

## 6 HUMAN BEINGS

### 6.1 Introduction

This section discusses the key issues affecting human beings, and the potential impacts of the proposed offshore development on them. The issues discussed include population, language and culture, employment, economic climate and tourism.

### 6.2 Study Methodology

An integral part of the assessment on human beings involved quantitative, qualitative and documentary research. The quantitative research involved the examination and assessment of information supplied by the Central Statistics Office.

Government, local and County publications were consulted. These include the “Border, Midlands and Western Region Development Strategy 2000-2006” prepared for the regional authorities in 1999 and the “Mayo Sustainable Tourism in the Coastal Zone” published by An Taisce and Mayo County Council.

The County Enterprise Board and Udaras Na Gaeltachta were also consulted and provided some baseline information.

### 6.3 Receiving Environment

#### 6.3.1 Population

While Ireland as a whole has over the last decade experienced significant economic growth, this has not had as great an impact on the west of the country. Generally, County Mayo and the west of Ireland is characterised as a rural area with a weak urban base and poor infrastructure relative to the rest of the State. The area has suffered from continual economic decline stretching back to the early 1800's.

The 1986-1996 period was the first period of population growth in County Mayo since the beginning of census records and halted a decline that has seen the population of the County fall to 111,524 in 1996 from approximately 200,000 in 1901 and almost 390,000 in 1841.

The percentage increase from 1991 to 1996 was 0.7%. However, most of the rural areas, particularly in Mayo, are continuing to decline with the urban centres accounting for recent population growth.

### 6.3.1.1 Age Profile

The age profile for the local area has been determined from Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) records provided by the Central Statistics Office.

It would appear from these statistics that there has been significant out-migration of school leavers from the area. This trend fits with the findings of the *Border, Midlands and Western Region Development Strategy 2000-2006* (BMW Report) which notes that this region as a whole ‘suffers from a major “braindrain”, with school leavers leaving the area to study in third level institutions and not returning.

### 6.3.2 Employment

Poor employment growth is a feature of lagging economic development and there is a correlation between this measure and the state of the region’s infrastructure, low labour force participation rates and higher rates of outward migration.

The level and growth in employment in Counties Mayo, Roscommon and Leitrim, is considerably below the national average.

The BMW Report notes that the Region’s economy is still more reliant on agriculture, forestry and fishing than is the national economy, and that this agriculture is relatively weak. The Region’s industry is more traditional in nature than that of Ireland as a whole, particularly outside the larger urban centres.

The BMW Report notes that there is a good availability of human resources in the Region, but that this availability is being reduced by declining unemployment. The Region has not yet experienced labour shortages as pronounced as those in the Eastern and Southern Regions; nevertheless, it does have difficulties in relation to highly skilled personnel in many instances.

The Region as a whole scores relatively low in terms of research, technology and innovation, in comparison to other areas of the country. The number of high R & D performing companies is limited and is heavily concentrated in a few specific locations.

### 6.3.3 Tourism

#### 6.3.3.1 County Mayo

County Mayo is a largely rural area with rich scenic resources and a distinctive culture. The economy is heavily dependent on the declining sectors of agriculture and fishing. Large proportions of County Mayo are designated as proposed National Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). In addition, the area is also rich in cultural resources through language, history, literature, archaeology and vernacular building traditions. Visitors are attracted to the region for its

tranquillity, unspoilt landscape and traditional community structure. Tourism has become an engine for growth in the County in recent times.

County Mayo is also well known for its museums and visitor attractions and has an abundance of festivals throughout the year, mostly during the summer months. Summer schools to learn or improve Irish language skills and schools to study English are hosted throughout the County. In this regard, a major element of the tourism industry in the Gaeltacht areas relates to Irish language schools for school children, students and others.

In recent years, tourism has become an important part of the local economy of west and north-west Mayo, but there is still potential to develop this resource further. However, the rapid growth of tourism (6 million tourists visited Ireland in 1999, projected to 8 million in 2005) and its impact on vulnerable environments, has brought about concern. In order to address these concerns, County Mayo aims to promote sustainable tourism to:

- support the social and economic prosperity of the resident communities; and
- protect their cultural and natural environments.

A new co-ordinating tourism marketing company, *Margaíocht Turasóireacht Iar Thuaisceart Mhaigh Eo*, is currently being formed in north-west Mayo to implement the above policies.

### 6.3.2 Tourism in the Local Area

The local area has a limited amount of tourist attractions. Tourist traffic in this area mainly focuses on horse riding, hill walking, fishing and the North Mayo Sculpture Trail. The main centres for tourism nearest the site are Glenamoy, Bangor, Pollatomish, Rosspport, Belderg and Belmullet. A significant number of the visitors to Erris come because of a family connection to the area.

### 6.3.4 *Language and Culture*

The proposed landfall site and two crossings of the Sruwaddacon are located in a Gaeltacht area. The term "Gaeltacht" describes those areas where the Irish language is the community language. *Údarás Na Gaeltachta* is the Regional Development Agency in Ireland with responsibility for the economic, social and cultural development of the Gaeltacht regions, ensuring the continuation of the Irish language as the spoken language of the community in these regions.

The Irish language is one of the oldest written languages in Europe and has a strong and rich literary tradition. The oral tradition has played a major role in the survival of Irish as a living language.

The Gaeltacht areas were established to encourage an unbroken link with a past that saw Irish as the main language in Ireland. They are seen as a vital lynch-pin for the transmission of Irish as a community language to the next generation.

## 6.4 Characteristics of the Proposed Development

### 6.4.1 Construction

The proposed offshore development will involve the construction and installation of 82 km of pipeline, umbilical and associated outfall pipe between Dooncarton landfall (Co. Mayo) and the Corrib Gas Field. It is estimated that around 200 to 300 people will be employed during the construction of the offshore facilities and crossings of the Sruwaddacon. Specialised contractors, who will operate the vessels and equipment needed for this type of application, will undertake the manufacture and installation of the subsea facilities. There are no known suppliers of these services in Ireland, although there may be some spin off in logistics support and services.

### 6.4.2 Operation

The offshore pipeline, umbilical and outfall pipe will be buried throughout Broadhaven Bay, and will not affect fishing activities once laid. The landfall and two crossings of the Sruwaddacon will be fully reinstated to their original condition. The operation of the offshore facility will be controlled at the Bellanaboy Bridge Terminal resulting in the creation of 50 to 70 permanent, new jobs. In addition, the long-term maintenance and monitoring of the offshore pipeline and production facilities will require the employment of specialist contractors at regular intervals.

## 6.5 Predicted Impacts

### 6.5.1 During Construction

#### 6.5.1.1 Population, Language and Culture

The drilling operations and installation of the Corrib Field facilities will be supported primarily by the port of Killybegs. In addition, specialised equipment and materials will be brought in from other European ports. Over 70% of vessel movements for drilling and installation operations originate from Killybegs, whilst local offices together, with a warehouse and pipe yard, have been established for longer-term continuity. Personnel working on the offshore development will arrive and leave by boat or by helicopter from Donegal airport and will live offshore. With this in mind, the offshore development will not impact upon the local community in County Mayo.

However, during construction of the landfall, and nearshore areas of the pipeline, there will be impacts on the local population, language and culture by the influx of new personnel. The micro population will increase, although workers will also commute from more urbanised areas.

Labour will be resourced from the local community wherever possible. However, there is also likely to be an inward-migration of non-Irish

speaking personnel and those that may not be familiar with the culture of the area. It is not expected that this will have a significant impact on the local culture and language since the area is already used to an influx of tourists throughout the year.

### 6.5.1.2 Employment and Economic Impacts

The construction of the offshore development will be a significant undertaking and will involve a workforce of approximately 200 to 300 people over the course of the construction period.

#### Offshore

The net impact of the offshore development is likely to be minimal, with the majority of personnel sourced from outside the local area (large construction/ installation vessels will have specially trained crew), although there may be the opportunity to resource smaller vessels and non-technical positions locally.

The employment of skilled seamen is likely with the traditional seafaring communities of Killybegs, Sligo and Galway may potentially benefit the most in terms of offshore, and Killala, Broadhaven and the Mullet peninsula may benefit for inshore work in support of the construction operations.

There will therefore be some economic benefits to Killybegs from this aspect of the project.

The offshore areas west of Ireland where the Corrib Field is located represent important fishing grounds. The existing situation shows a competition for the fish stocks between a number of fishing nations. Evidence from the seabed surveys and the public consultations suggests that the area is regularly trawled. The construction and presence of the gas export pipeline is unlikely to have anything other than a very short-term effect, during the construction period, on the fishing industry. However, there will be small seabed exclusion areas and around in the Corrib Field itself, to cover the central field facilities and satellite wells. The total area of seabed which these exclusion zones cover is estimated to be 3 km<sup>2</sup>.

#### Landfall and Sruwaddacon

The construction of the landfall and the two Sruwaddacon crossings will involve a significant influx of personnel over the construction period. While specialised jobs will be sourced by workers from outside the area, local direct and indirect employment will be created through the hiring of local workers and the use of local sub-contractors, where possible.

During the construction period there will be a positive impact on the local economy, with enhanced opportunities for local service providers. These will include increased trade in local shops, pubs, restaurants, and service providers. Local villages and towns likely to be affected include

Bellanaboy, Arhom, Vowth, Glenamoy, Pollatomish, Rosspport, Belmullet, Bangor, Ballycastle, Killala and Ballina. There will also be opportunities for supply of equipment, catering, transport and delivery of goods.

Local temporary accommodation will be used to accommodate construction site workers not native to the area. The effect of the influx of workers will be positive, as it will help to level the annual seasonal peaks and troughs in the tourism sector and increase the level of disposable income spent in the area.

Salmon netting licences for the Sruwaddacon are issued to two fishermen. It is probable that parts of the areas which these licences cover will be affected by the crossings of the Sruwaddacon. Enterprise will discuss the possible interruption to fishing activities with the licence holders, and mitigate these where possible. Enterprise will compensate for consequential losses where mitigation is not possible.

### 6.5.1.3 Tourism

A number of tourism centres have been identified in the county, the closest large attraction is the Céide Fields centre, more than 15 km to the east of the proposed landfall site. However, most major attractions are sufficiently remote from the offshore activities so that their associated visitors will be unaffected during the construction period. Visitors to the local area who have to pass by the landfall site and proposed crossing points by the Sruwaddacon will notice site activity during construction. There will be some disturbance in terms of noise, visual impact, and increased traffic levels upon the local population (See **Sections 11, 12 and 15**).

Increased noise levels will be experienced in the localised area of the landfall site during construction. The noise increase will affect only a small localised area and will not impact on any of the local tourism centres. Every effort will be made to keep noise and other nuisance effects to an absolute minimum (see **Section 11**).

There will be increased traffic movements on local roads during the construction period, with site traffic volumes varying (see **Section 15**). These increased traffic levels should not impact on local tourism. Also interactions due to increased traffic at sea on the western seaboard could, to some extent, impact the fishing industry in that area.

The local fishing industry and angling attractions will remain undisturbed by construction, by ensuring that environmental mitigation measures are implemented appropriately on site.

Local temporary accommodation will be used to house construction site workers not native to the area. During the feasibility study for the gas Terminal, Enterprise carried out a brief assessment of the available accommodation in the Mayo/Sligo area. It was found there are over 8,500 beds available for visitors in County Mayo, and 3,780 in County Sligo. With a peak number of construction workers of approximately 400 for the

whole Corrib development, this quantity may be absorbed without difficulty into the accommodation stock, even at peak summer periods.

Available accommodation in areas such as Westport, Castlebar and Ballina have been included. This is considered to be realistic; in this area it is not unusual for local people to commute over a significant distance on a daily basis.

The proposed landfall site does not affect any known recreational routes. The site will, however, be visible from local roads and tracks used in the area. Landfall construction will be visible from footpaths and tracks close by.

### **6.5.2 During Operation**

#### **6.5.2.1 Population, Language and Culture**

During normal operations, there will be no employment opportunities associated with the offshore development, except for those associated with the long-term maintenance and monitoring of the offshore pipeline and production facilities. These activities will require the employment of specialist contractors at regular intervals.

However, the Terminal at Bellanaboy Bridge will employ between 50 and 70 people sourced locally (See Terminal EIS). In this regard, it is expected that the proposed development, as a whole, will have a significant positive impact on the population levels, local language and culture of the local area. These issues are discussed in further detail in the Terminal EIS.

The proposed Bellanaboy Bridge Terminal is located in an area in which indigenous population has continuously declined for the past 150 years.

The development of the Corrib Field, its offshore facilities and associated Terminal, will help to reduce the outflow of the indigenous population from the local areas.

#### **6.5.2.2 Employment and Economic Impacts**

The development of the Corrib Gas Field will help to contribute to the regional development of the West of Ireland and County Mayo, in particular. The provision of natural gas in County Mayo will act as a catalyst to economic development and encourage investment in industry and commerce.

Whilst the number of new jobs associated with the operation of the Terminal is low, due to the low density of population in the area and the existing economic base, the jobs and income accruing from the proposed Terminal will have a disproportionately positive effect on the area. These direct jobs will in turn sustain other indirect local jobs through the multiplier effect.

At a macro level, there will be considerable socio-economic benefits to County Mayo and the west of Ireland in general. The current electricity supply to western Ireland is unreliable and there is no gas transmission or distribution system to the west or north-west of Ireland. The proposed development of the Corrib Gas Field and the associated Terminal will provide a major and reliable additional indigenous gas supply, increasing Ireland's overall security of supply. It will support the construction of an Irish gas ring main system and the provision of a major gas pipeline in the west of Ireland. It will encourage the development of regional power station projects and the development of an improved electricity supply system. Through increasing the attractiveness of the area for inward investment, the overall development will help reduce the outflow of population from rural areas and help to consolidate and strengthen existing urban areas. Increased economic activity and productivity will also help increase the general affluence of the areas and contribute to regional development.

### 6.5.2.3 Tourism

The environmental management plan and the proposed mitigation measures, detailed in the other sections of the EIS, are designed to ensure that there should be no impact on fisheries or the natural resources of the area as a result of emissions. In this regard, the important local tourist resources of fishing, hill walking and horse riding, will not be negatively impacted.

The proposed landfall can be assessed as having a minor impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the local area (the only above ground feature will be the security fence around the underground enclosure close to the landfall, which houses the joints between the offshore and onshore sections of the pipeline and umbilical). There are no significant tourist attractions that will be visually impacted upon directly.

It is therefore anticipated that the long term impacts on tourism and recreation, as a result of offshore development and associated construction of the landfall, will be negligible in terms of their magnitude.

## 6.6 Do-Nothing Scenario

If the proposed offshore development did not proceed, the potential positive and negative impacts of the proposal would not accrue to the local community.

## 6.7 Mitigation Measures

### 6.7.1 *Population, Language and Culture*

The objective of Enterprise in developing the Corrib Field in this culturally sensitive area is to consolidate the development into the existing native environment. The cultural sensitivity of the area will be addressed by liaison with the local government body, Údarás na Gaeltachta, part of

whose aim is to incorporate the Irish language into the work environment and public images of local enterprises, as much as possible. Associated mainly with the construction and ongoing operation of the Terminal, this is discussed in detail in the Terminal EIS.

### **6.7.2 *Employment and Economic Impacts***

No mitigation measures are considered necessary, as the proposed development is likely to have an overall positive economic impact on the existing residential community through enhanced use of local services and goods.

Enterprise will discuss the potential disruption to the salmon netting activities in Sruwaddacon with the licence holders. These licences cover the netting season between mid May and the end of August.

### **6.7.3 *Tourism***

The proposed development will increase economic activity and productivity in Mayo and will thereby help to increase the general affluence of the area, contributing to regional development. This may in turn have a positive effect on tourism in the area, with increased investment and recognition.

## **6.8 Monitoring**

Close liaisons with Government bodies, Údarás Na Gaeltachta, Mayo County Council and representatives from the community, will be developed to implement the above mitigation measures during the construction of the offshore development and deal with new issues as they arise going forward.

## **6.9 Reinstatement and Residual Impacts**

The landfall and two crossings of the Sruwaddacon will be fully reinstated in accordance with the requirements of Statutory Authorities.

At the end of the Corrib field life, the pipeline infrastructure, which has been constructed to support the development, will remain. Such infrastructure includes improved gas and electrical supply to the west of Ireland.