

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 and
Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute (MUSSI)
invite you to the seminar**

Rural Regeneration

**MUSSI Seminar Room, Second Floor Iontas Building,
North Campus
Maynooth University**

Thursday 21 April 2022, 14.00-16.00

Speakers

Josh O'Driscoll, Spatial and Regional Economics Research Centre, UCC

Karen Keaveney, Assistant Professor of Rural Development, UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science.

David Meredith, Senior Research Officer, Teagasc

Registration free.

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

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

For further information: chris.vanegeraat@mu.ie



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Rural Regeneration - Provisional Program

14.00 -14.10 Chris van Egeraat, Maynooth University and MUSSI - Welcome address

14.10 -14.40 Josh O'Driscoll (UCC) – The spatiotemporal dimension of population change in Ireland's Electoral Division (1986-2016)

14.40-15:10 Dr. Karen Keaveney (UCD) - It's not just about 'one-off houses': understanding spatial nuance in Irish rural housing

15:10-15:40 Dr. David Meredith (Teagasc) – 'The technology is the easy part, it's the societal expectations that present the big challenges.' Envisioning transitions to sustainable farming and rural communities in Ireland.

15:40 Coffee



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REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION

Biographies Speakers



Josh O'Driscoll is a PhD student in the Spatial and Regional Economics Research Centre (SRERC) in the Department of Economics, and in the Department of Food Business and Development, within the Cork University Business School (CUBS), University College Cork. His work, which is funded by a CUBS PhD Scholarship, looks at the economic and social consequences of population loss across Irish regions. Josh's research interests include population loss, regional shrinkage, and shrinking regions. He graduated with first-class honours in the BA Economics through Transformational Learning programme from University College Cork in 2019. He has previously worked as a research assistant within the Department of Economics in the University of Limerick, and as a graduate statistician in the Central Statistics Office. His blog, titled "Understanding trends of population loss across Irish Electoral Divisions since 1986", was selected as the Regional Studies Association (RSA) Best RSA Blog Student Summer Series 2021. His undergraduate dissertation was selected as the Global Undergraduate Awards 2020 Regional Winner in the Economics category for the Island of Ireland.

Abstract:

Regional shrinkage has gained more attention from academics and policymakers in recent years who are concerned with the long-term implications on the economic base, labour market, and the future provision of general services (Ubarevičiene et al., 2016). Research has shifted to consider urban and rural regions as shrinkage involves broader regional social and economic systems and processes, which are not confined to cities (Batunova and Perucca, 2020). However, less consideration has been given to sub-national analyses of shrinking, e.g., at 'small area', municipal or functional area level (Copus et al., 2021). Shrinkage is a complicated process with many different definitions (Sepp and Veemaa, 2017). This paper defines shrinkage as regions that experienced above average population loss over a 30-year period. Our rectified dataset, comprised of seven Irish Census of Population from 1986 to 2016 at the Electoral Division (ED) level, covers 3,384 EDs in the Republic of Ireland. We estimate a probit model examining economic/industrial (e.g., unemployment rate and industry share), sociodemographic (e.g., proportion of population with higher education, age profiles) and regional factors (e.g., population density, distance from towns/cities) impact on shrinkage.

REGIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION IRISH SECTION

Biographies Speakers



Dr. Karen Keaveney is Head of Rural Development, and an Assistant Professor in the School of Agriculture and Food Science, University College Dublin. Previously, Karen was Lecturer in Rural Spatial Planning in Queen's University Belfast. She has held a number of visiting appointments internationally, including Visiting Research Fellow in the Joint Centre for Housing Studies, Harvard University, and Visiting Professor in the Department of Geography, University of Toronto. She is a qualified Urban and Regional Planner (UCD) with an undergraduate degree in Human and Physical Geography (NUI Galway) and PhD in Geography (Maynooth University). Karen's key areas of interest are rural planning, housing and development. She has expertise in local decision-making and governance, sustainable rural development, and socio-economic change in the countryside. She is currently PI for the IRC Coalesce funded project 'Citizen Rural: Digital Data for Participatory Democracy in Remote Places'.

Abstract: It's not just about 'one-off houses': understanding spatial nuance in Irish rural housing

This paper highlights the spatial nuance of rural housing in Ireland by drawing on a number of studies on housing and planning outside major urban centres. The tendency to rely on the singular narrative of 'one-off housing' in debates on rural planning has oversimplified what is a complex housing structure operating within a broader, national dysfunctional system. For a number of decades, rural housing provided an affordable solution for people wishing to own their own home. Since the 2008 crash, and with the application of sustainable development principles, and the need to improve approaches to planning in the countryside, how and where houses are built outside towns and cities has changed. The regulatory system and land ownership structures have been central to the idea of rural housing as a right in rural policy and politics. However, non-planning regulatory system may have more of an influence due to regulations around housing efficiency and climate change mitigation. Add to this, the potential of remote working, the rising cost of living and declining housing affordability, a perfect storm has been created whereby rural places are no longer the safety valve to find 'cheap Irish homes'.

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Biographies Speakers



Dr. David Meredith (PhD, Maynooth University, 2013) is a Senior Research Officer at Teagasc, the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority, working within the Rural Economy and Development Programme. David leads the Rural Development and the Rural Health Research programmes. David has extensive national and international expertise in the design and implementation of research that centres on understanding the relational context of social and economic drivers that shape the behaviours of farmers, farm households and rural populations and give rise to socio-economic and spatial disparities in adjustment processes. David is the Principal Investigator on the RENEW2050 and BeSAFE projects and the Irish partner in the EU funded ESCAPE project. Since 2013 he has successfully written or been a principal investigator on 10 grants, totalling c.€2m and recently led a large, EU consortium bidding for Horizon Europe research funding (2022). David has published in a variety of international, peer reviewed journals, book chapters and co-edited a number of books including Spatial Justice and the Irish Crisis. Related to this work, David currently supervises five PhD students and two Post Doctoral researchers engaged with farm safety, occupational health, safety and wellbeing and the dynamics of rural populations. This portfolio of research projects supports David's work with agricultural and rural policy development stakeholders in Ireland and the EU.

Title: 'The technology is the easy part, it's the societal expectations that present the big challenges.' Envisioning transitions to sustainable farming and rural communities in Ireland. (David Meredith, Jack McCarthy and Aine Regan)

