

Vodafone Case Study Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)



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Background

**With over 7000 students,
1000 staff and 5 campuses,**

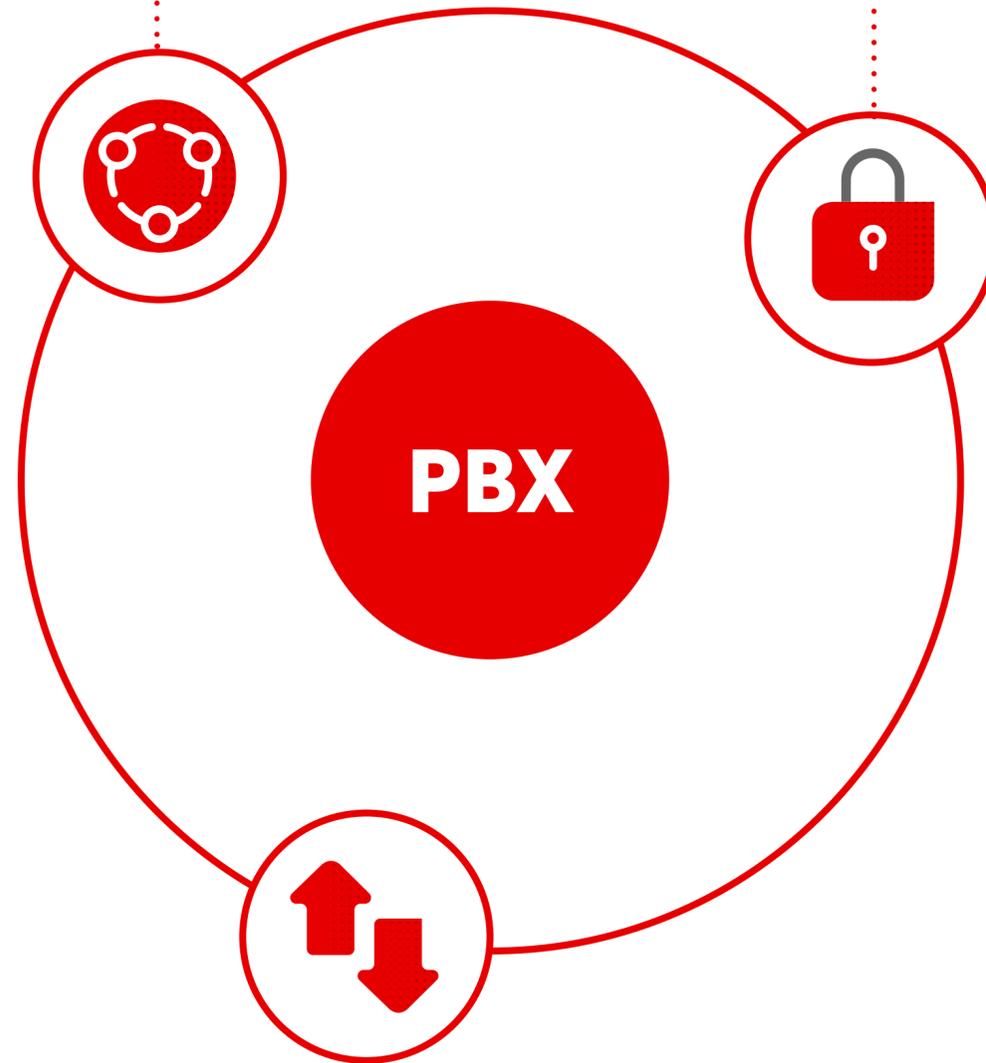
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) is one of the most geographically dispersed institutions in Ireland, with all the infrastructural and organisational challenges that brings.

When GMIT started the process of looking to replace its outdated telephony and communications system back in 2017, IT manager Donal McGinty and his team had no way of knowing the challenges that lay ahead.



Branch

Private



Exchange

Task

Their main task was **to find a way to simplify a sprawling and inconsistent telephony system** made up of three different digital PBX systems and one voice over IP (VOIP) system.

They also had to ensure that any new system would let GMIT's technology work well with that of Letterkenny IT and Sligo IT –the three institutions are due to merge to create a Technological University (TU) for the West and North-West of Ireland, one of the largest multi-campus universities in Ireland.



A laptop screen displays a video conference with multiple participants. The participants are shown in a grid layout, with a larger central window for the main speaker. The participants include a woman with white hair, a woman with glasses, a woman with dark hair, a man with a headset, a woman with long brown hair, a man in a suit, a man with glasses, a woman in a white cardigan, a man with glasses, and a woman with curly hair. The background is a blurred office setting.

In the meantime, however, the Covid 19 pandemic and associated lockdowns hit, and the need for **remote working and unified communications grew massively in importance.**



“

We had a patchwork of technologies in place from a variety of different suppliers and were using lots of hybrid systems built up over time to support different functions and different needs. It worked, but it was no longer really fit for purpose and had started to become a burden, so we decided we wanted to unify things,”

Donal McGinty
IT manager



Analyse

From an analysis of system usage, McGinty and his team could see that staff and students were increasingly **‘mobile first,’** carrying out most of their interactions with the institute from smartphones, tablets and laptops. Yet GMIT’s communication and collaboration services were traditional siloed systems tied to physical locations.

“We felt unifying and integrating communication systems would simplify communication. **Any steps that remove friction and obstacles from people communicating fosters a better collaborative environment.** We took this decision pre-Covid and we’re thankful we did with the challenges the pandemic presented,” said McGinty.

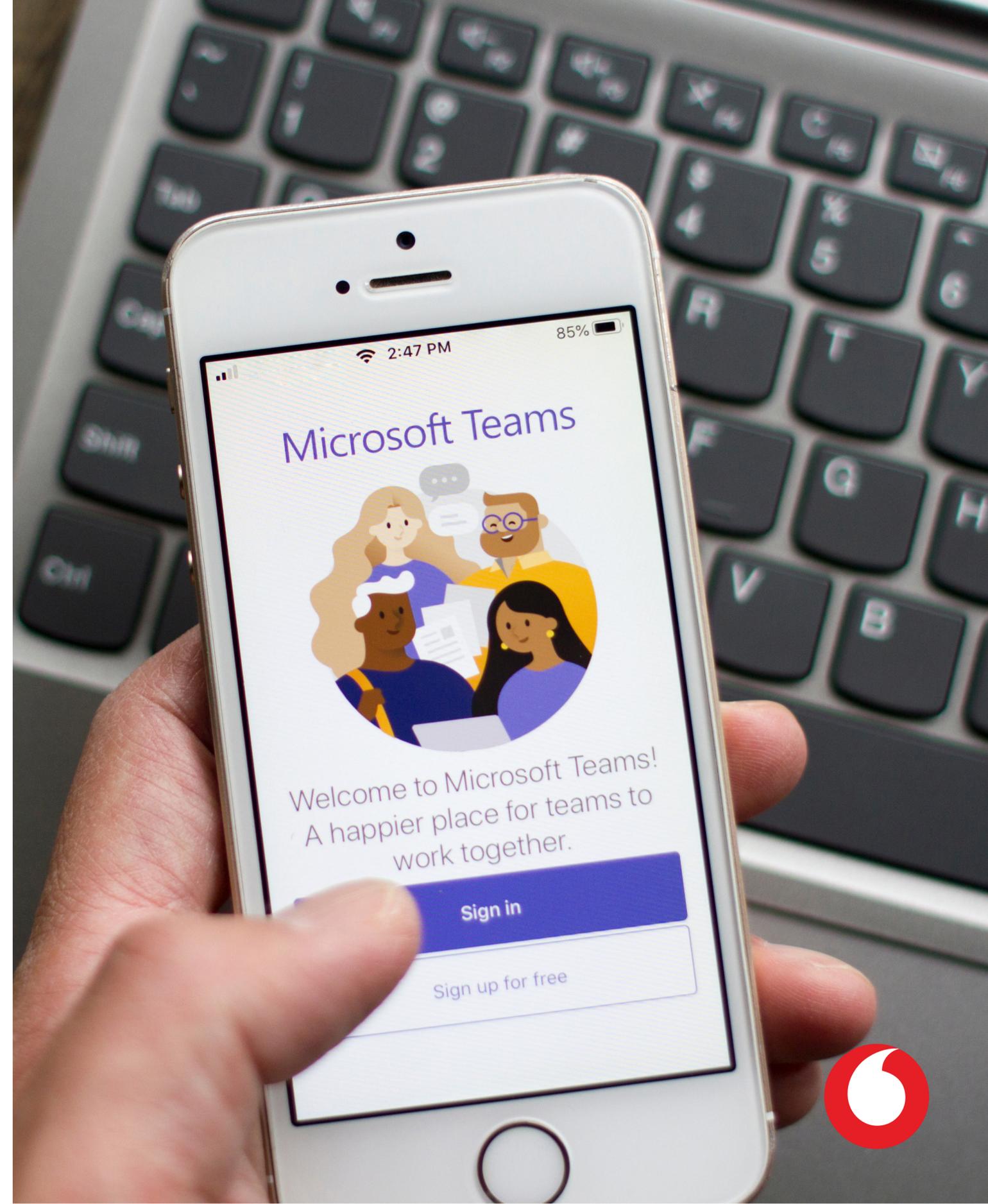


Microsoft Teams

“In **adopting Microsoft Teams**, we saw an opportunity to benefit all our internal stakeholders -researchers, students and staff.

Our IT strategy is to unify and integrate systems and services as much as possible, and we could see that Teams would allow us to

- **move from traditional network storage,**
- **implement consistent data governance**
- **policies improve collaboration with desktop video conferencing.”**



“We also wanted to implement a unified communication system, and **we needed the help of a partner who could guide us on the right path.**”





The solution

McGinty looked at other technologies, and while there were many with great features that were potentially suitable, each had a barrier to entry that wasn't there in Teams. In addition, it was available to GMIT under an existing licencing agreement and so made financial sense.

GMIT ran an EU-wide tender process, and according to McGinty, Vodafone's response best aligned with what GMIT was trying to achieve.



About Vodafone

“Vodafone was able to articulate to us exactly what we wanted to achieve and how it could be put in place. They brought in **project management and technical services people, and really did support the team here.**” he said.

“We knew from Vodafone’s support of the previous patchwork system the calibre and quality of their team and they brought that to this project. It’s not something we take for granted, finding a partner who will work alongside us, showing us what to do rather than telling us what we should do. Vodafone really hit the spot and we felt fully supported all the way through.”

Project management

Technical services



Showing what to do





The success

Now, instead of having four separate PBX phone systems, GMIT has **one cloud-hosted system.**

All of its 1,000 staff have a dedicated direct number and all its offices can now be contacted by the public, with calls seamlessly routed to the staff remote endpoint, be that a mobile client or laptop.

In addition, Teams has made a huge difference to the ability of GMIT to work remotely and efficiently with students during the pandemic.



“

GMIT has always had a very interactive and supportive teaching environment and lecturers actively make themselves available to support their students one to one. Adopting Teams has allowed that relationship to be maintained during the pandemic”



A group of diverse students sitting on a wooden bench, using various mobile devices like tablets and laptops. The students are wearing casual clothing like hoodies, sweaters, and jeans. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor or well-lit indoor setting.

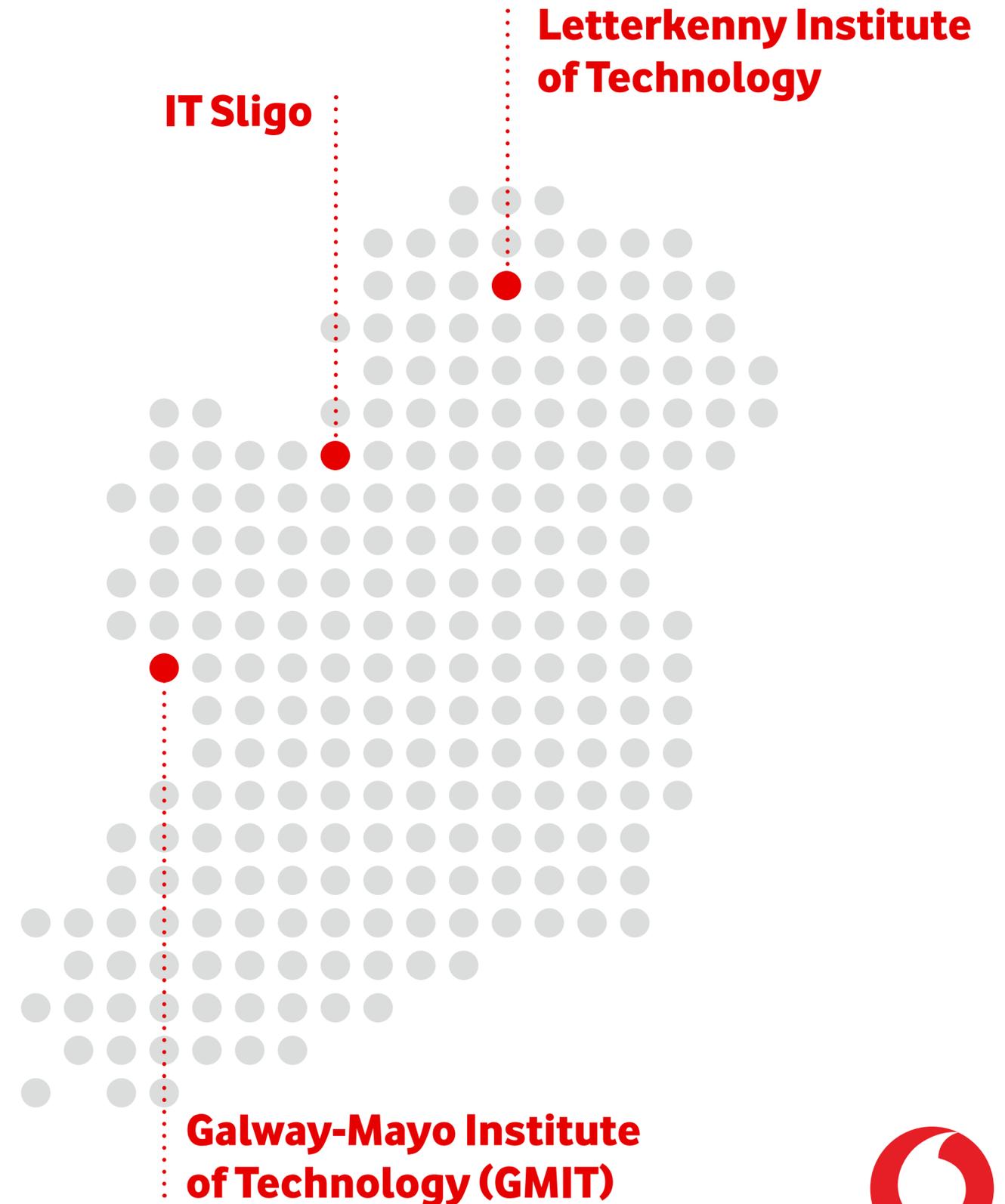
“Students can directly contact their lecturers, raise their hand to ask questions in class, and can join in with lectures using the most basic of access technologies. They don’t need to have state of the art broadband in their homes.”



The result

As GMIT merges with Letterkenny IT and IT Sligo to become a Technological University, technology will play a key role in integrating three geographically-dispersed institutes, allowing them function as one

...and be accessible to the wider community of 20,000 students and 3,000 staff.





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