies and strong advocacy to attract the necessary investment and policy support. With the enactment of the Planning and Development Act 2024, the Assembly's role has expanded, encompassing new responsibilities in renewable energy, coastal planning, and infrastructure prioritisation.

Planning & Economic Development Functions:

Since its establishment in 2015, the NWRA has seen a consistent increase in its responsibilities, requiring adaptation to meet the demands of a dynamic legislative and policy environment. The Planning and Development Act 2024 reinforces the Assembly's role as a critical enabler of regional planning and economic development by assigning new statutory functions, including:

- Preparing strategies for renewable energy, climate change adaptation, and coastal planning,
- Setting housing and population targets for local authorities,
- Coordinating joint area plans across administrative boundaries, and
- Prioritising and advocating for regional infrastructure investments.

These expanded functions necessitate robust economic expertise to ensure that policy decisions are informed by sound macro and microeconomic analysis. For example:

- The Renewable Energy Spatial Policy Framework requires economic modelling to optimise investments and ensure alignment with national targets.
- Housing targets must be informed by demographic and market trends to avoid mismatches between supply and demand.
- Infrastructure priorities must reflect a comprehensive understanding of economic returns and regional needs to address historical underinvestment.

The Competition

The Northern & Western Regional Assembly are currently inviting applications from suitably qualified persons for the post of **Economist**.

The Assembly will, following an open competitive interview process, form a panel for the post of Economic/Policy Analyst from which one permanent full-time post will be filled.

The panel will exist for one year and may be extended for a further period of one year at the discretion of the Director. Suitably qualified persons are invited to apply for inclusion on this panel.

About the Role

The **Economist** will be a key member of the Regional Planning Team and will serve the Regional Assembly in the development and delivery of its core functions.

The role of the Economist is to ensure that a rigorous economic and policy rationale underpins the activities of the Regional Assembly by playing a central role in the collection and analysis of data, the establishment of baseline reporting at regional and sub-regional level, formulating and implementing economic policies associated with the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, and by providing inputs to policy and programme development, and providing submissions on behalf of the Assembly, as necessary.

This role will involve inputting to the development of national, regional and local policy including contributing to the review of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Assembly, in particular the provisions stated in Section 29 (1)(n) of the Planning and Development Act 2024 with respect to a strategy relating to economic matters, as amended or updated.

The position requires excellent administrative, supervisory, interpersonal, communication, research and other particular skills and expertise depending on the demands of the role.

Key duties and responsibilities

- Contribute to policy development across a wide range of areas
- Provide statistical and economic analysis to the Assembly
- Review and analyse economic data and policy drivers to support the development and delivery of the review of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy in line with statutory timeframes
- Assisting in relevant aspects of the implementation of the measures set out Project Ireland 2040, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, and ERDF Programmes
- Support the Regional Assembly in its statutory role in relation to oversight of Local Economic and Community Plans
- Undertake studies/reports/research (including as part of a team) which investigate and analyse specific economic, issues on behalf of the Regional Assembly.
- Prepare advice, including any required evidence-based reports, to inform the development, delivery and monitoring or regional policy
- Preparation, input to, and delivery of submissions on behalf of the Regional Assembly
- Use data, quantitative and qualitative tools and techniques to conduct policy analysis and evaluation
- Economic modelling and forecasting, having regard to wider national and international models
- Provide support to the Director, to ensure work programmes are implemented to deliver on the Regional

Assembly's corporate and operational plans, including planning and prioritising work

- Develop and maintain productive working relationships, both internally and externally, including with Assembly members, Government Departments and Agencies.
- Act as a key point of contact and liaison, in relation to all operational matters for the areas for which they are responsible. This includes communicating and liaising effectively with colleagues, managers, the public, and elected representatives
- Represent the Assembly on committees and at meetings. This comprises engagement with local authorities, central government departments and relevant agencies, and participation on relevant multi-disciplinary teams
- Respond to policy negotiations at National and EU level
- Any other duties as assigned from time to time by the Director, relevant to the role

Qualifications for the post

1. Character

Each candidate must be of good character.

2. Health

Each candidate shall be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3. Education, Knowledge and Experience requirements:

- An honours Bachelor's degree or higher degree in economics
- Minimum 2 years' relevant experience
- In-dept knowledge and demonstrated understanding of EU, national and regional economic policies and public sector institutions
- Strong understanding of local, regional and national Government operations, including their roles and responsibilities
- Experience of delivering, co-ordinating and managing multiple projects simultaneously, whether independently or as part of a team
- Experience in compiling comprehensive reports, delivering presentations, and engaging effectively with the public, media, and stakeholders
- Knowledge and experience of operating ICT systems

4. Desirable Requirements:

In addition to the knowledge and experience above, it would be desirable to have the following:

- Expertise in areas such as statistics, policy evaluation; econometrics and economic modelling; economic planning; financial risk analysis; applied economics (health, transport, labour market, etc.), fiscal policy and public finance theory
- Political awareness and a clear understanding of the political reality and context of local, regional, national and European public institutions.
- Project management skills.

- Experience of managing finance and budgets and ensuring value for money.

Please supply copies of any certificates, diplomas or degrees you may have with the application form.

Competencies for the Post

Key Competencies for the post include the following and candidates will be expected to **demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application form and at interview stage** of competence under each of these.

Please take particular note of these when completing the application form as any short-listing or interview processes will be based on the information provided by candidates:

Specialist Knowledge & Expertise and Self Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly understands the role, objectives and targets and how they fit into the work of the organisation • Balances economic issues with the wider social and political environment in the national interest • Develops the expertise necessary to carry out the role to a high standard and shares this with others • Is proactive in keeping up-to-date on issues and key developments that may impact on own area, the organization and/or Government Policy
Policy Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is skilled in policy analysis and development, challenging the established wisdom and adopting an open-minded approach • Thinks clearly, analytically and objectively about economic and social policy issues • Identifies and uses appropriate data sources and analyses data using quantitative and/or qualitative techniques • Analyses, reviews & evaluates complex, economic & financial information and have the capacity to present options & recommendations • Identifies key themes and patterns in and across different sources of information, drawing sound and balanced conclusions
Decision Making and Delivery of Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to manage multiple work streams and to balance immediate priorities with more long-term projects • Demonstrates flexibility to work on different tasks of varying levels of complexity • Is resourceful and creative, generating original approaches when solving problems and making decisions • Quickly gets up to speed in a complex situation, rapidly absorbing all relevant information/date (written and oral) • Sees the logical implications of taking a particular position on an issue • Uses judgment to make clear, timely and well-grounded decisions on important issues, and acts decisively in a complex environment. Incorporates risk management knowledge into decision making and analysis. • Takes a firm position on issues considered important, gives leadership when making decisions and can demonstrate the validity and efficacy of decisions made • Is accountable and transparent in decision making, understands the statutory

	<p>and legal framework around specific decision making and the extent of the power delegates to them to act within these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumes personal responsibility for and delivers on agreed objectives/goals • Manages and progresses multiple projects and work activities successfully Accurately estimates time parameters for projects and manages own time efficiently, anticipating obstacles and making contingencies for overcoming these • Maintains a strong focus on meeting the needs of customers at all times • Ensures all outputs are delivered to a high standard and in an efficient manner • Use resources effectively, at all times challenging processes to improve efficiencies
<p>Interpersonal & Communication Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarises information effectively, pulling out the key points succinctly • Communicate complex constructs in a simple way, making issues accessible and understandable for non-specialists • Works effectively with others and can build collaborative networks • Develops & maintains positive & beneficial relationships with relevant interests & leads & works in multi-disciplinary teams • Communicates in a fluent, logical, clear and convincing manner verbally and in writing • Is able to listen effectively and develop a two-way dialogue quickly • Establishes appropriate & productive working relationships at local, regional, national & European level, within the public sector • Effectively influences key stakeholders to achieve operational strategy & objectives

Particulars of Office

1. Appointment

A panel will be established for the post of **Economist** which will be used to fill both permanent and temporary vacancies which may arise during the lifetime of the panel. The Regional Assembly shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if he/she fails to take up the appointment within such period or such longer period as the Regional Assembly in its absolute discretion may determine, the Regional Assembly shall not appoint him/her.

2. Reporting Relationship

The **Economist** will report to the Senior Planner/Assistant Director and/or other assigned Officer

3. Superannuation

Persons who become pensionable officers of a Regional Assembly, who are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution will be required in respect of their superannuation to contribute to the rate of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of the State Pension Contributory). Persons who become pensionable officers of a Regional Assembly who are liable to pay the Class D rate of PRSI contribution will be required, in respect of their superannuation, Regional Assembly to contribute to the Regional Assembly at the rate of 5% of their pensionable remuneration.

Widows and Orphans/Spouses and Children's Scheme

All persons who become pensionable officers of a Regional Assembly are required, in respect of the Local Government (Spouses and children's Contributory Pension) Scheme, 1986 to contribute to the Regional Assembly at the rate of 1.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of State Pension contributory) in accordance with the terms of the Scheme.

New Entrants from 1st January 2013 – Single Public Services Pension Scheme 'A' Officers/Non-Officers

For new entrants recruited on or after 1st January 2013 as well as former public servant returning to the public service after a break of more than 26 weeks. The Public Service Pension (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 applies to your employment. Members of this Scheme are required in respect of superannuation to contribute at the rate of 3% of pensionable remuneration plus 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration (i.e. pensionable remuneration less twice the annual rate of State Pension contributory) and you are liable to pay the Class A rate of PRSI contribution.

4. Retirement Age

New Entrants to the Public Service on or after 1st January 2013 have a compulsory retirement age of 70 years under the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other Provisions Act 2012). New entrants to the public service as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 do not have a mandatory retirement age. Any candidate who is not a new entrant to the public service, as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2004, is subject to a compulsory retirement age of 65 years.

6. Salary

The Economist's salary is analogous to the Local Government Administrative Officer Grade VII salary scale, currently €58,252 - €75,728 (inclusive of long service increments). On appointment the candidate will be placed on the appropriate point of the salary scale in accordance with the relevant Circul

7. Travel & Subsistence

Travel and subsistence expenses will be paid in accordance with nationally agreed rates applicable in the sector.

8. Driving Licence

Holders of the post shall possess a current unendorsed full driving licence (Category B) and, shall drive a motor car in the course of their duties and for this purpose provide and maintain a car to the satisfaction of the local authority. The post holder's Insurance policy must cover such use and must indemnify the Assembly.

9. Place of Work

The HQ of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly is Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon.
There will be one permanent post.

10. Residence

Post holders shall reside in, or at an address convenient to the Regional Assembly, as approved by the Director.

11. Probation/Performance Review

Where a person who is not already a permanent officer of a Regional Assembly or Local Authority is appointed, the following provisions shall apply:-

- a) There shall be a period after appointment during which the appointee will hold the position on probation.
- b) Such period shall be one year and may be extended at the discretion of the Director.
- c) Such person shall cease to hold the office at the end of the period of probation unless during such period the Director has certified that the service of such person is satisfactory based on the recommendation of the relevant Supervisor.
- d) Employment may be terminated during the probationary period should service be deemed by the Director to be unsatisfactory.

12. Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement is 30 days per annum exclusive of public and bank holidays.

13. Working Hours

The normal hours of work will be 35 hours per week. The Regional Assembly reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time.

14. Health

For the purpose of satisfying the requirements as to health it will be necessary for successful candidates, before they are appointed, to undergo at their expense a medical examination by a qualified medical practitioner to be nominated by the Regional Assembly. On taking up appointment, the expense of the medical examination will be refunded to candidates.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment, which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate(s).

Application and Selection

How to Apply

Application Forms are available for download at www.nwra.ie .

Application Forms should be signed and **emailed** IN PDF FORMAT, directly to jobs@nwra.ie no later than **4pm on Friday 28th February 2025**

Please use the email subject line: **Economist – Grace VII, followed by your name.**

Applications will only be accepted on the **official application form** and all sections must be completed in full. Please ensure that your application is in **typed format**. When completing the application form, accuracy is essential. The information you supply in the application form will play a central part of the selection process.

<u>Equality</u>	The Northern & Western Regional Assembly is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.
<u>Confidentiality</u>	Subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts 1997- 2014 , applications will be treated in strict confidence.
<u>Data Protection</u>	The personal records are used solely in processing your candidature. Such information held on computer is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the General Data Protection Regulations.
<u>Canvassing</u>	Any attempt, direct or indirect, by a candidate to influence the selection process will automatically disqualify the candidate. Do not send a reference without it being requested or induce anyone to make representations on your behalf. If you do, you run the risk of being disqualified.
<u>Deeming of Candidature to be withdrawn</u>	Candidates who- (a) do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as is required in regard to any matter relevant to their candidature, or; (b) do not attend the interview(s) at the time(s) and place(s) appointed, or; (c) do not attend for the medical examination as directed, or (d) when offered appointment, do not accept appointment and take up duty as arranged - shall, unless the Regional Assembly in its absolute discretion decides otherwise, be deemed to have withdrawn their candidature

Shortlisting

The Assembly reserves the right to shortlist applications based on the information supplied in the application form. In the event of a shortlisting exercise being employed, the information provided in your application will be assessed against the criteria based on the requirements for the position and decided if you will be shortlisted, relative to the other candidates applying for the position.

Interview

Admission to the interview is conditional on receipt of a completed application form by the required cut-off date. The onus is on all applicants to make themselves available for the interview on the date specified by the Assembly and to make whatever arrangements are necessary to ensure that they receive communications sent to them at the email address specified on their application form.

Interviews will take place in March 2025. An email invitation to interview will be sent to applicants in advance of interview date (if the candidate is shortlisted for interview).

The admission of a person to a competition, or invitation to attend for interview, is not to be taken as implying that such person fulfils the requirements of the position or is not disqualified by law from holding the position and does not carry a guarantee that your application will receive further consideration. It is important therefore for you to note that the onus is on you to ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the competition before attending for interview.

Special Needs

Candidates who indicate on their application that they have special needs will be required to submit a psychologist/medical report to the Assembly. A determination, if any, will be made by the Assembly on appropriate accommodations to be made for individual candidates, during the selection process.

Panel Formation

Selection shall be by means of a competition based on an interview conducted by or on behalf of the Regional Assembly. The competition will cover vacancies in both Assemblies. A panel may be formed on the basis of such interview, to fill further vacancies that may arise. Candidates whose names are on a panel and who satisfy the Regional Assembly that they possess the qualifications declared for the position and that they are otherwise suitable for employment may within the life of the panel be employed as appropriate vacancies arise. The life of the panel will be for 12 months and may be extended for a further period of 12 months at the discretion of the Director.

All appointments will be subject to the probationary period as set out below.

Data Protection (RECRUITMENT)

BASIS FOR PROCESSING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

The basis for processing your personal data is to progress your application for the position you have applied for with the Regional Assembly under the Terms of the Employment (Information) Act 1994 and Human Resources policies and procedures.

Personal data sought for the purpose of recruitment will include your name, your contact details including email address and mobile phone number, particulars of education, details regarding your record of employment and confirmation if you require an employment permit / visa / or work authorisation.

SHARING OF INFORMATION

Outside of the relevant recruitment team, the information provided in your application form will only be shared for progressing the competition for which you have applied, with a designated shortlisting and / or interview board. If, following the competition, you are placed on a panel and offered a position, the information provided in your application form will form part of your personal HR file.

STORAGE PERIOD

Your application will be retained for one year from the date a panel for this position is formed. In exceptional circumstances panels can be extended for an additional year and your personal data will be kept until the extension has expired. Applications that are unsuccessful at interview stage will be retained for one year. Applications that are not progressed to interview stage will be destroyed post competition. If you do not furnish the personal data requested, the Assembly will not be able to progress your application for the competition.