



Applying the Functional Territories Concept: Planning Beyond Boundaries

**Dr. Cormac Walsh, Mr. John Driscoll
& Ms. Caroline Creamer**



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Promoting best practices in spatial planning and economic development.

Applying the Functional Territories Concept: Planning Beyond Boundaries

Dr. Cormac Walsh is a research associate of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). He is currently employed as lecturer and researcher at Hamburg University, Institute of Geography. He holds a PhD in Planning and Public Policy from University College Dublin. His research interests include European spatial planning, territorial cooperation and governance, coastal management and river basin management.

Mr. John Driscoll is Vice President of the Institute for International Urban Development, Cambridge, Massachusetts and is an Executive Board Member (and formally the Founding Director) of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). He has over 30 years experience of cross-regional planning, urban regeneration and economic development in the United States, the EU, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia

Ms. Caroline Creamer is a Research Fellow with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. She is also Acting Director of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). Her research interests include regional and local development and regeneration, spatial planning practice and policy, individual and community identity, and inter-territorial and cross-border development.

These briefing papers are published as a way to highlight current cross-border, and local regional development issues. They represent the opinions of the authors, not of the ICLRDR.

June 2016

Introduction

The challenge involved in “planning beyond boundaries” is immense, not least because evidence of functional overlap and the existence (or otherwise) of significant spatial linkages is often not readily available. There is an increasing body of research which suggests that flexible development strategies are needed that are tuned to functional territories, rather than more traditional “comprehensive” plans confined by administrative boundaries. In addition, research suggests that networks and connections can be more important in developmental terms than physical proximity. The work of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) and the All Island Research Observatory (AIRO) has sought to bring attention to this gap and provide tools that allow the gap to be bridged. Both organisations continue to research the technical needs of cross boundary plan and policy makers and the tools needed to visualise and understand the spatial dynamics involved.

The concept of functional territories has been experiencing a renewed interest following the publication of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (CEDRA) report in 2014. Building on the beneficial relationship that exists between towns and surrounding rural areas (the rural hinterland) and, similarly, between towns and larger towns and cities in close proximity, the CEDRA Report called for the establishment of Rural Economic Development Zones or REDZ. These are functional rather than administrative geographic areas that reflect the spatial patterns of local economic activities and development processes. These sub-county zones are considered the most appropriate scale for intervention in fostering rural economic development. The concept of REDZs has been further endorsed through the recent publication of the *Charter for Rural Ireland* (DoECLG, 2015a).

Previous research carried out by the ICLRDR noted that “administrative boundaries do not always coincide with patterns of economic and social activity ‘on the ground’; and as a result, administrative areas can become divorced from the functions of towns and cities” (Gleeson et al, 2010). Traditional perceptions of social and economic relations across space therefore can – and does – lead to inefficient planning and a duplication of services, particularly on an inter-county and cross-border basis. In border areas, ‘border effects’ have been identified which result in potential connections between urban centres in the border area are not realised due to the different policy, regulatory and service provision systems operating North and South of the border (Creamer et al., 2008). In response, the international academic and policy literature is actively promoting the idea of maximising functional relationships among cities and regions. It is argued that cities located in ‘polycentric urban regions’ or ‘city-regions’ can derive significant benefits in terms of economic competitiveness, economies of scale and efficiencies in service provision (Kloosterman & Musterd, 2001). More recently, researchers have highlighted the importance of such connectivities across space for rural areas. From this perspective, rural regions may also be understood as dynamic functional territories (Copus & de Lima, 2014). This new paradigm for rural development policy is increasingly relevant in an Irish context; recognising as it does that connectivity is not just about the interactions between the urban-rural but also within the rural and between the rural and global.

On this basis distinct rationales for the adoption of a functional territories approach may be identified:

1. To promote economic development, strengthening vertical and horizontal linkages in the regional economy and developing critical mass;
2. To achieve efficiencies and synergies in the provision of public services, promoting a ‘shared services agenda’;
3. To mitigate environmental impacts and promote socially and spatially just outcomes;
4. To achieve a better understanding of functional relationships, working across and beyond administrative boundaries, supporting evidence-informed planning and policy-making.

Policy Context – Planning for Functional Territories

Traditionally, planners have thought and practised with, and through, clearly bounded scales at a national, regional or local level (Heley, 2013, Walsh, 2014). With the shift to strategic spatial planning at the turn of the century, planners have increasingly had to engage with and immerse themselves in such concepts as ‘fuzzy boundaries’ and ‘soft spaces’; with the notion of functional areas being very closely tied to this shift in policy and practice. Working with the concept of ‘functional territories’ calls for a flexible approach to spatial planning and regional governance, recognising that functional boundaries will shift according to the issue being addressed. The principle of ‘variable geometry’ adopted in urban-rural partnership structures in northern Germany and the mancomunidades of Spain provides a mechanism to cater for this flexibility. Under this approach, the constellation of actors and spatial focus can vary on a project-by-project basis (O’Keeffe, 2011). The flexibility provided by this approach, can, however, lead to an undesirable fragmentation if some municipalities/local authorities located within a functional territory decide to opt-out (Walsh & Williams, 2013).

The concepts of functional territories and working across administrative boundaries have formed part of policy debates on the island of Ireland since the late 1990s. They are, for example, integral to the *Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area* (1999) and the *Cork Area Strategic Plan* (2001). Indeed, processes of strategic spatial planning, working through soft spaces at multiple scales have played a significant role in the renegotiation of the spatial relationship between Northern Ireland and Ireland from the 1990s onwards (Walsh, 2015; Murray, 2004) – a transformation made possible by relative political stability and the cessation of violence.

At a national level, the *Regional Development Strategy* (RDS) for Northern Ireland and the *National Spatial Strategy* (NSS) in the Republic of Ireland were both informed by and promoted functional concepts relating to development corridors, gateways and hubs (see Gleeson et al., 2010; Walsh, 2009). Quoting directly from the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), the revised RDS (2012) makes specific reference to the importance of networks of small towns and the role of functional ‘complementarities’ in achieving viable settlements through critical mass:

‘The creation of networks of smaller towns in less densely settled and economically weaker regions is also important. In these areas, cooperation between urban centres to develop functional complementarities may be the only possibility for achieving viable markets and maintaining institutions and services

which could not be achieved by the towns on their own' (ESDP, 1999; quoted in Department for Regional Development, 2012: 66).

This perspective on functional complementarities and cooperation among rural towns is particularly relevant to the Irish context, highlighting the role of cooperation among neighbouring cities to harness a level of critical mass that would not otherwise be there. The concept is also applied in the case of the NSS (2002) in the form of linked Gateways and Hubs. In the 2010 report on regional competitiveness in the Border Region, a document which subsequently informed the *Regional Planning Guidelines* (RPGs), significant emphasis was placed on cross-border functional relationships:

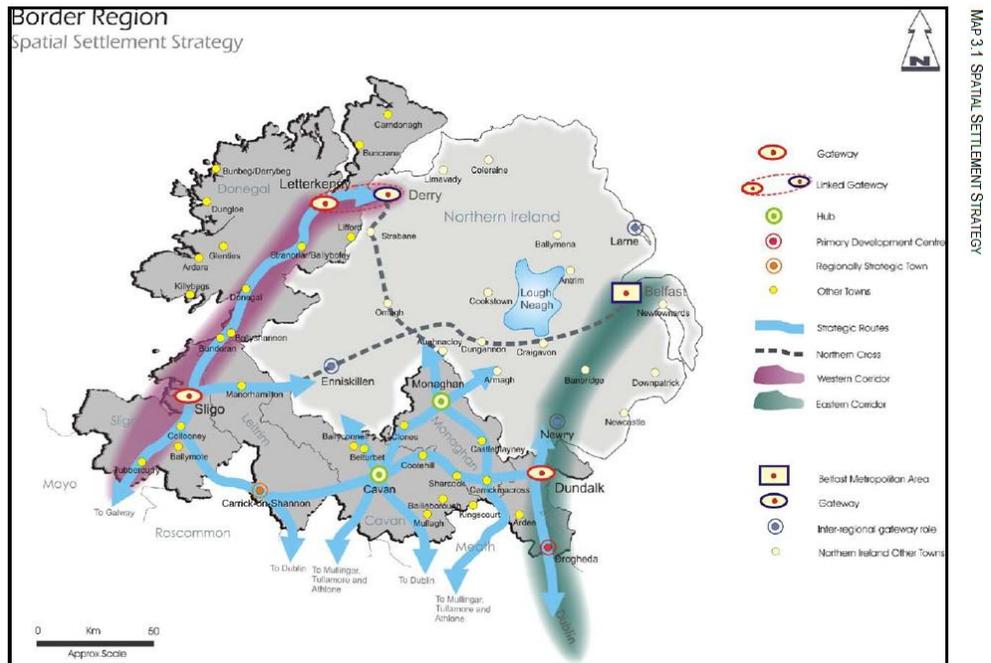
'As the NSS and Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland have recognised, the future development of the Border areas North and South may be realised through building critical mass around the strongest functional relationships which traverse the border' (Forfas, 2010: 8).

The resulting (and current¹) *Regional Planning Guidelines* (RPGs) for the Border Region (Border Regional Authority, 2010) states that the region provides 'an interface' between the 'two national economies of Ireland and Northern Ireland'. It is noted that a number of Northern Ireland towns already have strong functional relationships with urban centres in the Southern border areas. While the Letterkenny/Derry linked Gateway and Newry/Dundalk Twin City initiative are recognised to have progressed furthest, other important cross-border linkages identified are Dublin/Belfast, Sligo/Enniskillen, Cavan/Enniskillen, Lifford/Strabane and Monaghan/Armagh (Border Regional Authority, 2010: 10).

The Border Region RPGs further highlight the significance of the two key strategic corridors within the region. The eastern corridor is founded on the Dublin-Belfast axis and the increasingly significant links between Newry, Dundalk and Drogheda. The western corridor is identified as an extension of the Atlantic Corridor (Cork,/Limerick/Galway) and extends from Sligo north to Letterkenny and Londonderry/Derry with the North West Gateway Initiative (NWGI) as the 'key driver' (see Figure 1). The challenge for the RPGs was – and remains – to link the two strategic corridors through the 'Central Border Region', which has a weaker economic and urban spatial structure (Border Regional Authority, 2010: 11). In 2013, one solution put forward was the publication of the *Regional Strategic Framework for the Central Border Region 2013-2027* (RSF) which put forward a number of responses to the questions facing the central border region while also indicating the potential of the functional territory approach to strategic spatial planning. The Framework recognised that the diverse challenges facing the region required a long-term perspective; and to this end, identified three distinct timeframes over which the agreed actions would be delivered (see Figure 2). The experience of the RSF to date would, however, indicate that further work is required around the implementation phase of such plans and the mechanisms required to mobilise key actors in a collaborative manner.

¹ The current RPGs are in the process of being replaced by Regional Social and Economic Strategies (RSES's) which are being developed by the three newly constituted regional assemblies. The RSES's are expected to be published in mid- to late-2017.

Figure 1: Border Region Regional Planning Guidelines: Spatial Settlement Strategy



(Source: Border Regional Authority, 2010: 11)

Figure 2: Regional Strategic Framework (RSF) for the Central Border Region

Period	Challenges	Funding Context	Appropriate Activities
Up to 2015	The short term which is principally about preparing for the major activity and building the capacity of the Region	Difficult - EU cross-border funding is largely committed. Local authority and national budgets under considerable fiscal pressure.	Preparatory actions, capacity building, building awareness of the needs of the Region. Project pipelines / design.
2015 - 2020	The medium term which is more strategic and ambitious in its nature, building on the use of national and EU funds for border region development (including the INTERREG V and Horizon 2020 Programmes) and national funds.	The next EU Programming Period will be 2014-2020, and funding should be available from 2015. National fiscal pressures may ease slightly.	More strategic and more ambitious projects, capital projects, projects reflecting EU priorities and projects building new regional strengths for the future.
2020 - 2027	The longer term which is concerned with realising the benefits of the investments made in the earlier period.	New EU Programmes may be available. National fiscal policies may ease further.	More aspirational projects, completing and building upon projects commenced in the previous periods.

Source: ICBAN (2013: 10)

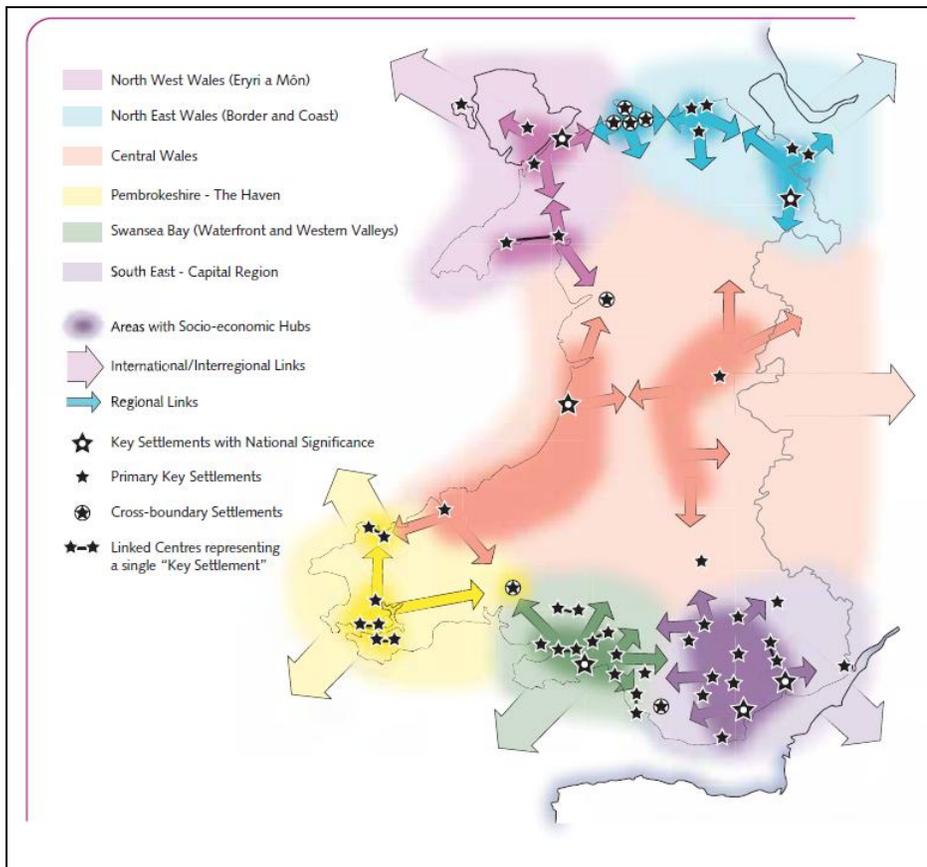
The revised RDS makes similar references to strategic cross-border linkages including Londonderry/Derry-Letterkenny, Sligo-Enniskillen and Newry-Dundalk. An analysis of cross-

border commuter patterns highlights a strong concentration of commuter activity in the vicinity of these strategic corridors. In the case of Londonderry/Derry-Letterkenny, for example, the commuting flows are predominantly from Donegal to Northern Ireland; while in other areas, North-South flows are dominant. Development Plans need to recognise the implications of this kind of movement.

Functional Boundaries and the Wales Spatial Plan: An Innovative Example

People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan, published in 2004 and further updated in 2008, takes a functional territories approach to spatial development over a twenty year period. Local authority boundaries were seen as failing to reflect functional relationships and as presenting a barrier to thinking through how people really lived their lives. A deliberate decision was, therefore, made to avoid existing administrative boundaries in the plan document. The planners were also concerned to raise the debate above parochial concerns around competition for funding among local authorities. The plan identifies six sub-regions without defining hard boundaries, reflecting the different linkages involved in daily activities (see Figure 3). These functional sub-regions have fuzzy and, in places, overlapping boundaries. An overriding objective behind this approach is that decisions are taken with regard to their impact beyond sectoral or administrative boundaries.

Figure 3: Wales Spatial Plan ‘National Vision’ - Functional Sub-Regions with Fuzzy Boundaries



(Source: Wales Assembly Government, 2008: 20)

A ‘fuzzy boundaries’ approach strives to more accurately reflect the complex geography of commuting, housing and labour market areas. In the case of the Wales Spatial Plan, a strong focus is placed on policy coordination and achieving efficiency in service provision. In this way the spatial plan acts as a key strategic framework document for the Welsh Assembly Government. The planners behind the Wales Spatial Plan argued that housing markets and commuting zones do not represent neatly defined functional regions and that spatial policy should accommodate this through a more flexible approach. Significantly, the adoption of fuzzy boundaries was also part of a deliberate attempt to break away from the ‘parochialism’ associated with local government boundaries and their politics. Creating a planning space with fuzzy boundaries provided a politically acceptable means of developing a strategic spatial approach to the city-region concept (Haughton *et al*, 2010: 148), for example, Cardiff City Region.

Using ‘fuzzy boundaries’ has meant that both policy-makers and politicians have been able to temporarily avoid the potentially difficult political decisions around the designation and ranking of urban centres (Walsh, 2014). Critics argue, however, that the spatial plan may have limited capacity to influence spatial development patterns as its objectives are too vague (Haughton *et al*, 2010: 133; Heley, 2012).

Scotland’s National Planning Framework

Since the *Scotland Act of 1998*, the Scottish Parliament has full responsibility for spatial planning and related fields such as transport and local government. Scotland’s *National Planning Framework*, now in its third iteration, takes a slightly different approach to spatial development – placing an emphasis on a network of seven city-regions which are in turn, complemented and supported by networks of smaller towns and villages that are largely rural-based. The current Framework document presents itself as the spatial expression of the country’s economic strategy, offering a 20-30 year vision for investment in Scotland (Columb & Tomaney, 2015: 4). In this context, the Framework is firmly centred on the argument that its cities are the main driver of the Scottish economy, with cities then sitting to the core of their regions

“...towns within these regions are also important centres where many people live and work. Many of these towns are crucial transport, commercial and cultural hubs” (The Scottish Government, 2014: 2.17)

The plan makes no reference at all to ‘functional areas’ and nor does it apply the Welsh model of soft, fuzzy boundaries. It does however, note the importance of clusters:

“our diverse and vibrant rural towns support clusters of services, have a significant share of homes and jobs, and act as transport hubs for a much wider rural community. We want to see the role of these towns strengthened and diversified” (The Scottish Government, 2014: 2.28)

“Many coastal and island communities have key towns, where development opportunities, employment, homes and services are often clustered. Place-based development plans for our coastal and island areas should recognise the role of these towns as important focal points for investment and transport connections”
(The Scottish Government, 2014: 2.38)

The Framework speaks to the opportunities of each of the city-regions and outlines 14 concrete and well-defined national developments that it sees as essential to delivering on Scotland’s spatial strategy (see Figure 4).

Potential for Functional Areas

At a workshop in April 2011 on the theme of ‘Planning for Functional Territories’, hosted by the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at Maynooth University and ICLRD under the ESPON research programme INTERSTRAT², Cliff Hague³ highlighted ten key messages derived from the ESPON research that can inform practice in this context:

- 1) Flexible development strategies are needed that are tuned into the concept of functional territories, rather than more traditional “comprehensive” plans confined by administrative boundaries;
- 2) Agglomeration effects benefit larger urban centres through “soft” spillovers of knowledge and know-how that have become increasingly important as the knowledge economy has developed;
- 3) Cities, therefore, have a vital economic role to play and policies need to reflect this;
- 4) Diversity is strength: beware of taking “off the peg” solutions or adopting “best practice”. There is diversity within diversity – not all coastal regions, for example, have the same assets or challenges;
- 5) Think regional development, not sectoral development. In particular, recognise that agriculture is no longer the main driver of rural economies;
- 6) Networks and connections are probably more important in development than physical proximity; who / where is connected, and what connects the different networks?
- 7) Work to make multi-level governance work. Plans and development visions need to accommodate pressures and actions at different scales;
- 8) Aspatial policies have unanticipated territorial impacts. Plans should be a key mechanism to test whether such impacts are positive or negative;
- 9) Use scenarios to engage a wider audience in thinking about regional futures and the scope for actions; and
- 10) Consider if your region is resilient. What are the points on which it is vulnerable and how can they be managed?

² The overall aim of the INTERSTRAT project was to promote and facilitate the use of ESPON findings in the creation and monitoring of integrated territorial development strategies.

³ Professor Emeritus, Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh and Past President of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

Figure 4: Scotland’s National Planning Framework – It’s Place in Wider Scottish Government Policy

SG Purpose	To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.										
SG National Outcomes	The planning system and service contribute to all 16 National Outcomes										
SG National Plans, Policies & Strategies	Government Economic Strategy										
	Infrastructure Investment Plan										
	Scotland's Digital Future	Electricity & Heat Generation Policy Statements	2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity	Scottish Historic Environment Strategy and Policy	Housing Strategy	National Planning Framework & Scottish Planning Policy	Land Use Strategy	Low Carbon Scotland: Report of Proposals and Policies	National Marine Plan	Regeneration Strategy	National Transport Strategy
Planning Vision	We live in a Scotland with a growing, low carbon economy with progressively narrowing disparities in well-being and opportunity. It is growth that can be achieved whilst reducing emissions and which respects the quality of environment, place and life which makes our country so special. It is growth which increases solidarity – reducing inequalities between our regions. We live in sustainable, well-designed places and homes which meet our needs. We enjoy excellent transport and digital connections, internally and with the rest of the world.										
Planning Outcomes	Planning makes Scotland a successful, sustainable place – supporting sustainable economic growth and regeneration, and the creation of well-designed places.			Planning makes Scotland a low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change.			Planning makes Scotland a natural, resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural and cultural assets, and facilitating their sustainable use.		Planning makes Scotland a connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity.		
National Planning	Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)						National Planning Framework (NPF)				
	Principal Policies										
	Sustainability			Placemaking							
	Subject Policies										
	Town Centres	Heat and Electricity	Zero Waste	Natural Environment	Travel	Cities and Towns Rural Areas Coast and Islands National Developments					
	Rural Development			Green Infrastructure							
Homes	Aquacultural			Digital Connectivity							
Business & Employment	Minerals										
Historic Environment	Flooding & Drainage										
COMMUNITY PLANNING											
Strategic	Strategic Development Plans										
Local	Local Development Plans										
Site	Master Plans										

(Source: The Scottish Government, 2014).

These points are as relevant today – 2016 – as they were five years ago to planners and policy-makers alike as they draw up development plans and other associated strategies and policies to future proof regions.

While concerns have emerged in the literature surrounding the growing emphasis being placed on supporting the growth of city-regions as ‘functional economic areas’ over “the pursuit of more even economic development across the national territory i.e. territorial cohesion” (Columb & Tomaney, 2015: 13) which is part of a growing EU Agenda⁴, these concerns are addressed by Andrew Copus and colleagues in their recent book on territorial cohesion in rural Europe (outcome of ESPON EDORA project⁵). This territorial cohesion perspective as developed by Copus and colleagues represents a new paradigm for rural development acknowledging the importance of rural-rural and local-global links areas (Copus & Hörnstrom, 2011; Copus & de Lima, 2014). The idea is to move towards an understanding of rural regions as networked and connected, rather than focusing on cities as the necessary core of functional territories. This perspective provides a valuable reminder of the potential role of functional territories which are rural-centred and not dominated by a metropolitan core.

Piloting Functional Areas in Ireland

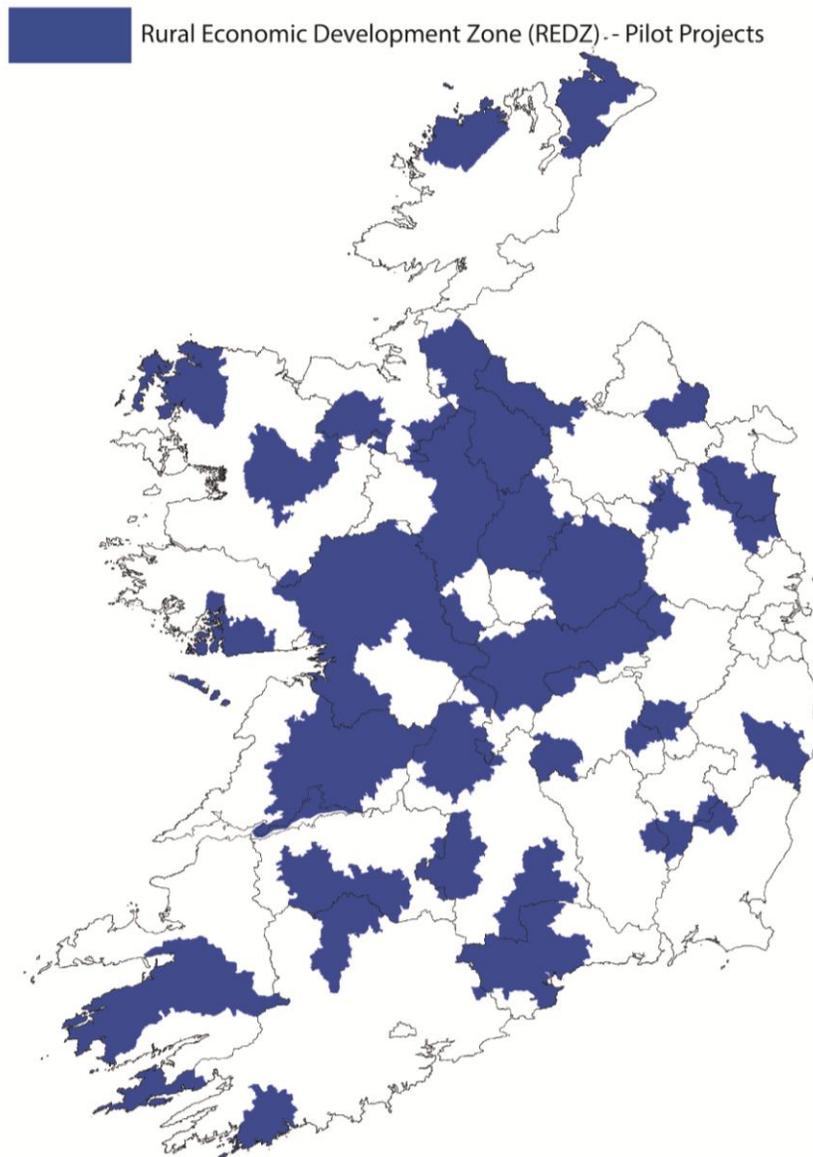
Building on one of the key recommendations in the CEDRA Report – that of the formation of Rural Economic Development Zones or REDZs – the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) announced a pilot programme in June 2014 to pilot such zones across the country. The pilot scheme was open to all local authorities in cooperation with their local communities; thus allowing DoECLG to market the initiative as being a real “bottom-up” scheme allowing rural communities to actively participate in and drive their own local economies (DoECLG, 2015b). The pilot, with its funding pot of €2million, envisaged Local Authorities working in cooperation with each other, and with other relevant stakeholders such as community and/or private interests as appropriate, across administrative boundaries i.e. working to functional rather than administrative boundaries. The fund was further designed to allow the REDZ partnership use other funding from their own resources, or indeed work with private stakeholders on the ground, to provide the matched funding required to implement the project(s) – noting that the pilot initiative did not fully fund projects submitted. The maximum funding applicable to any one REDZ was €250,000 – the qualifying criteria being based on population of the pilot REDZ area.

In September 2015, following a competitive tendering process, 51 REDZ pilot programmes were funded (see Figure 5), with 26 receiving all of the funding for which they applied. In total, taking account of Exchequer monies and match-funding contributions, it is estimated that over €4 million was invested into this pilot initiative. A listing of the funded pilots can be downloaded from here: <http://www.environ.ie/community/rural-development/funding/minister-phelan-announces-funding-over-eu37-million-rural> From a cross-border/cross-boundary perspective, it is interesting to note that the majority of the REDZ zones are cross-boundary in nature – thus emphasising the need for more cross-council cooperation, and building the capacity of officials to deliver on this.

⁴ This is a long-standing debate in UK planning policy and practice.

⁵ See http://www.espon.eu/main/Menu_Projects/Menu_AppliedResearch/edora.html for further details.

Figure 5: Funded Projects under the Pilot Phase of the Rural Economic Development Zone (REDZ) Programme



(Source: All-Island Research Observatory, 2016)

The final evaluation reports for these pilots and the assessment of the Department is not yet available. And while initial indications were that this pilot would be followed by a REDZ II, there has been no indication in 2016 as to when/if this will proceed. The success of the pilots – centred on functional rather than administrative geographic areas that reflect the spatial patterns of local economic activities and development processes – can also play a role in defining future functional area policy in Ireland....or indeed, if there will be national policy on this concept.

Conclusion

Despite this renewed interest in functional areas, and the recent ‘testing’ of such areas in practice across Ireland, there is no ignoring the fact that traditional concepts of ‘bounded space’ continue to dominate in local-level spatial plans (i.e. Development Plans). In Wales, the *Planning (Wales) Act 2015* is being heralded as the foundation for a ‘renaissance of strategic planning’; with the Act foreseeing the preparation of a National Development Framework by 2018 to replace the existing Wales Spatial Plan. The Act also paves the way for the introduction of “Strategic Development Plans for some parts of the country to tackle larger-than-local cross-boundary issues (Columb & Tomaney, 2015) i.e. issues that operate on a functional rather than administrative boundary basis. The December 2015 publication by the Irish Government of *Towards a National Planning Framework* makes limited explicit reference to planning for functional areas – despite the strong emphasis placed on the concept of REDZs by CEDRA and the DoECLG.

With the new *National Planning Framework* (NPF) for Ireland being heavily influenced by the Scottish model, the 2015 document, however, continues to place strong emphasis on supporting the growth and development of city-regions and other regionally significant towns. Having acknowledged the shortcomings of the NSS in terms of cross-border collaboration, and noting that reference is made in the December 2015 document to the RDS for Northern Ireland, it is hoped that the ideal of planning for functional areas hasn’t been sidelined...maybe just renamed.

Bibliography

Border Regional Authority (2010). *Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022)*, <http://www.border.ie>, accessed 17/06/2011.

CEDRA: Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas (2014). *Energising Ireland's Rural Economy*. Dublin: Teagasc.

Columb, C. & Tomaney, J. (2015). 'Territorial Politics, Devolution and Spatial Planning in the UK: Results, Prospects, Lessons' in *Planning Practice and Research*, 31(1), 1-22.

Copus, A & de Lima, P. (2014) (eds.) *Territorial Cohesion in Rural Europe*, London: Routledge.

Copus, A. & Hörnström, L. (2011) *The New Rural Europe: Towards Rural Cohesion Policy*, Stockholm: NORDREGIO REPORT 2011:1.

Creamer, C., Blair, N., O' Keeffe, B., Van Eggeraat, C. & Driscoll, J. (2008) *Fostering Mutual Benefits in Cross-Border Areas: The Challenges and Opportunities in Connecting Irish Border Towns and Villages*, Armagh: International Centre for Local and Regional Development.

Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (2015a). *Charter for Rural Ireland*. Dublin: The Stationery House.

Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (2015b). *Minister of State Ann Phelan announces the opening of a Pilot CEDRA Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) initiative*. Press Release, 2 June 2015.

Department of the Environment and Local Government (2002). *The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020. People, Places, Potential*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department for Regional Development (2012). *Regional Development Strategy 2035: Building A Better Future*. Belfast: Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland.

Forfás (2010). *Regional Competitiveness Agenda: Volume II – Border*. Dublin: Forfás.

Gleeson, J., Curran, D., Bartley, B., Breathnach, P., McCaffery, D. & Rickard, A. (2010) *Delineating Functional Territories Across the Island of Ireland*, Armagh: International Centre for Local and Regional Development.

Haughton, G., Allmendinger, P., Counsell, D. & Vigar, G. (2010) *The New Spatial Planning: Territorial management with soft spaces and fuzzy boundaries*, London: Routledge.

Heley, J (2013). 'Soft Spaces, Fuzzy Boundaries and Spatial Governance in Post-devolution Wales' in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 34(7), 1325-48.

Kloosterman, R., C. & Musterd, S. (2001) The polycentric urban region: towards a research agenda, *Urban Studies*, 38, (4), 623-634.

Murray, M. (2004). 'Strategic Spatial Planning on the Island of Ireland: Towards a New Territorial Logic?' in *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 17(3), 227-242.

The Scottish Government (2014). *Ambition, Opportunity, Place: Scotland's Third National Planning Framework*. Edinburgh: Crown Service.

Wales Assembly Government (2008). *People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update*. Cardiff: Wales Assembly Government.

Walsh C. (2014). 'Rethinking the Spatiality of Spatial Planning: Methodological Territorialism and Metageographies' in *European Planning Studies*, 22, (2), 306-322.

Walsh, C. & Williams, B. (2013). 'Regional Governance and Metropolitan-Hinterland Relations: The Case of the Dublin City-Region' in *Administration*, 61, (3), 133-153.

Walsh, C., (2015). 'Creating a Space for Cooperation: Soft Spaces, Spatial Planning and Territorial Cooperation on the Island of Ireland' in: Allmendinger, P., Haughton, G., Knieling J., Othengrafen, F. (Eds.), *Soft Spaces in Europe: Re-negotiating Governance, Boundaries and Borders*, London: Routledge, 192-212.

Walsh, J. (2009). 'Space and Place in the National Spatial Strategy for the Republic of Ireland' in Davoudi, S. & Strange, I (eds). *Conceptions of Space and Place in Strategic Spatial Planning*. London: Routledge, 95-125.