Irish Rural Link

22nd September 2017

**Irish Rural Link Concerned of Continued Disparity of Unemployment rates across regions**

Irish Rural Link (IRL) – the national network representing the interest of rural communities has raised concerned over the disparity that still remains between unemployment figures across the different regions of the country.

Responding to the release of the CSO Quarterly National Household Survey for Q2 2017, it welcomes that overall, unemployment continues to decrease but it is not falling at the same pace in all regions, and in fact there was an increase in unemployment in the Midlands region.

The rate of unemployment fell to 6.4% in the state, which is welcome but on a regional basis, it still remains high in South East at 8.1% and 8.3% in Midlands.

A consultation on Action Plan for Jobs 2018 is currently open and IRL are making a submission for better regional balance of job growth, investment in necessary infrastructure like Broadband and services in all regions of the country to attract foreign companies to regions outside Dublin and to help SME’s and start ups to grow. Last year just 4,000 of the almost 200,000 jobs created by IDA were based in the Midlands.

Ends

**For further information, please contact (anytime):**

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**About Irish Rural Link:**

Irish Rural Link represents the interests of locally based rural groups in disadvantaged and marginalised rural areas by highlighting problems, advocating appropriate policies, sharing experiences and examples of good practice. It has a membership of nearly 500 rural community groups dedicated to sustainable rural development and represents rural communities at a national and international level