

**Regional**

**Studies**

**Association**

**THE GLOBAL FORUM FOR CITY  
AND REGIONAL RESEARCH,  
DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY**

# **REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION**

**The Irish Section of the Regional Studies Association, in  
association with Maynooth University Social Sciences  
Institute and the Regional Assemblies of Ireland, invites  
you to its**

## **Annual Conference**

**Renehan Hall  
South Campus  
Maynooth University**

**Thursday 8 September 2022, 11.00-16.00**

**Key Note: Ron Martin, University of Cambridge**

**(provisional program attached)**

**Registration: 30 Euro (including coffee and lunch)**

**Online Registration at: <http://rsa-ireland.weebly.com/register.html>**

**For conference updates see: <http://rsa-ireland.weebly.com>**

**For further information: [chris.vanegeraat@mu.ie](mailto:chris.vanegeraat@mu.ie)**



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## REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION

### Provisional Program

**Justin Doran (Chair of the Irish Section)** - Welcome address

#### **11.00-12.15 Session1 - Rural Regeneration**

**Karen Keaveney (UCD)** - It's not just about 'one-off houses': understanding spatial nuance in Irish rural housing

**Niamh Moore (UCD)** - Exploring place-based opportunities for just transitions

**Mary O Shaughnessy (UCC)** – Rurality as context for innovative responses to social challenges - The role of rural social enterprise

12.15-13.15 Lunch

#### **13:15-14:30 Session 2 - Keynote Address and Tribute**

**Keynote by Prof Ron Martin (University of Cambridge)** – What Price a Global Financial Centre? How London Distorts the UK's Economic Geography and Challenges Levelling Up

**Niall Cussen (Office of the Planning Regulator)** – Tribute to Jim Walsh, former chair of the Regional Studies Association

14.30-14.50 Coffee

#### **14:50-16:05 Session 3 – Regional Assemblies and RSES: taking stock**

**David Minton (Director NWRA)** - In pursuit of regional coherence: Progress towards effective regional development

**David Kelly (Director SRA)** – Title to be confirmed

**Jim Conway (Director EMRA)** Title to be confirmed



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# REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION

## Keynote

Ron Martin, University of Cambridge

### What Price a Global Financial Centre? How London Distorts the UK's Economic Geography and Challenges Levelling Up

**Abstract:** This lecture argues that while the UK Government's *Levelling Up White Paper* (2022) possibly represents the most elaborate policy statement on reducing the substantial inequalities in economic prosperity, performance and prospects across the regions and cities of the country since the famous Barlow Commission report of 1940, its chances of success will ultimately be limited because it fails to address a key systemic cause of those inequalities, namely the overbearing influence of London on the UK's political economy. For the entrenched nature and persistence of geographical socio-economic inequalities across the UK cannot be understood in isolation from the long-standing institutionalised concentration of economic, financial and political power in London, and its joint role as a global financial centre and the nation's capital city in shaping the national model of economic growth and development. As the nation's 'economic dynamo' London's success undoubtedly helps the other regions and cities of the UK. But it is also the case that London distorts national economic and financial policymaking in its own favour. While the *White Paper* promises more local Combined Authorities, with certain devolved powers and resources, this still falls short of what is now long overdue, namely a move to an economic model based on a geographically federated system of economic governance and an explicit embedding of spatial imperatives into national policymaking and expenditure - in other words a decentred political economy.

# REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION

## Keynote

Ron Martin, University of Cambridge

### What Price a Global Financial Centre? How London Distorts the UK's Economic Geography and Challenges Levelling Up

**Ron Martin** is Emeritus Professor of Economic Geography at the University of Cambridge. He holds BA, PhD and DSc degrees from that University, and is an Emeritus Professorial Fellow of St Catharine's College, there. He also holds Senior Research Associate positions in the Centre for Business Research at the Judge Business School, and in the Bennett Institute for Public Policy. Although retired from teaching, Ron is still highly research active. His main research interests include regional economic development; the productivity and competitiveness of regions and cities; the geographies of money and finance; evolutionary economic geography; the economic resilience of cities and regions; and spatial economic policy. He has published some 30 books and monographs and more than 250 articles on these and related themes. His most recent, co-authored book is *Levelling Up Left Behind Places* (2021, Routledge). He was President of the Regional Studies Association between 2015-2020. In 2016 he was awarded the Royal Geographical Society's Victoria Gold Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Economic Geography. He is listed as a Highly Cited Researcher (among the top 1 percent of most cited social scientists worldwide) by the Web of Science, and has some 40,000 Google Scholar citations. He holds 'Best Paper Awards' from the journals *Spatial Economic Analysis and Territory*, *Politics and Governance*. He has held editorial positions on several journals, including *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *Economic Geography*, *Journal of Economic Geography*, *Regional Studies*, and *Environmental and Planning*, and in 2008 co-founded, and is an editor on, the *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*. He has held Visiting Professorships at the University of California Los Angeles (USA), Utrecht University (Netherlands), the University of Ancona (Italy), and Victoria University, Wellington (New Zealand). Ron has also held a Leverhulme Professorial Fellowship, and the British Academy's Thank-Offering to Britain Fellowship. He has undertaken research, advisory and consultancy work for the European Commission, the OECD, the UK Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the UK Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the UK Treasury. He is currently writing a book on *Rethinking the Economy: Why Geography Matters*.

