

# **REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (Irish Branch)**

## **E-NEWSLETTER**

**ISSUE 5, September 2008**

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Regional Studies Association (RSA) e-newsletter. A new development for the Irish Branch of the Association, this e-newsletter serves as a way to highlight conferences, events, publications and other developments in the broad regional policy area. Contact details are included below.

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## 1. About the Association

The Regional Studies Association is a learned society interested in regional development, policy and research. The Association carries out a range of activities including:

- publishing a journal, newsletter and books;
- organising conferences and other meetings; and
- establishing and maintaining a branch and international section network.

It has an international membership of individuals, corporate organisations and students.

The Irish Branch was formed to provide a forum to discuss regional issues in Ireland.

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## 2. RSA News

### WEBSITE UPDATE

The website of the Irish Branch of the RSA can be accessed at: [www.regionalstudies.ie](http://www.regionalstudies.ie)  
Suggestions on the site's continued development is welcomed – as is relevant text! The Association's general website can be accessed at: [www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk](http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk)

### SECOND JOINT IRISH-SCOTTISH CONFERENCE ON REGIONAL ISSUES

Arrangements for the second Irish-Scottish Conference are progressing. Scheduled to take place in the Shannon Region over the next few months (with exact location and date to be confirmed over the coming weeks), it is currently proposed that the theme for this event will be *Economic Development, Labour Markets and Regional Connectivity*. Sponsorship for this 1-day event is currently being sourced to supplement the grant made available by the RSA HQ. A call for papers will be issued shortly; with deadline for abstracts expected to be in early November. For further details, contact the branch secretary Patrick Collins at [secretary@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:secretary@regionalstudies.ie)

### RSA WINTER CONFERENCE 2008

On 28 November 2008, the Regional Studies Association will host a 1-day conference on *Working Regions*. In recent years, employment issues have been neglected in regional studies debates as the focus has turned to issues of productivity, growth and performance. In part this reflects relatively low rates of unemployment in many regions in the developed world, but it is also indicative of policymakers' concern with economic growth at the expense of broader and alternative visions of regional development. As the global economy enters a period of prolonged uncertainty, it is timely to ask questions about current trajectories of regional development and their implications for creating meaningful work and livelihoods. Plenary presentations include: Prof. Jane Wills, Queen Mary on 'Immigrant workers in London'; Prof. Danny Dorling, University of Sheffield on 'The North-South divide' and Alexandra Jones, the Work Foundation on 'Changing labour markets in a changing economy'. For further details, see <http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk/>

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### 3. Upcoming Events

- **PRESENTATIONS/WORKSHOPS/PAPERS**

#### COMBAT POVERTY AGENCY

**Seminar title:** "Financial Services Provision and Prevention of Financial Exclusion in Europe"

**Date:** 18 September 2008

**Venue:** Combat Poverty Agency, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

A presentation by Caroline Corr, Research Officer, Combat Poverty Agency on a study funded by the European Commission under the EU Social Exclusion Programme.

**Seminar title:** "Health Inequalities, Deprivation and Access to Primary Healthcare"

**Date:** 23 September 2008

**Venue:** Combat Poverty Agency, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

A presentation by Dr. Jean Saunders, Statistical Consulting Unit, University of Limerick on a study funded under the Poverty Research Initiative.

**Seminar title:** "Nigerian church Communities in Ireland: creating space for difference"

**Date:** 23 September 2008

**Venue:** Combat Poverty Agency, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

A presentation by Julius Komolafe, Projects Researcher, Combat Poverty Agency.

**Seminar title:** "Empowering Communities in disadvantaged Urban Areas: towards Greater Community Participation in Irish Urban Planning"

**Date:** 4 November 2008

**Venue:** Combat Poverty Agency, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

A presentation by Dr. Andrew MacLaran, Trinity College Dublin on a study funded under the Poverty Research Initiative.

**Seminar title:** "Private Sector Involvement in Regenerating Social housing Estates: worthwhile and workable?"

**Date:** 7 November 2008

**Venue:** Combat Poverty Agency, Conyngham Road, Islandbridge, Dublin 8

A presentation by Dr. Michelle Norris and Dr. Declan Redmond, University College Dublin on a study funded under the Poverty Research Initiative.

All events commence at 12.30p.m. Tea/coffee and sandwiches are provided. All welcome with prior notification essential.

**For further details contact:** the Research Administrator at 01-602 6612 or email [research@combatpoverty.ie](mailto:research@combatpoverty.ie)

- **UPCOMING CONFERENCES**

#### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WATER AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PARADIGMS

**Date:** 15-19 September 2008

**Venue:** Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

This international conference focuses on the pressing need for an integrated approach to city planning which includes the development and management of safe drinking water, municipal wastewater distribution, processing and re-use systems. The conference aims to bridge the gap between the disciplines of water management, ecology and the approaches of engineering,

urban design and spatial planning. Key themes being explored as part of this week-long event include urbanity and hydrology, mitigating natural disasters (flood, tsunami), urban water management, and rethinking water governance. Keynote speakers include: Robert France, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Luc Feyen, Institute for Environment and Sustainability, European Commission, and Hen Meyer, Technical University of Delft.

**For further details see:** [www.urbanwaterconference.be](http://www.urbanwaterconference.be)

## CITIES OF OPPORTUNITY – THE URBAN PROMISE OF UPWARD MOBILITY

**Date:** 22-23 September 2008

**Venue:** Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Organised by the European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) in cooperation with the City of Rotterdam, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Nicis Institute, this conference aims to change the view of deprived areas as an accumulation of problems to a view that is more in line with the actual situation in our cities. The conference will focus on harnessing the potential and energy that exists within deprived urban areas and explore ways in which these areas and their inhabitants can play a role in the creation of comprehensive, well-balanced and vital cities. The conference will result in the production of the *Rotterdam Recommendations on the Practicalities of Implementing an Integrated Approach to socio-economic Urban Development*.

**For further details see:**

[http://www.eukn.org/eukn/meetings/2008/09/cities-of-opportunity\\_1007.html](http://www.eukn.org/eukn/meetings/2008/09/cities-of-opportunity_1007.html)

## CITIZEN FIRST...USING TECHNOLOGY TO INCLUDE ALL CITIZENS

**Date:** 25-26 September 2008

**Venue:** The Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, co. Clare

Citizen First is an INTERREG IIIB funded initiative involving a partnership that was formed with the common objectives of ensuring that organisations are increasingly citizen-centric in service provision. Citizen First aims to address the digital divide that affects communities and citizens in the territories of the Mid-West Region (Ireland), Eindhoven Region (Netherlands), West Flanders (Belgium) and Cambridgeshire (England). This conference marks the end of this funded programme.

**For further details contact:** Marie Collins, Mid-West Regional Authority at 067 33197 or by email at [info@mwra.ie](mailto:info@mwra.ie)

## BUDGET PERSPECTIVES 2009

**Date:** 7 October 2008

**Venue:** ESRI, Whitaker Square, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2

This conference, organised by the Economic and Social Research Institute and the Foundation for Fiscal Studies, will present research findings and draw out their implications for public policy, particularly budgetary policy. This conference will be of interest to the social partners, high-level officials from government departments (central and regional) and others involved in the debate on policy issues.

**For further details contact:** Edgar Morgenroth at [edgar.morgenroth@esri.ie](mailto:edgar.morgenroth@esri.ie)

## LEARNING CITIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY

**Date:** 9-11 October 2008

**Venue:** Milan, Italy

European cities are engaged in difficult and challenging process of social, economical, institutional and territorial change. The 11<sup>th</sup> European Urban Research Association (EURA) Conference will explore these major challenges and will foster a lively exchange and debate among researchers in the field of urban studies. Contemporary cities are places of learning – as central nodes of a knowledge-based economy, as social laboratories and as settings for institutional and political innovation. This conference will consider the interactions between different forms of knowledge and urban governance; and is being organised around four tracks:

- Emerging spatial planning practices
- Economic development and urban change
- Learning through governance
- Integration and cohesion in knowledge-based urban societies.

**For further details see:** [www.eura2008.polimi.it](http://www.eura2008.polimi.it)

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## 5. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### INTERREG IVA IRELAND-WALES PROGRAMME

The second call for proposals under the INTERREG IVA Ireland-Wales programme opened on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008. Through an integrated approach to economic, environmental, social and technological issues the Ireland-Wales Territorial Cooperation Programme seeks to further develop the cross-border region and:

- Contribute to its greater competitiveness and sustainable development;
- Improve its overall economic, environmental and social well-being;
- Achieve a more cohesive, balanced and sustainable development of the Ireland Wales cooperation area, and thus to contribute to the overall competitiveness of the Community territory in a globalised world

With two Priorities – (1) Knowledge, Innovation and Skills for Growth and (2) Climate Change and Sustainable Regeneration – over €40million remains available under this fund. Deadline for receipt of applications is the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008. An information workshop on this second call for proposals will take place in the Lyrath Estate Hotel, Kilkenny, on the 14 August 2008.

**For further details see** [www.irelandwales.ie/](http://www.irelandwales.ie/)

### SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME: RENEWABLE AND SMART ENERGY

The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development is now seeking funding applications for collaborative projects on renewable electricity generation, renewable fuel production, clean coal technologies and activity energy, smart energy networks and energy efficiency and savings. This strand of FP7 has a budget of €147 million. Deadline for receipt of applications is 8 October 2008. **For further details see**

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL\\_ID=127&ACT\\_CODE=ENERGY#infopack](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL_ID=127&ACT_CODE=ENERGY#infopack)

### ECO-INNOVATION IN ENTERPRISES

The promotion of Eco-Innovation through the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) aims to contribute to the implementation of the Environmental Technologies

Action Plan. One of the main objectives of this Action Plan is to tap the full potential of environmental technologies for protecting the environment while contributing to competitiveness and economic growth as laid down in the Lisbon Strategy. CIP Eco-Innovation will support projects concerned with the first application or market replication of eco-innovative techniques, products, processes or practices, which have already been successfully demonstrated, but due to remaining risks need incentives to penetrate significantly the market. Under the current call for project proposals, priority areas include material recycling, buildings, the food and drink sector, and the greening of businesses (smart purchasing). Deadline for submissions of applications is 11 September 2008. **For further details see** [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etap/ecoinnovation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etap/ecoinnovation/index_en.htm)

**If you have a submission or suggestion on any upcoming events, seminars, presentations or conferences and would like them to be included in a future edition, please email [newsletter@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:newsletter@regionalstudies.ie)**

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## **6. Publications of Interest**

### **• BOOKS (incl. CHAPTERS)**

**Title:** AER Study on Regional Policy 2014+

**Author(s):** Assembly of European Regions

**Date Published:** December 2007

**Publisher details:** AER

The future development of European regions is currently being debated at both national and European level. As part of this, the Assembly of European Regions (AER) asked member regions to take part in a consultation on regional policy and development and EU Structural Funds. Sixty regions participated in this discussion on future cohesion policy, with a particular emphasis on post-2013. The resulting in-depth report considers the advantages and drawbacks of the Lisbon Agenda and the integration of the rural development pillar of CAP into future regional policy. It details the lessons emerging from the experiences of states in preparing the 2007-2013 programmes and considers how the principle of subsidiarity could be further supported. The report argues strongly for a more integrated and flexible approach to development and growth. This report can be downloaded, free of charge, as a pdf document. For further details see:

[http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/MainIssues/CohesionRegionalPolicy/AER-Study-FutureRegPolicy-2014-FIN.pdf](http://www.aer.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/MainIssues/CohesionRegionalPolicy/AER-Study-FutureRegPolicy-2014-FIN.pdf)

**Title:** Integrated Area Planning: A Collaborative Approach to Decision-Making

**Editor(s):** Ciaran Lynch & Catherine Corcoran

**Date Published:** May 2008

**Publisher details:** Oak Tree Press, Cork

Over the past seven years, Tipperary Institute (TI) has been commissioned by various local authorities and community groups to assist them in dealing with issues arising from the planning process. These groups were interested in drawing up good local development plans and were interested in finding a less adversarial, and more positive, way of engaging in such processes. The proposition that lies behind this book (a synthesis of lessons learned over the past seven years) is that the decisions about how a particular geographic area develops should be made in a way that actively involves the community in question. A fundamental process that affects how areas develop is how decisions about land-use and environmental management are made. The type of planning mechanism used when such decisions are made may have a

profound impact on the way that area actually develops. Rather than seeing planning as a mechanistic exercise, or a process that is owned by experts, the broad-based ownership of the planning process is recognised and what are called collaborative planning principles are applied. This book explores the application of these collaborative planning principles within an Irish context. Published in paperback, this book costs €25. For further details see: <http://www.oaktreepress.com/ECom1/Library3.nsf/CatalogByTitle/28D890C0F59488BA80257458004A38D2!OpenDocument>

## • WORKING PAPERS/DOCUMENTS

**Title:** European Integration, Regional Growth and Cohesion: An Overview

**Author(s):** Nijkamp, P (Free University Amsterdam) & Siedschkag, Iulia (ESRI, Dublin)

**Date Published:** June 2008

This article is published in a special edition of the *International Journal for Public Policy* (Vol. 3, No. 3-4, pp.141-145). It focuses on the effects of European integration on regional production systems. In particular, the article focuses on economic interactions across border regions in the enlarged EU. In addition, it discusses the impact of transport, cohesion and ICT policies on border regions and more broadly on regional growth and cohesion.

**If you wish to have a recently published book/paper listed in this section of future newsletters, please e-mail details formatted as above to [newsletter@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:newsletter@regionalstudies.ie)**

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## 7. An Introduction to the Dublin Regional Authority

In each edition of the e-newsletter we plan to briefly profile a body working in the area of regional policy in Ireland. Thanks to Patricia Potter and Walter Foley, Dublin Regional Authority for their assistance in preparing this profile.

Established in January 1994, the Dublin Regional Authority is one of eight Regional Authorities set up under the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order 1993. Their key functions are:

1. Preparing Regional Planning Guidelines and Regional Economic and Social Strategies.
2. Reviewing, as appropriate, the Development Plans of the Local Authorities in the Region and, where relevant, the Development Plans of Local Authorities adjoining the Region; to consider the consistency of plans with one another and with the overall development needs of the Region.
3. Promoting coordination of public services and, where relevant, consideration by Public Authorities of the implications for, or the effect of, their decisions, activities or services on the Region.

The region comprises the constituent city/county council administrative areas of Dublin City, Dún Laoghaire- Rathdown, South Dublin and Fingal. The land area of the region is 921 sq.km., with Fingal the largest county in terms of geographic area (453sq.km.). The Dublin region had a population of 1.18 million in 2006 (an increase of 9.5% on 2002 figures). There were approximately 506,000 persons living in the Dublin Metropolitan Area in 2006 with the remainder outside the city limits. The median age of the regions' population stood at 35.6 years in 2006 with 62% aged between 20-64 years of age. The Dublin Region had a residual net migration of 48,000 in the period 2002 to 2006 with a natural increase of 33,000 persons.

**MEMBERSHIP:** The Dublin Regional Authority consists of a Board of 30 elected representatives nominated from the four Dublin local authorities operating within the region.

The Board consists of 14 members from Dublin City Council (DCC), 6 from South Dublin County Council (SDCC) - including one additional member from the Committee of the Regions - and 5 each from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLRCC) and Fingal County Council (FCC) respectively.

**REGIONAL VISION:** In this era of globalisation the further development of the Dublin Region as an international hub is paramount to continued economic prosperity both regionally and nationally. As the Dublin Region is the main transport, trade, educational, health and urban tourism node and asset of Ireland, much of the country's output is predicated on the Dublin Region having more than adequate infrastructure to provide essential national services such as swift and efficient access to and from the ports and airports. The Dublin Region will also face up to the challenges facing it in terms of the creation of a healthy, diverse, innovative, environmentally friendly and socially equitable region. To this effect the Dublin Regional Authority continually aims to secure an improved future for the region through enhanced activity and cooperation within and between public sector agencies, private sector bodies and the general public. This process is facilitated along four main facets:

- 1) Dublin as a living city region with low levels of crime, a clean environment, a well educated workforce and high levels of accessibility
- 2) Dublin as a metropolitan region with an innovative enterprise base, high skills levels, a creative workforce and a vibrant economy
- 3) Dublin as the National Capital with a unique character and physical environment and effective, well integrated local government
- 4) Dublin as a leading European City with high levels of competitiveness and an attractive location for inward investment.

**INTERNATIONAL ISSUES:** In 2007, the Authority undertook a number of high level projects to improve the international profile of the Region and introduce international best practices in the area of economic benchmarking and creative city region policy. The *Creative City-Regions* Conference was organised by the Dublin Regional Authority and the Dublin Employment Pact in Dublin on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2007. This conference sought to identify new best practise internationally in the development strategies of cities and regions in relation to their becoming significant centres for attracting, growing and keeping creative workers and creative industries. Amongst other distinguished speakers were John Gormley, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government; and Prof. Richard Florida, Professor of Business and Creativity at the University of Toronto, and author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*.

In terms of international benchmarking, the Department of Transport hosted a delegation from the Puget Sound Regional Council in Seattle to discuss the economic growth of Ireland and the role played by the Dublin Region. On their return to Seattle, the Puget Sound Regional Council set up an *International Regions Benchmarking Consortium* and requested the Dublin Regional Authority to take part. Six other regions from around the world agreed to become a part of this first-ever consortium - Barcelona, Spain; Fukuoka, Japan; Helsinki, Finland; Melbourne, Australia; Munich, Germany and Stockholm, Sweden. To date the regions have undertaken an initial benchmarking data collation exercise of socio-economic indicators. It is foreseen that these data-sets will provide a means to measure the Region's strengths and opportunities in terms of international competitiveness, the development of a knowledge economy and quality of life issues.

**EUROPEAN ISSUES:** The Dublin Regional Authority is represented on the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) in order to provide the EU with comments and opinions on EU policy from the perspective of the Dublin Region. To enhance our involvement in the CoR, the Authority undertook a number of EU focused projects to (1) directly respond to the EU Commission on EU policy approaches, (2) highlight Dublin's culture and traditions among the institutions and authorities of the EU and (3) establish partnerships with other EU city-regions. The Authority has also assisted in the roll-out of Irish Cultural Programmes in Brussels throughout 2007 and 2008.

Where relevant, the Dublin Regional Authority makes submissions to the EU on emerging policy and directives. In 2007, the Dublin Regional Authority made a submission to the European Commission's Maritime Policy Task Force in response to the Green Paper, *Towards a Future Maritime Policy for the Union*. Within its submission, the Authority responded to a number key questions posed by the Commission, for example,

- Should the EU have an integrated maritime policy?
- What mechanisms should be in place to ensure that new maritime development is sustainable?
- In what way should stakeholders be involved? What are the principles and mechanisms that should underpin maritime spatial planning systems?

Full details on this, and other, submissions can be obtained from <http://www.dra.ie>

The Authority is also involved in a number of networks covering issues pertinent to the Dublin region. The "PURPLE" network, for example, was set up in 2004 and brings together the following regions - Catalunya, Flanders, Frankfurt Rhein/Main, Île de France, Mazovia, MHAL (Province of Limburg), Nord Pas de Calais, Regio Randstad, Rhône-Alpes, South East England, Stockholm, West Midlands - to work closely to maximise the advantages resulting from their location in proximity to large urban areas while minimising adverse impacts on landscape, the environment and heritage which characterises these areas. The Dublin Regional Authority joined the PURPLE Network in May 2007 with a view to maintain the diversity – resource and landscape, heritage and quality of life – of our own peripheral urban areas and to highlight that different policy solutions are needed for peri-urban areas to those already advanced for areas with more definite rural or urban characteristics.

In conjunction with partners throughout the Irish Sea Region the Dublin Regional Authority has involved itself in preparing and assisting in proposals for a number of cross regional initiatives/projects. The Irish Sea Regions Platform (ISP), for example, provides the opportunity for all regions and sectors in and surrounding the Irish Sea and the Isle of Man, to work together to provide opportunities to, not only develop new projects, but also to be aware of developments in other sectors which may have a wide impact.

**NATIONAL ISSUES:** The Authority addresses national issues of relevance to the social, economic and environmental development of the Dublin Region. The Authority also prepares position papers on issues of concern for the attention of Government departments. For example, the Dublin Regional Authority prepared its response to the NDP 2007-2013 in its document, *The NDP, What's in it for Dublin*. In late 2007, the Authority also prepared Position Papers on *Sustainable and Renewable Energy Options for Dublin* and *Greening Dublin's Fleet*. In addition, the Regional Authority has, over the past year, prepared submissions on the Green Paper on Local Government Reform - *Implications for the Dublin Regional Authority*; the Dublin Transportation Authority Bill; the Department of Transport - Statement of Strategy 2008-2010; and, the consultation document *2020 Vision-Sustainable Travel and Transport*.

**LOCAL ISSUES: DUBLIN BAY TASK FORCE:** The Authority has regard to all issues of local interest. Based on Dublin City Council commissioning a wide-ranging economic, amenity and environmental study of Dublin Bay, including the Dublin Port area, the members of the Regional Authority have, since 2007, been considering on the future of Dublin Bay. The commissioned study assessed the impact of leaving the port undisturbed as well as a number of potential options for development of the port lands based on partial or complete relocation of the port. The Dublin Regional Authority was presented with details of the study findings at its meeting in November 2007, and having discussed the matter comprehensively, the Authority submitted comments to Dublin City Council as part of the consultation phase; with key points raised including:

- The Dublin Regional Authority welcomed a debate about the future of Dublin Port; however, it considered that there was a need to undertake a comprehensive approach to the sustainable development of the wider Bay area
- The Authority considered that a further study was needed to address the specifics of the relocation of the port outside Dublin

- There is no overall co-ordination between the many authorities, State agencies and organisations whose remit includes the Dublin Bay area, and as such, it is difficult to monitor the development of Dublin Bay and to ascertain if it is being developed to its full potential.

As part of its submission the Dublin Regional Authority recommended that, as the only democratic regional body operating in the area, it should be the overarching body responsible for Dublin Bay, augmented by other agencies, e.g. Dublin Docklands Development Authority.

Since then and as part of the Programme for Government, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has mandated the Dublin Regional Authority to lead and facilitate the establishment of a Dublin Bay Task Force and to progress the work of preparing a Master Plan for Dublin Bay. On Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2008 the Task Force was launched by Minister Gormley and the first meeting was held. Stakeholder consultation is an essential part of the proposed Master Plan and, as of August 2008, opinions were being sought on the details for the terms of reference for the Plan.

**REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDELINES:** The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the Greater Dublin Area combines two Regional Authority areas - the Dublin Regional Authority and the Mid-East Regional Authority - for the purposes of Regional Planning. The current RPGs were adopted by the Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities on the 8th of July 2004 and cover the Councils of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Dublin City, Fingal and South Dublin in the Dublin Region and Kildare, Meath and Wicklow in the Mid-East Region. Prior to the adoption of the Regional Planning Guidelines, the 7 Councils and the 2 Regions, in association with the Department of Environment and Local Government, had prepared a non-statutory regional planning guidance document, *The Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area*, in 1999.

The current RPGs are updated regularly through a series of reports as required by Implementation Guidelines. These Reports cover a wide range of topics such as Population and Housing Updates; National and Regional Economy; Waste and Water Infrastructure; Environment and Heritage; Social Inclusion, and so on. These reports are available at <http://www.rpg.ie/reports.html>. The latest review process for the RPGs will commence in late Autumn 2008. Revised RPGs are required to be in place 6 years from the date of adoption (as after this date - under Sc. 27 (5) of the Act - planning authorities will not be obliged to have regard to them). Therefore, in order to have revised guidelines in place, the revised document needs to be completed by June 2010.

**FUTURE WORK:** The Regional Authority will continue to follow-up on existing and ongoing activities already mentioned in this synopsis. The Authority furthermore hopes and expects to participate in INTERREG IV and ESPON programmes, particularly through its involvement with the ISP and Manchester Enterprises respectively. The latter programme will involve an inter-regional study on urban agglomerations as key drivers of the economy.

Following on from the creative city region conference, the Regional Authority is in the process of developing a competitiveness strategy for the region with a focus on innovation and enterprise. This will involve an analysis and examination of the needs and opportunities for the existing workforce; upskilling; the potential to attract and grow the creative class in the region; and the potential to increase both FDI, ODI and indigenous enterprise.

Dublin Local Authorities, through the Regional Waste Management offices, wish to develop a Business Materials Exchange programme to business and individuals that will seek to reduce waste by promoting the exchange of reusable commercial materials. This program will help reduce waste, extend the life of usable materials and improve economic performance and quality of life for participants. It is hoped that this programme will form one part of an industrial ecology ethos across the region. In addition, the Dublin Regional Authority in conjunction with the Mid-East Regional Authority expects to shortly begin the process of undertaking a Regional Bio-Energy Plan with the assistance of Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI).

The DRA in its role as secretariat to the Irish delegation to the CoR will assist in the upcoming Committee of the Regions' conference focused on SMEs, taking place in Athlone on 29-30 September 2008. The event, which will be opened by An Taoiseach Brian Cowen, is entitled *Supporting our SMEs – overcoming barriers to their development*, and will focus on European policies for delivering growth and jobs and the new Small Business Act for Europe.

**Further Details** on the Authority and its work, the RPGs or Irish Regions are available through contacting the office on +353 1 8074482; via email [info@dra.ie](mailto:info@dra.ie); or by looking up the websites <http://www.dra.ie>; <http://www.rpg.ie>; <http://www.iro.ie>

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## 8. Regional Policy: What's New?

### FUTURE OF REGIONAL POLICY

In an interview with *Regions and Cities of Europe* (May-June 2008), Danuta Hubner, European Commissioner for Regional Policy noted that territorial cohesion policy “must strive to achieve a more balanced, sustainable and integrated form of regional development”. While currently there are a number of varying definitions of territorial cohesion, the Green Paper, which is scheduled to be published in September 2008, will make a common interpretation possible. When asked what the key aspects of the planner reform of regional policy will entail, commissioner Hubner noted that cohesion policy must:

- Respond to the new challenges facing our regions – the quickening pace of economic restructuring, a changing demographic structure, climate change, rising energy costs and social polarisation
- Address structural factors such as competitiveness and sustainable development
- Facilitate regional economies to develop their own resources in physical, human and institutional capital terms
- Build on successes to date in terms of partnerships and governance
- Develop evaluation criteria and new indicators thus ensuring efficiency and value added policy.

For a full transcript of this interview see *Regions and Cities of Europe, Issue 60, May-June 2008* which can be downloaded at:

[www.cor.europa.eu/.../ui/ViewDocument.aspx?siteid=default&contentID=dbe35434-35c0-4fcd-bd8e-e312c9e0f390](http://www.cor.europa.eu/.../ui/ViewDocument.aspx?siteid=default&contentID=dbe35434-35c0-4fcd-bd8e-e312c9e0f390)

### FIFTH PROGRESS REPORT ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COHESION

Adopted in June 2008, the *Fifth Progress Report on Economic and Social Cohesion, Growing Regions, Growing Europe*, shows strong growth in the less developed regions of the EU and a strong consensus for an ambitious cohesion policy going forward. The report, which includes a synthesis of the public consultation process undertaken between September 2007 and February 2008, calls for greater emphasis to be put on innovation, education, support for SMES, EU-wide infrastructure and climate change. Submissions during the consultation process also promoted the benefits of simplifying cohesion policy and increasing the involvement of both regional and local authorities. For copy of report see: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/interim5\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/interim5_en.htm)

### EUROPEAN WEEK OF REGIONS AND CITIES 2008

The OPEN DAYS of the European Week of Regions and Cities takes place from 6-9 October 2008 in Brussels. Over the week, 143 specialist seminars and workshops will be hosted – the key themes being:

- Innovating Regions: promoting research, technological development and innovation
- Sustainable Development: regional responses to climate change
- Cooperation and Networking: exchange of best practice in regional development
- Looking Forward: a European cohesion policy for tomorrow.

The OPEN DAYS are aimed at EU and regional policy-makers, experts and representatives of banking, business and civil society groups. Participation is free and online registration is now open. For further details see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/conferences/od2008/index.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/od2008/index.cfm)

## **MANIFESTO FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

Published in May 2008, the *Manifesto for cross-border cooperation in Europe*, the first publication of EUROMOT – the European network of cross-border local authorities established in November 2007 – contains practical recommendations for making progress on cross-border cooperation in Europe. The recommendations of the Manifesto were produced by the twelve topic-based workshops of the Lille conference, hosted by Mission Opérationelle Transfrontalière (MOT) in November 2007; these were prepared over the preceding year by specialist working groups and highlighted issues and projects of cooperation in Europe. The topics covered include: cross-border territories, cross-border conurbations, cross-border rural and natural territories, maritime cooperation, economic development, employment and training, health, environment, public transport, culture and territorial integration, legal instruments of cooperation and training in cross-border professions. A copy of this report can be downloaded at: [http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/MANIFEST\\_EN.pdf](http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/en/MANIFEST_EN.pdf)

## **MID-SHANNON CORRIDOR TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT SCHEME**

Introduced under the Finance Act 2007, the Mid-Shannon Corridor Tourism Infrastructure Investment Scheme provides tax relief for qualifying expenditure on certain tourism facilities which will lead to balanced and sustainable tourism in the mid-Shannon area. The Scheme allows for tax relief by way of accelerated capital allowances over 7 years for qualifying construction and refurbishment expenditure. The scheme, according to Shannon Development, will further spread the economic benefits of tourism into the very heart of Ireland. Further information on the Scheme and the types of facilities eligible for tax relief can be downloaded at:

<http://www.shannondev.ie/Tourism/MidShannonTourismInfrastructureInvestmentSche/#d.en.7442>

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## **9. Contacting the RSA Newsletter**

This is the third e-newsletter of the Irish Branch of the Regional Studies Association. Given the success of the e-newsletter in this, its inaugural year, it is planned to continue this publication in 2008. There will be a further one e-Newsletter produced during 2008 and this will be circulated as follows:

Mid-November.

**If you have any queries regarding the newsletter, or any comments, suggestions or submissions for future editions (incl. details on upcoming events, publications of interest, job vacancies), please email [newsletter@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:newsletter@regionalstudies.ie)**

**PLEASE NOTE:** the closing date for receipt of submissions is the first day of the month of the next issue.

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## 10. Membership of the RSA

Membership of the Association is open to all individuals and organisations with an interest in the analysis and development of regional policy.

The benefits of membership include nine issues of the international journal *Regional Studies*, four issues of *Regions: The Newsletter of the Regional Studies Association* (overall body), three issues of *Spatial Economic Analysis*, discount on other Routledge publications, access to Association events, and ability to participate in any local branch or section activities.

Membership is based on the calendar year. For the year 2008, membership costs are: Individual £74 (€113); Student £35 (€54); Associate Membership £56 (€85); Corporate £152 (€213). Further details and application forms can be found on the RSA international website: [www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk](http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk)

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## 11. Current Irish Committee Members

The current RSA committee for 2008 are: Micheál Collins, TCD (Chairman); Chris Van Egeraat, NUI Maynooth (Vice-Chairman); Patrick Collins, NUI Galway (Hon. Secretary); Edgar Morgenroth, ESRI (Hon. Treasurer); John McDonagh, NUI Galway; Des McCafferty, Mary Immaculate College, UL; Stephen Walsh, DIT; Mark Boyle, NUI Maynooth; David Hogan, Shannon Development; Gillian Slattery, Enterprise Ireland; David Meredith, Teagasc; Ronnie O'Toole, Northern Ireland Bank; Caroline Creamer, ICLRD/NIRSA, NUI Maynooth; Sean O'Riordain, NUI Maynooth; Philip O'Connor, Dublin Employment Pact; Louis Wildenboer, John Spain Associates, and Fergal Gough, Cork County Council.

The following are the contact details of the Association. We strongly encourage communication by e-mail.

RSA Chairman Micheál Collins: [chairman@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:chairman@regionalstudies.ie)

RSA Secretary Patrick Collins: [secretary@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:secretary@regionalstudies.ie)

Newsletter: [newsletter@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:newsletter@regionalstudies.ie)

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## 12. Joining/Leaving the RSA (Irish Branch) Mailing List

If you wish to have your details added to the RSA mailing list please e-mail the following address with the word "ADD" in the subject line: [mailinglist@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:mailinglist@regionalstudies.ie)

To have your details removed from the RSA mailing list please e-mail the following address with the word "REMOVE" in the subject line: [mailinglist@regionalstudies.ie](mailto:mailinglist@regionalstudies.ie)

The RSA updates its mailing list approximately once every six weeks.

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A pdf copy of this newsletter is available on the RSA website at [www.regionalstudies.ie](http://www.regionalstudies.ie)