



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, Ireland**

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

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, 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 uneven 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 to frame new governance institutions 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 aspects of policy implementation, particularly the proposed review of the National Spatial Strategy and the new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies which are to be developed as integrated cross-sectoral policy vehicles for economic development, investment and job creation.

***Admission is free but registration is essential.***

***For registration details click [here](#) or visit [www.espon-ireland.ie](http://www.espon-ireland.ie)***

09:30	<b>Opening Address: Minister Paudie Coffey TD - Minister for Housing and Planning</b>
<b>Session 1 – Past Lessons, Global Challenges and Future Opportunities</b>	
09:45	<b>Fifty Years of National and Regional Planning in Ireland - Learning the Lessons of the Past:</b> Professor Jim Walsh, Maynooth University
10:10	<b>Why Invest Outside Dublin? – Some Economic Policy Messages from Europe:</b> Professor Michael Parkinson, University of Liverpool
10:35	<b>Overview of EU Cohesion and Regional Policy to 2020:</b> Dr. Lewis Dijkstra, European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy
11:15	<i>Coffee &amp; Networking</i>
<b>Session 2 – Driving Reform through Coordinated Place-Based Action</b>	
11:45	<b>New Regional Governance for Ireland: The Challenges and Opportunities Ahead:</b> Stephen Blair, Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly
12:10	<b>Shaping the Next Generation of National and Regional Spatial Policies in Ireland:</b> Niall Cussen, Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government
12:35	<b>Reviewing the National Spatial Strategy – the Scottish Experience in Preparing the National Planning Framework and Some Possible Lessons for Ireland:</b> Dr. Graeme Purves, Former Assistant Chief Planner, Scottish Government
13:15	<i>Lunch</i>
<b>Session 3 – Thinking Spatially for Effective Policy and Investment Choices</b>	
14:15	<b>Fostering Regional Recovery – Evidence and Insights from the ESPON Crisis Project:</b> Dr. Adrian Healy, Cardiff University
14:40	<b>Regional Economic Resilience: The Role of Industrial Structure and Inward Investment:</b> Dr. Chris Van Egeraat, Maynooth University
15:05	<b>Energising Ireland’s Rural Economy: Spatial Development Messages from Current Government Policy - Signposts from CEDRA and Local Governance:</b> Dr. Brendan O’Keeffe, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick & Dr. Karen Keaveney, University College Dublin
15:45	<i>Coffee &amp; Networking</i>
<b>Session 4 – Creating the Regions of Tomorrow</b>	
16:15	<b>Spatial Development Patterns and the Implications For Ireland’s Medium Term Economic Strategy:</b> Dr. Edgar Morgenroth, Economic and Social Research Institute
16:40	<b>“Making Sense of Uneven Development“</b> –Professor Mark Boyle, Maynooth University
17:00	<i>Conference Close</i>

*This event is funded by the ESPONontheRoad Project. For more information visit [www.esponontheroad.eu](http://www.esponontheroad.eu)*

*For any queries on the conference please email [nirsa@nuim.ie](mailto:nirsa@nuim.ie)*