

Association of Irish Regions

Annual Training Seminar

Driving the Future of Regions: Governance, Sustainability, and Place-Based Impact



Date: 5 - 6 February 2025



Venue: Radisson Blu Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Day 1 – 5 February

8:30 – 9:15	Registration and refreshments
9:15 – 10:00	Conference Opening Remarks - 10 Years of 3 Regional Assemblies, what has been achieved and what is yet to come. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minister Peter Burke (TBC)• Cllr Jimmy McClearn, Cathaoirleach of AIR, member of the Committee of the Regions (CoR)• Clare Bannon, A/Director of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
10:00 – 12:00	Session 1 - Evolving Governance in Ireland <p>This session will feature interventions from a panel of speakers from European, National and Regional levels including the OECD and the Seanad.</p> <p><i>Speakers & Panellists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dorothee Allain-Dupré, Head of the Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division, CFE, OECD• Senator Mark Daly, Member of Seanad Éireann• Tommy Moylan, Director, Association of Irish Local Government• John Moran, Mayor of Limerick• David Kelly, Director of the Southern Regional Assembly
12:00 – 14:00	Showcasing the Regions <p>The Cathaoirleach will launch an exhibition space showcasing the impact of the three Regional Assemblies in Ireland over the last ten years, which participants can explore.</p>
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:30	Session 2 – EU and the Role of place-based policies and development strategies <p>This session will explore the EU policy making process and the role of place-based policies and development strategies. Speakers will represent the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Committee of the Regions (CoR).</p> <p><i>Speakers & Panellists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Message from</i> Raffaele Fitto, Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms, European Commission• Sari Rautio, member of the High-Level Group on the Future of Cohesion policy, member of the Committee of the Regions (CoR)• Cynthia Ní Mhurchú, Member of the European Parliament• Cllr Kieran McCarthy, Cork City Council and member of Committee of the Regions (CoR)• Ellen L. Mulder-Metselaar, Director International Relations & Public Affairs, Province of Gelderland, The Netherlands• Bernie Roe, Assistant Director, EU JTF, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly• Paddy Austin, Assistant Director, ERDF, Northern and Western Regional Assembly

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Day 1 – 5 February (cont.)

19:00

Dinner and After Dinner Speaker

Day 2 – 6 February

9:30 – 12:00

Session 3 – Opportunities in an evolving planning space

Experts in the field will speak about key planning issues relevant to regional and local government including the evolving overall planning space, the climate, transport and economic contexts, and the review and implementation of the RSES.

Speakers & Panellists:

- Anne-Marie Wood Wolfe, A/Assistant Director and Senior Planner, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
- Brendan O’Sullivan, Senior Lecturer, University College Cork
- Jonathan Patchell, Head of Regional Enterprise Plans, Funding and Infrastructure Unit, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
- Marie Donnelly, Chairperson of the Climate Change Advisory Council
- Caoimhín Ó Ciaruáin, Assistant Secretary for Climate Action, Department of Transport
- David Barrett, Assistant Principal Officer, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

12:00 – 13:00

Regional Development Monitor - Launch of Census Atlas and the S3 Dashboard by Minister (TBC)

Speakers:

- Minister (TBC)
- Owen Douglas, A/Senior Executive Planner, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly
- Justin Gleeson, Director of the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO), Maynooth University

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch and Conference closes