

# STRATEGIES FOR REGIONAL SPATIAL ECONOMIC GROWTH

An ambitious vision is being set out by Ireland's three Regional Assemblies (namely Eastern & Midland, Northern & Western and Southern) for their respective regions up to 2031 and beyond within the Regional Spatial Economic Strategies.

**U**nder the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the three Regional Spatial Economic Strategies will set out a 12-year strategic planning and economic development framework that will implement 'Project Ireland 2040' the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP-2018-2027) at the regional and local level.

By 2040, there will be roughly an extra one million people living in our country and an extra 700,000 jobs. Project Ireland 2040 projects an additional 540,000 will be living in the Eastern and Midland Region, 380,000 additional people in the Southern Region and 180,000 additional people in the Northern and Western Region.

These targets underline the growth strategies for the regions and has shaped the identification of key enablers for growth in each of the regions for vibrant and revitalised urban and rural areas.

The targets set out in each Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) are challenging. However, they also offer a significant opportunity for new approaches with a focus on strengthening the cities and regional growth centres, achieving compact growth and also regenerating and revitalising the rural areas.

In doing so, each RSES offer a significant opportunity for change and new approaches to how to improve, plan and deliver on a sustainable vision for the future.



*Waterford City is one of the main cities and metropolitan areas in the Southern Regional Assembly.*

## REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES



French Church Street in Cork City – Ireland's second largest city.

### APPROACH TO EACH STRATEGY

Each strategy sets out a dynamic regional vision and sustainable frameworks for spatial growth and economic investment. Each embraces all aspects of life within the region including the economy, environment, communications and many other factors

which determine quality of life.

Connecting strengths and unlocking the potential of regional assets is a consistent thread with a focus on resilient economy, smart specialisation, place-making, diversity in the rural economy and improving bidding capacity and investment.

A key component of each RSES is the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) for Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. However, no location or community is left behind through the strategies. Objectives strongly support vibrancy and strong economic roles across cities, towns, villages and rural areas.

However, the regions do not operate in isolation from each other, and they share many complementing and connecting assets. The collective strength of all three regions will ensure the State on the global stage is resilient, innovative and adaptable, in facing the challenges including Brexit, climate change and geopolitical uncertainty.

### KEY MESSAGE EMERGING

The RSES process to date has built up strong cross-sectoral partnerships to provide a clear focus on place-based regional economic development and effective regional planning. However, the success of the RSESs firmly rests on effective

### KEY ELEMENTS OF GROWTH FOR EACH RSES:

- Eastern & Midland Region Assembly:** To support the continued growth of Dublin City and Metropolitan area as the national economic engine, targeted growth into the regional growth centres of Athlone, Drogheda and Dundalk as regional drivers, embed a network of 11 key towns.

All-island cohesion and facilitating collaboration and growth of the Dublin-Belfast corridor is a key enabler.
- Southern Region Assembly:** To capitalise on the individual and collective strength of three cities and metropolitan areas including the State's second largest city and metropolitan area of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford, strong network of 14 key towns and further strategic town networks. The Atlantic Economic Corridor, Tier 1 and Tier 2 Port assets, State and regional airport assets and emergence as an international region of learning are the key enablers.
- Northern & Western Regional Assembly:** To strengthen Galway City and Metropolitan Area, target growth into key regional centres of Letterkenny, Sligo and Athlone, strong network of eight key towns.

The Atlantic Economic Corridor, All-Island cohesion and building on strengths and assets of sub-regional character areas are the key enablers.



## REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES

implementation, delivery and monitoring.

The Regional Assemblies look forward to playing an active role in delivering on the strategic vision for the regions with our partners and will play a leadership role to pursue policy coherence at a European, national, regional and local level and seek investment across a range of infrastructures to realise the vision and objectives set out in the RSES and their MASPs. This will involve supporting the bidding capacity and project collaborations across local authority and regional boundaries, especially to win funding under the Project Ireland 2040 funds.



*Public consultations on the Draft RSES (Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy) have been held in each regional assembly area. Pictured is a recent consultation held by the Southern Regional Assembly, and all interested parties were invited to send their submissions on formulating the strategy on or before 8 March 2019.*



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