



## **One-Day Conference**

The National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis in association with ESPON will host the following one-day conference:

# **Creating the Regions of Tomorrow: Maximising Ireland's Reform Opportunity**

**Renehan Hall, NUI Maynooth, County Kildare**

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

***\*\*Admission is free but registration is essential\*\****

**[Click Here to Register](#)**

The economic crisis and fiscal austerity have hit regional Ireland, outside of the major urban centres, particularly hard. Unemployment and out-migration have all increased markedly, re-exposing the historic disparities which were temporarily masked by the construction bubble. The geography of the nascent economic recovery is further revealing an increasingly 'two-speed' Ireland with new employment and investment ever more concentrated in the larger cities competing at a global scale.

While much of the focus has been on prioritising national economic recovery, comparatively little attention has been paid to the spatial and regional dimensions of the crisis. EU Cohesion Funding for 2014-2020, which is worth €1.2 billion to Ireland, together with the Government's ambitious proposals for local government and planning reform represent an important opportunity for Ireland to implement meaningful policies and governance to counteract unbalanced development and promote regional recovery.

This one-day conference aims to take stock of these developments and will have a specific focus on the spatial dimension of policy implementation, particularly the proposed review of the National Spatial Strategy and the new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies which are proposed to be developed as integrated cross-sectoral policy vehicles for economic development, investment and job creation.

# Conference Programme

09:30 **Opening Address: Minister Jan O’Sullivan TD** - Minister for Housing and Planning (TBC)

## Session 1 – Past Lessons, New Challenges and Future Opportunities

09:45 **Fifty Years of National and Regional Planning in Ireland - Learning the lessons of the Past:** Professor Jim Walsh, NUI Maynooth

10:10 **Why Invest Outside Dublin? – Some Economic Policy Messages from Europe:** Professor Michael Parkinson, University of Liverpool

10:35 **Overview of EU Cohesion and Regional Policy to 2020:** Dr. Lewis Dijkstra, European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy

## Session 2 – Driving Reform Through Action: Developing Spatial and Economic Strategies

11:45 **New Regional Governance for Ireland: The Challenges and Opportunities Ahead:** Stephen Blair, Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly

12:10 **Shaping the Next Generation of National and Regional Spatial Policies in Ireland:** Niall Cussen, Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government

12:35 **Reviewing the National Spatial Strategy – the Scottish Experience in Preparing the National Planning Framework and Some Possible Lessons for Ireland:** Dr. Graeme Purves, Former Assistant Chief Planner, Scottish Government

13:15 **Lunch**

## Session 3 – Gathering the Evidence Base for Effective Policy and Investment Choices

14:15 **Providing Evidence to Inform Regional Development: Challenges and Possible Solutions for Statistical Providers:** Dr. Steve MacFeeley, Assistant Director General Central Statistics Office

14:40 **Building a Spatial Vision for Ireland and its Regions to 2050 – Evidence from the ESPON Scenarios Project:** Carlo Sessa, Institute of Studies for Integration of Systems (TBC)

15:05 **Fostering Regional Resilience – Evidence and Insights from the ESPON Crisis Project:** Dr. Adrian Healy, Cardiff University

## Session 4 – Joining the Dots: Integrated Spatial and Economic Development

16:15 **Spatial Development Patterns and the Implications For Ireland’s Medium Term Economic Strategy:** Dr. Edgar Morgenroth, Economic and Social Research Institute

16:40 **Enhancing Regional Competitiveness: The Role of Industrial Structure and Investment:** Dr. Chris Van Egeraat, NUI Maynooth

17:05 **Energising Ireland’s Rural Economy: Spatial Development Messages from Current Government Policy - Signposts from CEDRA and Local Governance:** Dr. Brendan O’Keeffe, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

17:30 **What Have We Learned?** Rapporteur - Mary Crowley, President, Irish Planning Institute (TBC)

For information on the conference please contact: [mark.g.boyle@nuim.ie](mailto:mark.g.boyle@nuim.ie) or [gavin.daly@nuim.ie](mailto:gavin.daly@nuim.ie)