



NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh



Whitaker  
Institute



Call for Papers: Regional Studies Association Irish Branch Annual Conference, in conjunction with  
The Western Development Commission

# Planning for Regional Development: The National Planning Framework as a Roadmap for Ireland's Future?

Friday 9 September 2016, NUI Galway

## Theme:

The island of Ireland is on the cusp of an unprecedented period of historical importance with the population of the island set to finally bridge the gap of population loss which arose through the Great Famine some 160 years ago. Pre-famine Ireland had one of the densest populations in Europe and the century following the famine was marked by a population decline which created a largely rural population with low densities across the island, most noticeably in what is now the Republic.

Current trends suggest that the next 30 years could see the Republic's population reach up to 6.5 million while Northern Ireland's population will top 2 million. The island and both jurisdictions need to plan for such growth. This is going to require an enormous shift in thinking in how and where people live, work, recreate and travel. The development pressures arising, along with the need to address development legacies from the past require innovative and long-term thinking if both jurisdictions are to avoid unnecessary congestion, inadequate housing provision as well as meeting the hugely challenging environment of change from the international arena.

In the Republic efforts are underway to develop a new National Planning Framework (NPF) while the Northern Ireland Government is also looking to address the Region's oncoming growth. Is it possible that both are finally beginning to grapple with the need for long term planning underpinned by an effective island-wide investment programme which will equip both urban and rural communities to meet this oncoming dynamic policy environment?

Marking the development of the National Planning Framework the Regional Studies Association Irish Branch is using its national conference to, amongst others, look at the many challenges and possible initiatives which would help position the island to confront such pressures. We will examine best international practice in spatial planning and will look at what should be at the heart of Irish regional development and planning policy so that the growth envisaged will, finally, equip the people across the island to have a real understanding of current spatial processes and what vision for Ireland should be at the cornerstone of local, regional and national development over the next 30 years.

**Submission themes:**

We call for presentations from, policy makers, academia and practitioners active in the field of regional studies. Post-graduate students are encouraged to submit. We call for presentations dealing with, amongst others, the following themes:

- The new National Planning Framework
- One island, two jurisdictions
- Visioning Ireland
- The NPF and Governance
- The NPF and Housing
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies
- Local and regional economic forums
- New approaches to regional development
- International comparator cases
- Other contributions dealing with the topic of regional studies are invited and will be included in focussed sessions

**Submissions:**

Please submit proposals for presentation in the form of a 250 word abstract through the Regional Studies Association – Irish Branch online portal by 31st July 2016.

Submissions should be forwarded to [chris.vanegeraat@nuim.ie](mailto:chris.vanegeraat@nuim.ie)

**Venue:**

NUI Galway

**Registration and Conference updates:**

Conference fees: 70 Euro (including lunch). Registration and conference updates are available on the Regional Studies Association, Irish Branch website at: <http://rsa-ireland.weebly.com/>

Any queries regarding registration should be send to [justin.doran@ucc.ie](mailto:justin.doran@ucc.ie)