



Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor

For members of the Economic Development and Enterprise SPC

—

12 April 2022

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Summary of DBEC Partnership project:

On behalf of the eight councils of the Dublin Belfast Economic Corridor, KPMG is supporting the partnership with a development plan, strategy, and action plan.

The overall strategic process is informed by extensive stakeholder consultation, data analysis, spatial analysis, and secondary research.

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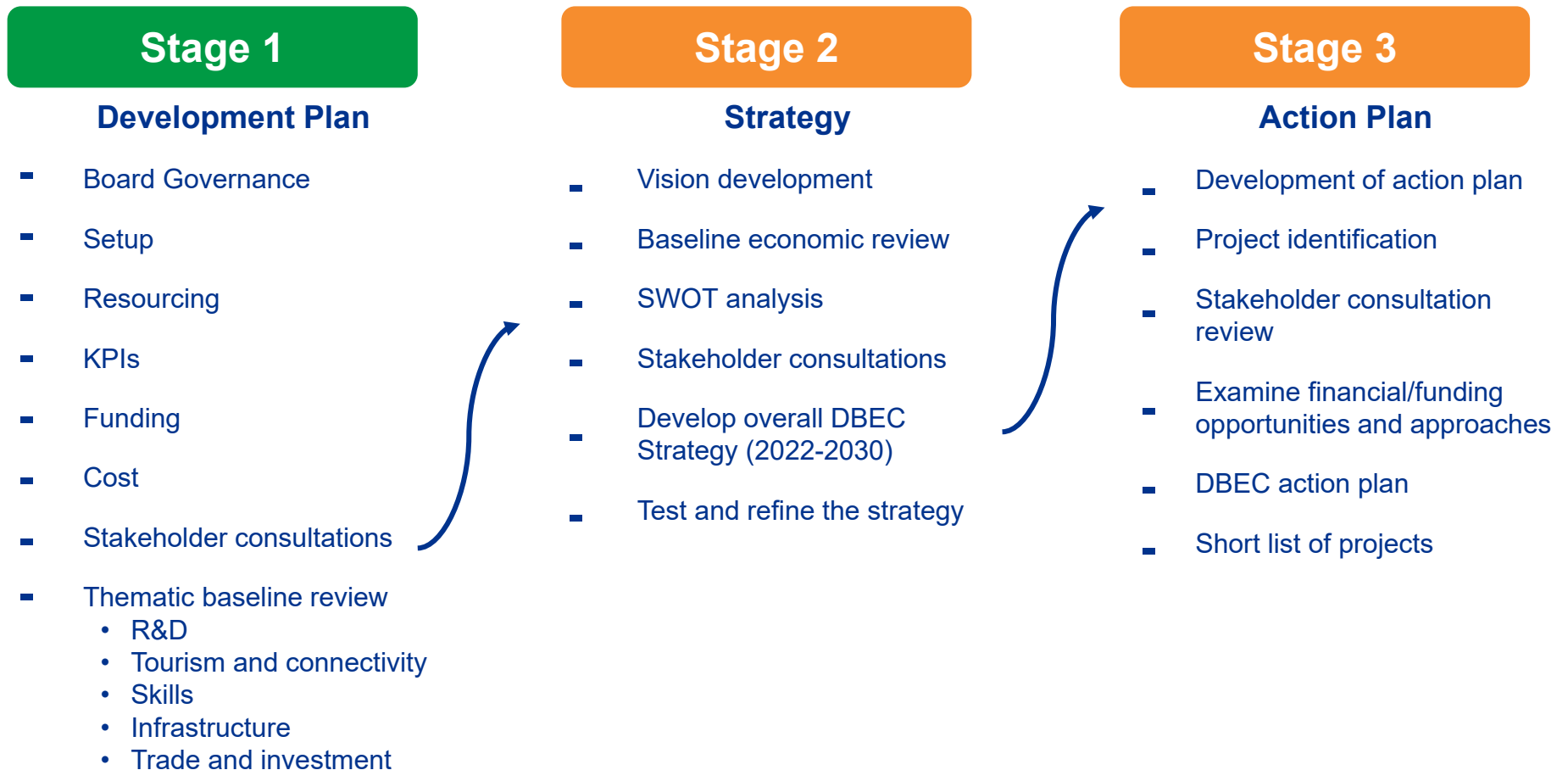
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Indicative findings

Project overview

The DBEC project comprises three stages: Development Plan, Strategy and Action Plan.



DBEC in a wider context

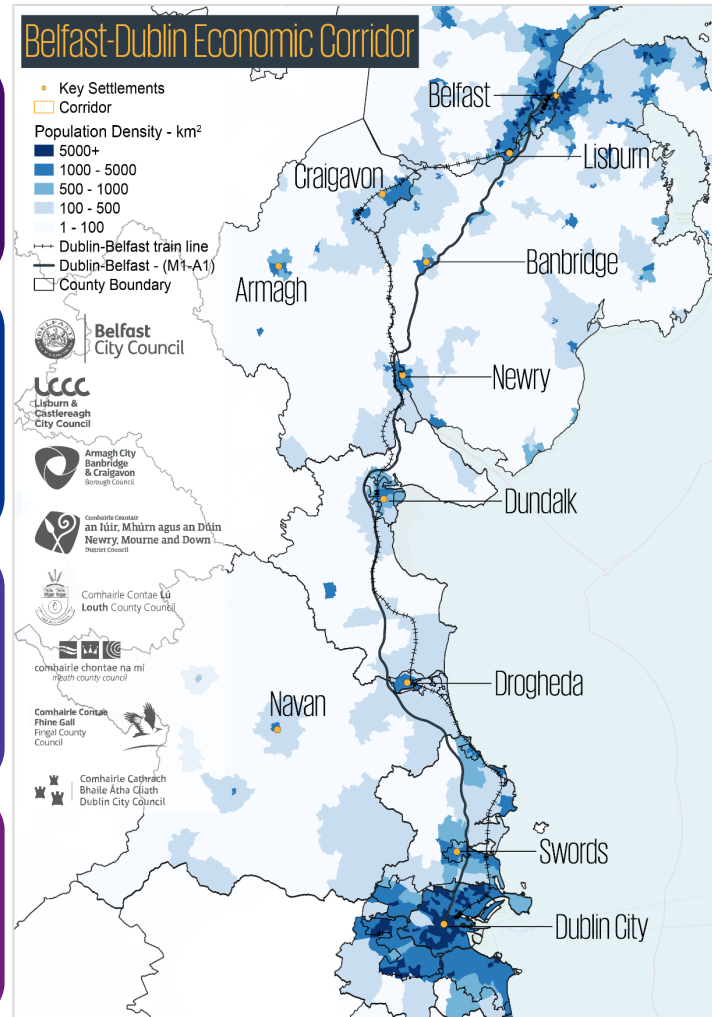
Council areas in NI

Belfast (~340,000) is the economic driver of the NI economy, with key strengths in a number of high growth sectors.

Lisburn & Castlereagh and their wider hinterland (~141,000) are ideally located as a gateway to Belfast, with direct access to the A1/M1 opening the area to multiple opportunities.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and their hinterland (~210,000) comprise key settlements and enterprise bases (e.g. agri-food, manufacturing).

The **Newry, Mourne & Down District Council** area (~179,000) is an access point to/from NI/RoI and vice versa, and also includes freight access into NI through Warrenpoint Port.



Council areas in RoI

Louth County Council area (~129,000) located on the border, world class research centres and facilities at DkIT, particularly around ICT, Health & Ageing; Energy & Environment and Creative & Digital Arts.

Meath (~195,000) is Ireland's ancient capital with a number of historical hotspots. It has a number of key sectors for the region including, tourism, data centres, film industry, warehouse distributors, agriculture

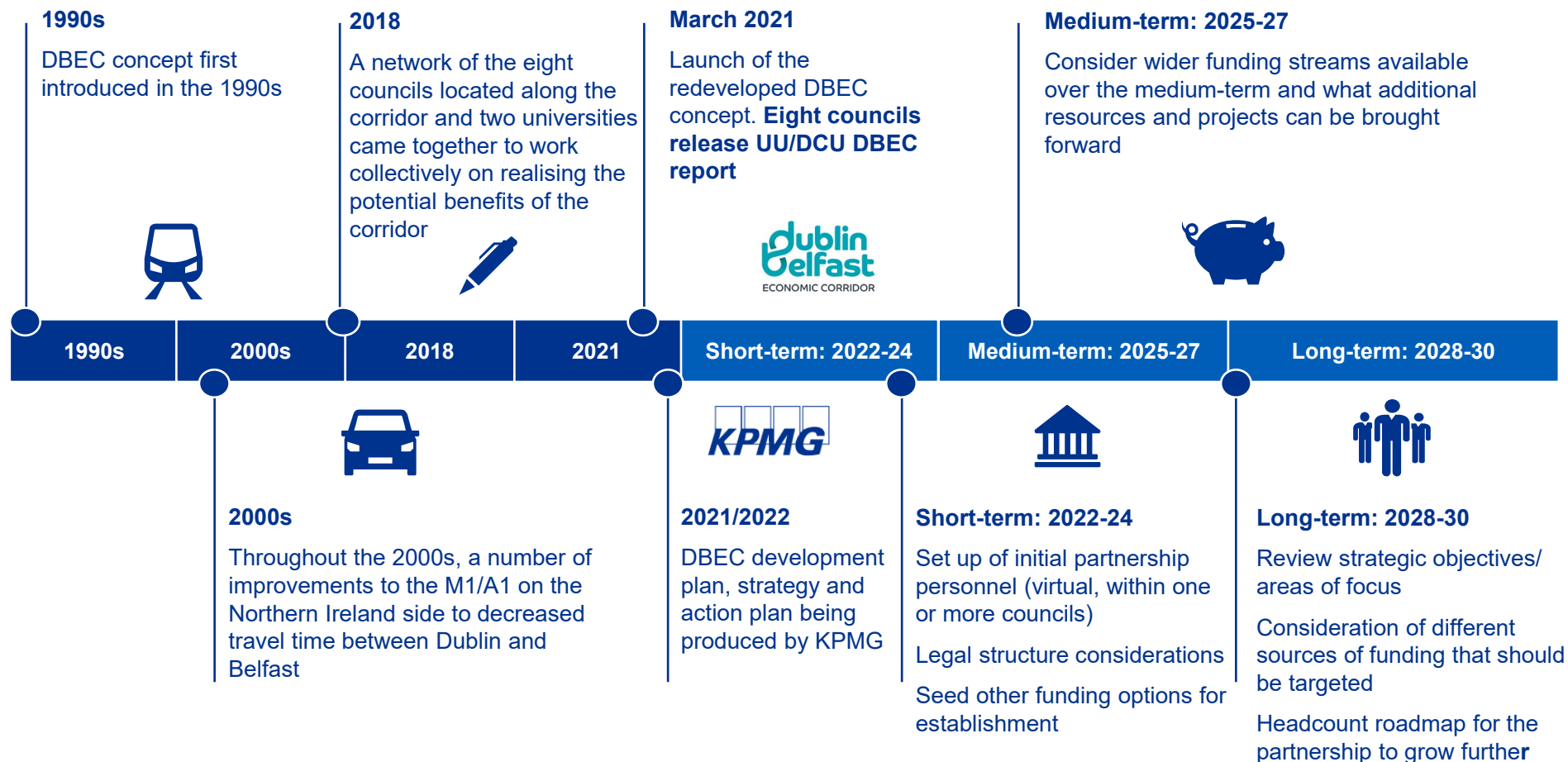
Fingal (~296,000) plays strong supporting role to the Dublin City Gateway with the Dublin Enterprise Zone (DEZ) (~1500 hectares of land for primarily business activities.

Dublin City Council (~550,000), having over a quarter of the corridors population is represents the most sizeable share of the corridor's total population. Dublin has a number of key sectors promoting growth

Sources: Based on the latest census data at Electoral Division (Northern Ireland) and Super Output Area (Republic of Ireland)

Evolution of DBEC

The DBEC concept has developed to grow and promote the region



Comparator corridors

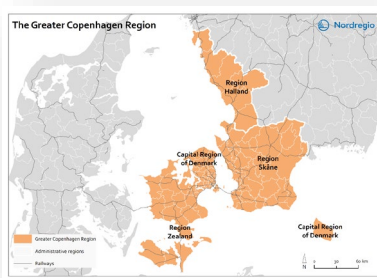
There are a number of international economic corridors from which DBEC can draw learnings about corridor vision, set up, governance, resourcing, costs, and funding.

“By maximising the benefits of integration and cross-border dynamics, the Oresund Region will stand out as the most attractive and climate-smart region in Europe”

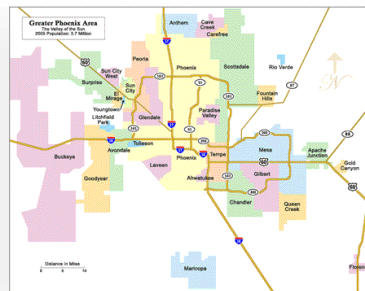
“To attract and grow quality businesses, and advocate for Greater Phoenix’s competitiveness”

“To maximise the Arc’s transformative economic potential”
+ Quantified sub-goal on doubling economic output by 2050

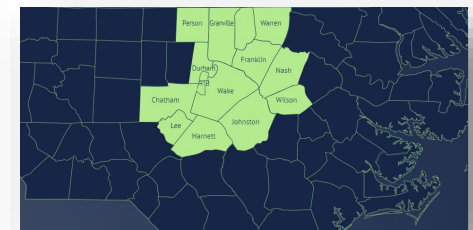
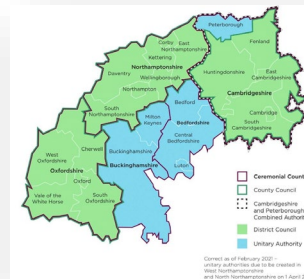
“To market the region to external audiences on why the Research Triangle Region is the best place to live and do business”



**GREATER
COPENHAGEN**



**Greater Phoenix
Economic Council**
Greater Together



- ✓ Maximising benefits and growth
- ✓ Advocate for competitiveness

- ✓ Attract and grow quality businesses
- ✓ Market the region

Sources: Respective economic corridor websites

Consultation feedback

Themes		
Objectives	Set up	Stakeholders

There is broad consensus amongst stakeholders that DBEC is a major opportunity, especially in skills, infrastructure, and R&D. Higher and more regionally balanced growth is a priority. Clarity on objectives, flexibility on short-term structure, and private sector involvement, emerge as key short-term actions.

"The first step when creating an economic corridor partnership is to have good advertising and establish good branding"
CEO of comparator economic corridor

"Projects undertaken by DBEC should be complementary with the aims of private sector representatives"
Private sector representative

"Tourism and promoting the region should be an early focus for DBEC"
Council executive

"DBEC needs to have a key difference from other international corridors for it to market and promote to FDI"
CEO of comparator economic corridor

"If we were to start over we would adopt a bottom up approach instead of being top down"
Comparator economic corridor

"DBEC needs to have strong links with government departments and the private sector"
Council executive

"Moving towards a separate secretariat should be near the border ideally but host has to be fully bought into"
Council executive

"For the partnership to succeed there needs to be private sector champions to promote the partnerships and corridor"
CEO of comparator economic corridor

"The partnership is to be a joint voice for the region to lobby for infrastructure and other needs"
Council executive

"DBEC can be a local government network and can create a platform to share information"
University Representative

"Initially funded from local government with funding sources to be broadened within 1-3 years "
Council executive

"Encourage the involvement of universities in the partnership to better align the training of skills and research needs for the corridor"
CEO of comparator economic corridor

"For the 8 councils to have a focus in key areas such as; Sustainability, mobility labour force, green sector, tourism, etc"
Private sector representative

Sources: KPMG consultations

Potential focus for the DBEC partnership



- Advocate for **cross-border infrastructure, develop initial business cases, prioritise investment in future infrastructure improvements** e.g. rail, greenways, next generation energy network water, vertiport network
- Advocate for **all-island skills policy and become the aggregator of skills coordination along corridor.** Develop a regional workforce platform that meets the current and future demands of exporting companies
- **Coordinate existing research centres for pan-corridor use** (e.g. City Deal Regional Innovation Hubs, Fingal's accelerator centre, SFI centres, and the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership)
- **Leverage collective voice to secure funding** from Shared Island, SEEUPB and private sector for a range of co-operative projects amongst corridor stakeholders to be put towards infrastructure, skill development and R&D projects
- **Work with partner organisations** (Government, semi-state, councils) to support key priorities and to **achieve targets outlined in respective development plans**
- **Facilitate collaboration between local companies and foreign companies** and connect them with business advisory services that provide peer-to-peer mentor, and organise regular educational workshops around opportunities, programmes, key issues of interest
- As part of annual reporting, publish an **annual benchmarking report on the corridor's growth against peer corridors**



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