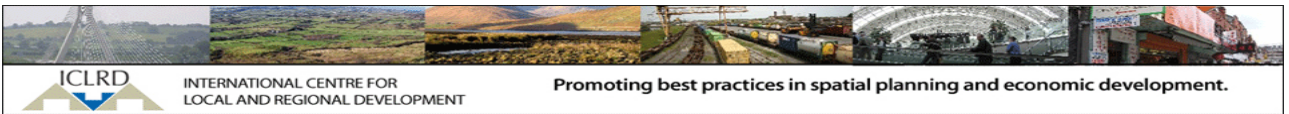


Breaking Ground – European Approaches to Changing Rural Narratives

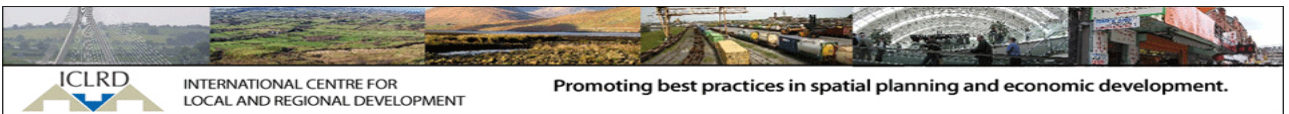
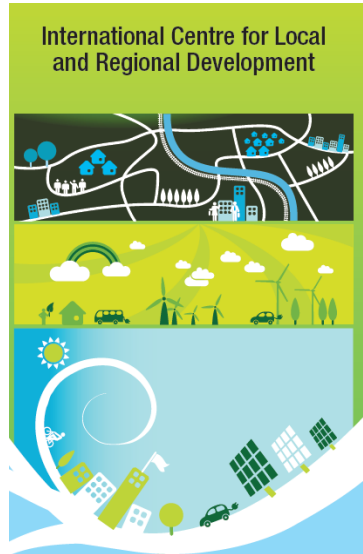
Presentation to Joint Co-operation Ireland/ICLRD conference, 'Death from Nostalgic Sentiment or A New Narrative for Rural Ireland?'

26th September 2019, Dundalk

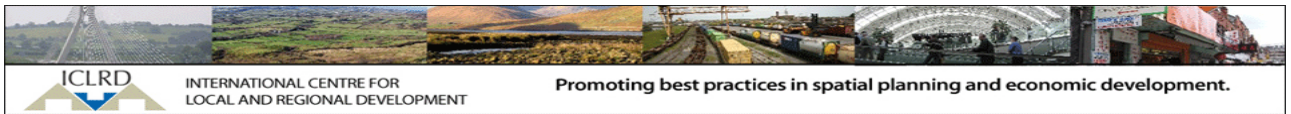
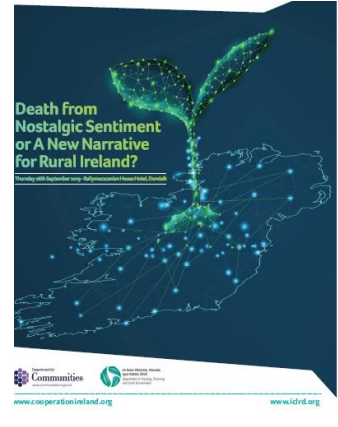
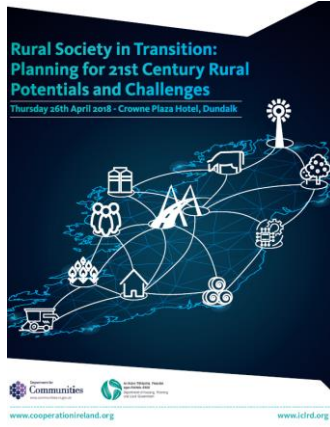
Caroline Creamer, Director, International Centre for Local and Regional Development & Research Fellow, Maynooth University



1. The ICLR: Who, What

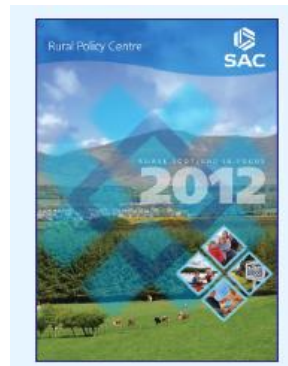


2. Today's Conference...The Trilogy



3. Scotland – Understanding the Vulnerability of Rural Towns and Villages

- In 2011/2012, Vulnerability index developed for Scotland's town by SRUC.
- Objective to inform dialogue on why, and in what ways, Scotland is changing
- Covered range of themes
- Based on 4 key indicators:
 1. Proportion of local population of working age
 2. Proportion of local population claiming Job seekers Allowance
 3. Proportion of local population working in public sector
 4. Measure of income deprivation



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3. Scotland – Vulnerability Index

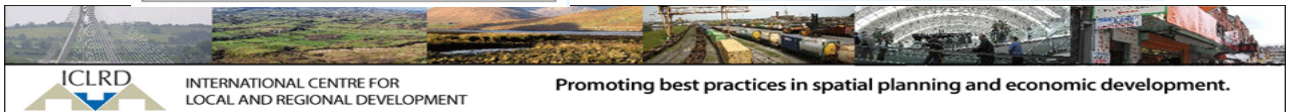
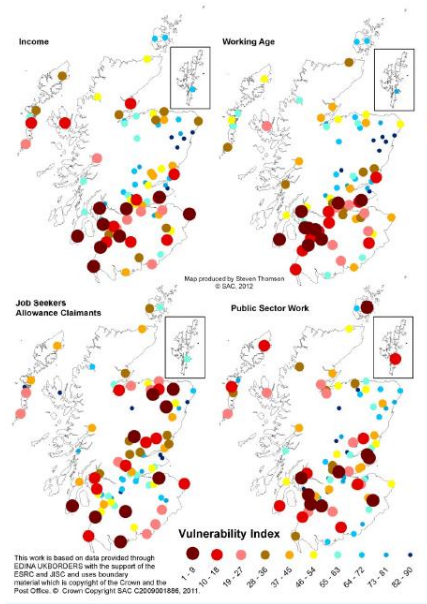
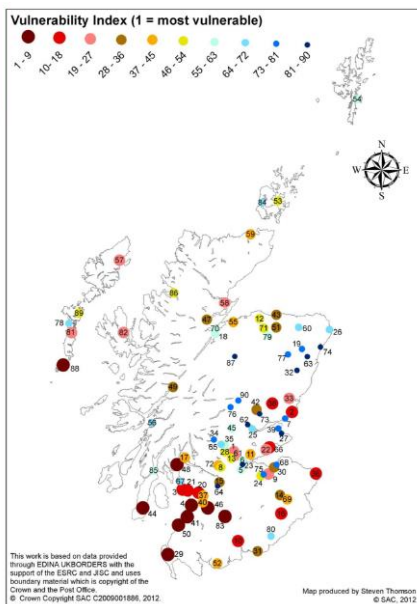
Towns ranked 1-90
(where 1 is most vulnerable)

Settlements*	Sixfold Urban Rural Classification	Local Authority	Population	Rank (1 is most vulnerable)
Campbelltown (44)	Remote small town	Argyll & Bute	4,940	1
Dunoon (48)	Remote small town	Argyll & Bute	3,450	1
Girvan (50)	Remote small town	South Ayrshire	6,890	3
Stranraer (29)	Other urban	Dumfries & Galloway	10,380	4
Sanquhar (83)	Remote rural	Dumfries & Galloway	2,030	5
Cumnock (46)	Remote small town	East Ayrshire	9,990	6
Aggr (4)	Other urban	South Ayrshire	60,880	7
Maybole (41)	Accessible small town	South Ayrshire	4,630	8
Castletown (88)	Remote rural	Western Isles	NA	9
Kilwinning (21)	Other urban	North Ayrshire	16,380	10
East Wemyss (66)	Accessible rural	Fife	1,720	11
Arbroath (2)	Other urban	Angus	22,110	12
Ardrossan (3)	Other urban	North Ayrshire	31,570	13
Dumfries (10)	Other urban	Dumfries & Galloway	31,610	14
Egmont (36)	Accessible small town	Scottish Borders	3,410	15
Kirriemuir (39)	Accessible small town	Angus	5,750	16
Hawick (16)	Other urban	Scottish Borders	13,390	17
Kilmarnock (20)	Other urban	East Ayrshire	44,390	18
Kirkcaldy (22)	Other urban	Fife	48,630	19
Alloa (1)	Other urban	Clackmannanshire	29,020	20
Tain (58)	Remote small town	Highland	3,420	20
Stornoway (67)	Remote small town	Western Isles	5,530	22
Airth (61)	Accessible rural	Falkirk	1,660	23
Brechin (33)	Accessible small town	Angus	7,070	24
Dalketh (9)	Other urban	Midlothian	38,940	25
Lochboisdale (81)	Remote rural	Western Isles	NA	26
Portree (82)	Remote rural	Highland	2,100	27
Hamilton (15)	Other urban	South Lanarkshire	68,770	28
Blairgowrie (42)	Remote small town	Perth & Kinross	8,310	28
Keith (61)	Remote small town	Moray	2,470	30
Fort William (49)	Remote small town	Highland	3,680	31
Annan (31)	Accessible small town	Dumfries & Galloway	8,450	32
Tranent (30)	Other urban	East Lothian	10,440	33
Dingwall (47)	Remote small town	Highland	4,970	34
Buckie (43)	Remote small town	Moray	7,960	35
Galashiels (14)	Other urban	Scottish Borders	14,430	36
Thurso (63)	Remote small town	Highland	2,470	37
Helensburgh (17)	Other urban	Argyll & Bute	15,590	38
Mauchline (40)	Accessible small town	East Ayrshire	4,010	39
Kirkcubright (52)	Remote small town	Dumfries & Galloway	3,240	39
Newtown St Boswells (6)	Accessible rural	Scottish Borders	1,290	41
Dunfermline (11)	Other urban	Fife	78,550	42
Twechar (72)	Accessible rural	East Dunbartonshire	1,280	43
Galston (37)	Accessible small town	East Ayrshire	2,710	44
Maun (35)	Remote small town	Highland	3,990	45

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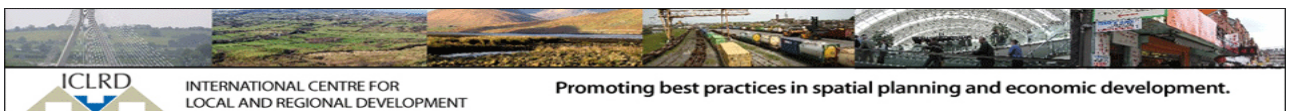
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3. Finland – Rural Shrinkage

- ESCAPE – European Shrinking Rural Areas Challenges, Actions and Perspectives for Territorial Governance
- ESPON-funded applied research programme – commenced March '19
- Focusing on the process(es) driving shrinkage
 - Simple Shrinking: characterised by natural decrease and out-migration
 - Complex shrinking: simultaneously experiencing population decrease and economic decline
- Examined through series of case studies
- Report late 2020.

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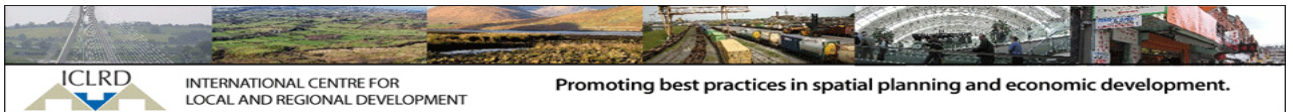


3. France – Shrinking to Survive

- Vitry-le-Francois – Champagne Region, Eastern France
- Area greatly affected by deindustrialisation...now at stage of advanced decline.
- Strong community....public and private actors working together for solutions....
- Planned Shrinkage!

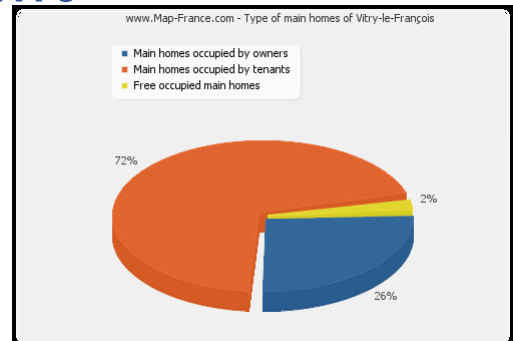


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3. France – Shrinking to Survive

- Municipality plan to diversity the housing stock – type & tenure
- Working with ANRU – the national agency for urban renewal
- Waiver to rule on demolitions/reconstructions
- A policy under the radar...conflicting with other policies
- Need for more inclusive approach...with emphasis not only on housing



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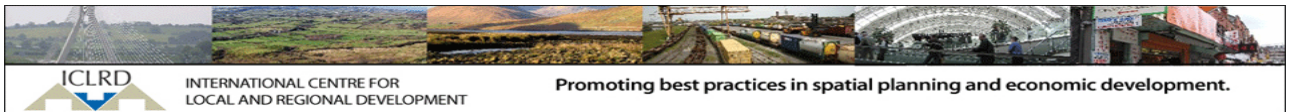


3. Belgium – Taking A ‘Green’ Approach to the Rural Narrative

- Eeklo, East Flanders
- As a municipality, Eeklo is only main town...pop. just over 20,000
- Interesting history – with economy traditionally industry and textiles
- Shift to services centre for neighbouring communities
- Self-sufficiency model: Ecopower



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Promoting best practices in spatial planning and economic development.

3. Belgium – Eeklo: Ecopower through Citizen Co-operative

- Eeklo community have established an energy cooperative
- Currently 8 turbines, with fourteen further planned
- Also hydro-power installations and solar panels
- Community embracing the initiative – involved in setting the pricing and share in profits
- Also operates as social enterprise – employment to energy experts



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3. Belgium – Taking A ‘Green’ Approach to the Rural Narrative

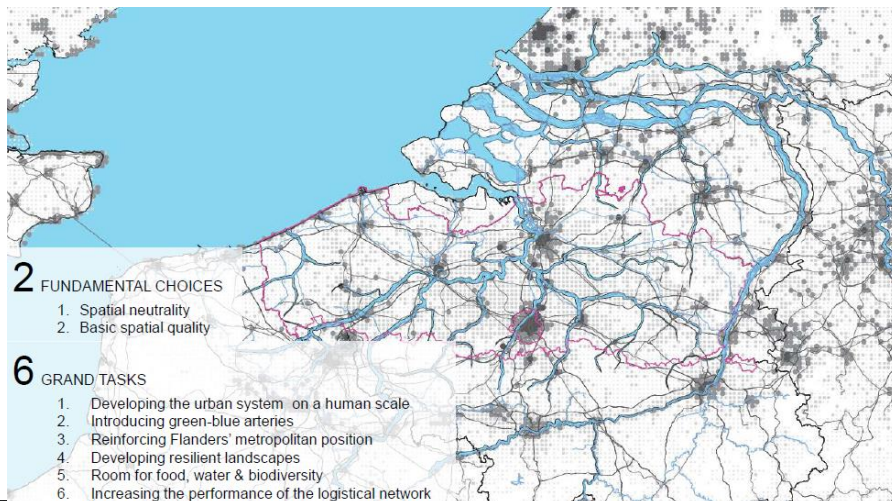
- Evergem, East-Flanders
- Flanders is heavily developed – for tax incomes
- 13,000km of ribbon development – equal to distance from Brussels to Singapore
- Municipalities in competition – build it and they will come!
- BUT...environmental impacts



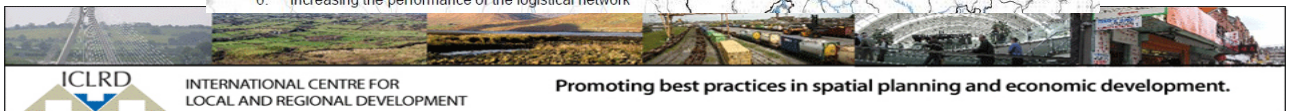
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3. Belgium – Evergem: Restricting Future Build



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4. Rural Policy....Ever Evolving

- **GERMANY:** Places of economic dynamism and innovation
Embracing role of business - 'Hidden Champions'
- **NORWAY:** Rural remote regions re embracing the silver economy
- **MEXICO:** Identification of 263 micro-regions and development of a Strategic Community Centre in each to drive change
- The need for new rural narratives is not NEW!



5. Conclusion

"The world we have created today as a result of our thinking thus far has problems which can not be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them"

Albert Einstein

