

A GENDA *for*

DUBLIN



A G E N D A



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Major economic change since the late 1990s has seen Dublin emerge as the powerhouse of the 'Celtic Tiger' and Ireland's chief gateway to the global economy.

The transformation of Dublin into a cutting edge economic leader has involved major social change and generated enormous demand on physical and social infrastructure. In highlighting these issues the Dublin Regional Authority and Dublin Employment Pact have sought to arrive at a common perspective and set of objectives for Dublin as it moves forward into the 21st century.

The key challenges facing the Dublin Region in this context of continued growth relate especially to spatial planning, inward investment policy and transportation, and there is now a growing awareness of the need to co-ordinate these developments at a Greater Dublin level. Although this need was strongly identified in the National Spatial Strategy, there remains considerable resistance to the development of Dublin, which is often erroneously regarded as contrary to the development needs of other regions. Such an attitude, however, takes little account of the specific needs of Dublin as Ireland's gateway to the global economy, let alone of its well being as a functioning urban region. The fact is that the proper development of the Dublin Region is a pre-requisite for the development of the country as a whole and hence of its other regions.

The development of Dublin has seen a new coherence since the mid-1990's, which is reflected in the broadening role and sophistication of local government, in the institution and progress of the City and County Development Boards, the consolidation of the local Partnerships and Enterprise Boards, as well as other local-level initiatives such as the Drug Task Forces and the Community Development Programme. While there is much focus currently on achieving a proper and balanced co-ordination and integration of these structures, the development of regional Dublin-wide co-ordination is still at an early stage, though

the work of the Dublin Regional Authority and the Dublin Employment Pact has contributed new potential in this area.

In this context of a transformed and largely new economy and an emerging new governance structure in Dublin, the Dublin Regional Authority (DRA) and the Dublin Employment Pact (DEP) present this Agenda for Dublin as a consensus programme around the key issues facing the capital. Endorsed by the elected representatives composing the DRA and by the agencies and organisations composing the DEP, this Agenda sets out the responses of key representative social interests in Dublin to the challenges ahead.

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Population Growth and Spatial Planning



With the publication of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the emergence of Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs)¹, Ireland is now moving towards a 3-tier planning system at national, regional and local level similar to other European countries.

After years of neglect of the 'bigger picture' planning issues there is now a growing recognition that issues of population growth, settlement patterns and economic and social planning need to be tackled in an integrated manner at national and regional level.

The NSS recognises Dublin as the gateway for Ireland and supports Dublin's pivotal role for the economic success of the country as a whole. The vision presented for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA)² under the RPGs envisages the city region to excel as an international competitor. The policies contained in these strategic planning documents have been devised against a backdrop of unsustainable settlement patterns emerging in the absence of a definite regional strategy pre-1999.³ The publication of the Census 2002 has shown that the population of the Greater Dublin Area has grown by 9.2% since 1996 and 13.6% since 1991. The Dublin Region now accounts for 28.7% of the state's population and the GDA accounts for a staggering 39.2%. These trends are expected to continue and this will have major implications for the planning of a well-functioning city region.

In the Greater Dublin Area there has been stronger than anticipated population growth in the Mid-East Region (+18.8% between 1996 and 2002) as opposed to the Dublin Region (+6.1%). This settlement trend in combination with a low jobs ratio in the Hinterland area has led to an extended commuter belt focused on Dublin which has increased traffic congestion. Increases in the

populations of Westmeath (+13.5%), Wexford (+11.7%), Laois (+11%), Louth (+10.5%) and Carlow (+10.6%) also reflect to some extent a widening of the Dublin commuter belt beyond the GDA.

In the Dublin Region, Census data has shown that between 1996 and 2002 the older inner suburbs of Dublin have experienced a population decrease, while significant population growth has taken place in new greenfield developments in the outer suburbs, particularly in Fingal (+17.1%) and South Dublin (+9.2%) the two areas with the biggest landbanks in the Dublin Region (see Figure 1). This 'doughnut effect' has created a mismatch whereby in the older inner suburbs existing infrastructure, i.e. public transport, schools, shops, health services etc., is increasingly being under utilised while newly developing areas are having difficulties to catch up with putting this crucial infrastructure in place.

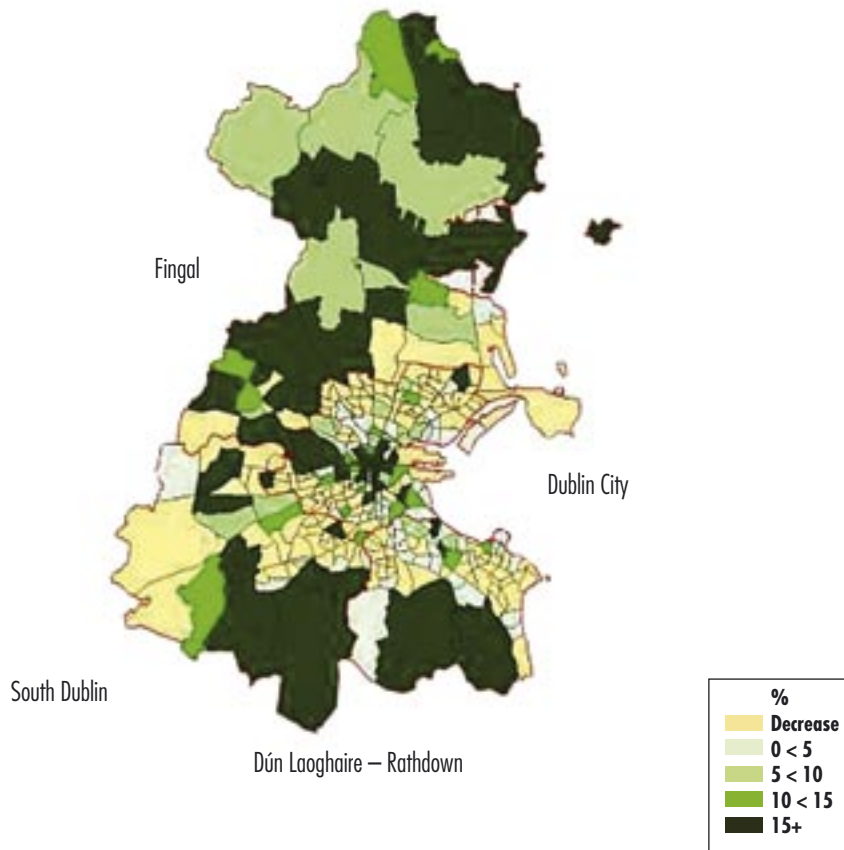
Furthermore, there has been a lack of coordination and strategic planning in the Metropolitan Area with regard to business location. The emergence of major employment centres at the edge of the city, particularly in close proximity to the M50, has resulted in a further extension of the commuter belt and has increased traffic congestion from cross city trips. It has led to an urban pattern which is increasingly difficult to serve by public transport. The NSS and RPGs for the GDA set out a number of strategic policies for the Metropolitan Area to address some of the unsustainable development patterns of the past. The overriding goal of these

¹ For details see: www.iirishspatialstrategy.ie and www.rpg.ie

² The Greater Dublin Area (GDA) comprises of the Dublin Region (Dublin City and Counties Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown) and the Mid-East Region (Counties Meath, Kildare and Wicklow).

³ In 1999 the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (SPGs) were published. They were the legally binding regional planning framework for the GDA and will be superseded by the Regional Planning Guidelines.

Figure 1 Percentage Change in the population of Electoral Divisions within Dublin between 1996 – 2002



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Recommendations

- The strategic policies set out under the Regional Planning Guidelines must be translated into concrete actions that need to be implemented by the responsible agencies on the ground.
- Priority needs to be given to measures that aim to tackle Dublin's low-density urban footprint and that will reverse the population decline in the older inner suburbs.
- Particular emphasis in the spatial planning of a growing city must be put on combining high-density development, efficient transport, multiple housing options, commercial and industrial clustering and environmental resource planning.
- Land use and transport planning at the Greater Dublin Area level must be accompanied by integrated framework policies on social development, economic and employment planning, and social inclusion.
- Greater co-ordination is needed between the 4 local authorities at city regional level to successfully implement the strategies that concern the whole region and to reflect the interconnectivity of the different administrative areas within the city.

documents is the physical consolidation of Dublin which is seen as essential to Dublin's competitiveness internationally. Consolidation is also required for an effectively functioning public transport system.

Population Growth and Spatial Planning

The specific Strategic Policies set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines include:

- Increase in residential densities through the application of the Residential Density Guidelines, the promotion of infill housing, 'Living Over The Shops' scheme and other innovative measures.
- Greater use of vacant and under utilised land in the city region. An audit of vacant and under utilised lands to be carried out.
- Promotion of high quality urban design throughout the region, e.g. through urban design plans in renewal areas in order to ensure intensification without negatively affecting amenity.
- Re-development of declining industrial areas for new economic activity and the relocation of inappropriate land uses.
- Full priority for the implementation of the DTO's Platform for Change recommendations, such as the location of developments that attract a large number of people (high density residential developments, major employment uses or recreational facilities) near transportation corridors.
- Increase of the jobs ratio in the Hinterland area to ease the commuting pattern concentrated on Dublin.

It is important that these strategic policy objectives are translated into concrete actions by the agencies responsible for implementation on the ground. If the Dublin region is to excel as a competitor on the international stage it is of crucial importance that the region functions in an efficient manner and meets its expanding infrastructure requirements.

As leading experts on globalisation have demonstrated,⁴ networks of interlinked city economies increasingly drive the global economy, and Dublin has the potential to be Ireland's major player. In this context the infrastructural efficiency and social integration of cities are key elements in competitiveness, and both are issues with which Dublin is currently struggling. For Dublin to achieve its potential as an international Gateway, the strategies now in place must be implemented without delay.



⁴ DEP Doubling Dublin Conference, October 2001.

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The Dublin Economy



Recommendations

- **A coherent economic planning structure must be developed at the level of the Greater Dublin Area, comprising representatives of the Dublin regional elements of all key economic development agencies, such as the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, the Dublin Enterprise Boards, FÁS, Forfás, Dublin Port and Airport, the local authorities, the City and County Development Boards and the relevant training and educational interests.**
- **A strategy needs to be developed for Dublin in relation to inward investment, targeting the needs of a large urban region with a Gateway role for Ireland in the global economy.**
- **Economic development must be accompanied by a human resources policy, which focuses on the employment and skill development needs of the region's population.**

The transformation of the Dublin Economy – which effectively covers the Dublin and Mid-East Regions as well as Louth, given the importance of the Dublin-Belfast corridor – commenced in the late 1980s and involved a radical shift away from older manufacturing industry towards services.

This restructuring involved the widespread closure of older industries and consequent high unemployment. By 2002 the reversal in economic trends saw unemployment fall to 4% nationally and 2.9% in Dublin. These figures represent employment expansion over the period 1993 to 2000 of 150,000 to a total for Dublin of 534,000.⁵ While the importance of IT and the software industry is widely recognised, and the Dublin Region is seen as a new technology led economy, it is essential that new and future growth areas are identified and systematic planning be undertaken regarding the infrastructural, training and other needs associated with such growth.

In addition, an inward investment strategy needs to be developed for Dublin, targeting the types of industry Dublin will require in the future and eschewing those which would be detrimental to the overall development of the city.

In a recent report Forfás noted that weakening demand conditions are now spreading from the

USA to all of Ireland's largest export markets - a development reflected in slowing export growth by indigenous Irish companies in 2002–03.

Other major potential risk factors presented by the global economic slowdown include:

- a downturn in Irish economy expenditures by multi-nationals in Ireland
- an appreciation of the euro against sterling and the dollar
- a further deterioration in equity prices
- a decline in domestic Irish business and consumer spending and
- increased price competition in global markets

While these are issues of national importance, it is essential that they also be viewed and responded to at the Dublin level through a coherent economic and investment policy tailored to the particular needs of the region.

⁵ DEP 'Employment and Unemployment in Dublin' (2002)

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Transport



Recommendations

- **The economic cost to Dublin of inefficient transport systems is threatening the very basis of the prosperity of recent years and must be tackled at region-wide level with the requisite urgency and authority.**
- **Given the social costs of an inefficient and unreliable transport system, all public transport plans should be subject to a social audit to assess their impact on social life, community participation and social inclusion.**
- **Transport planning must include local transport plans that maximise the mobility of people within and between communities, to and from employment and education options, and to and from services and facilities. Different modes, types and systems of transport (including community-based services), as well as flexible and reliable ticketing and time-tabling are not add-on luxuries but essential prerequisites.**
- **Increased mobility is also achieved through reducing travel times, not least through the spatial locating of services and facilities to maximise accessibility.**

Traffic congestion in Dublin has been estimated by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce to cost the economy over 500m annually.

Congestion will only be resolved by provision of an efficient public transport system, which has been defined as the ability to travel between any two points in the city with only one change of mode of transport and a walking time of not more than 10 minutes.⁶

Such a scenario may seem utopian for Dublin, but it must be achievable and the commitment must be made. One of the major economic consequences of a chronically poor public transport system is a non-mobile workforce, whose choices of where to live and work are restricted by the lack of effective transport. In tandem with this, residential mobility is further restricted by high housing costs. Commuting levels are increased as people are reluctant to or cannot afford to move house closer to their place of employment.

Commuting of two and more hours per day is highly wasteful and exhaustive of human resources. International expertise has quantified the economic impact of labour force immobility, and suggested that Dublin is seriously down the European league in this regard and fast approaching crisis point.⁷

The social consequences of a poor transport system are equally alarming: the restriction of people to particular areas limits their access to services, education, employment, family and social life and cultural engagement, and hence reinforces social exclusion.

⁶ Dublin Transportation Office (2001)
A Platform for Change: Strategy 2000–2016

⁷ Prof. René Prud'homme (University of Paris) at the DEP
Doubling Dublin Conference, October 2001

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Employment



Employment

Over the period 1973-2001 employment in the Dublin region had increased by 160,000 (or 30%) to an all time high of 544,000, resulting in the lowest ever recorded unemployment rate at 2.9%.⁸

For the Greater Dublin Area, the development since 1996 has been as indicated in table 1 below.

The profile of employment has also changed dramatically, with a major shift to service industry jobs and away from manufacturing, an increase in the female participation rate to 47% (and nearly 70% among the 25-45 age group), and the increasingly high-skill nature of new employment.⁹ People of post-retirement age wishing to work are also increasingly accessing the labour market, and this group will form a growing element of the workforce.¹⁰

Although IDA strategic planning has stipulated that at least 50% of green field inward investment (FDI) be located in the BMW Region,¹¹ high-skill global investment will nevertheless continue to locate near a global centre with its infrastructure and workforce. With Ireland now the leading exporter of software in the world, 71% of indigenous and 76% of overseas companies engaged in this sector in Ireland are located in the Greater Dublin Area, employing 9,000 people.¹² Besides the traditional

industries of construction, food and drink, paper, and administration, other key new sectors are tele-services (5,000), financial services (30,000), telecommunications, pharmaceuticals and the community and voluntary sector, which now directly employs over 10,000 people in Dublin.¹³

There is also a growing immigrant labour force in Dublin of approximately 50,000 in areas of high-skill demand and in low-skill areas such as the hotel and catering trade.¹⁴

Although Dublin's economy has grown substantially throughout the 1990s as the Irish economy grew, unemployment rates have begun to rise again, reaching an annual average of 4.7% in 2003 (QNHS, 2003).

Over the last year, a modest growth in Public Sector employment has masked a decline in private sector employment. The Unemployment rate in Dublin has grown faster than the national average. In addition to this, the method of measuring unemployment excludes many people who are long-term

⁸ CSO: QNHS (Quarter 1996 & 2001).

⁹ See analysis by DEP *Employment and Unemployment in Dublin, 2001*.

¹⁰ cf. Colm McCarthy, *The Dublin Jobs Market - Paper presented to the meeting of the Strategic Policy Group of the Dublin Employment Pact, 2nd June 1999*. Cf. Mary Harney, 'Let over-55s contribute to the boom', *The Irish Times*, 19th July 2000.

¹¹ IDA Strategic Plan.

¹² Dublin Chamber of Commerce, *Dublin into 2000. An Economic Profile of Dublin 1999-2000*.

¹³ Ibid. and also *Supporting Voluntary Activity. White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector*, Dublin, September 2000, p. 10.

¹⁴ Information Office, Dept. ETE.

Table 1 – Labour Force in Dublin Region and Mid-East Region

Dublin & Mid East	Not in Labour Force 000's	In Employment 000's	Unemployed 000's	Total Labour force
April 1996	461.1	548.7	73.7	622.4
April 2001	443.3	735.3	22.0	757.3
Change 1996 – 2001	-17.8	186.6	-51.7	134.9



unemployed, particularly older men who have been unemployed for a number of years and groups such as lone parents. It is estimated that these groups now total approx. 30,000 in Dublin.¹⁵

Considerable additional numbers of people are still excluded from the labour market due especially to lack of childcare facilities or barriers faced by other groups, such as people with disabilities.¹⁶

Long-term unemployment and labour market exclusion is concentrated in disadvantaged areas, and ten of the twelve designated most disadvantaged areas in Ireland are located in Dublin, in communities with a combined population of 264,000 people.¹⁷ Results from the Census 2002 have also shown that 15 unemployment blackspots are concentrated in the Dublin City area alone.¹⁸

Dublin also has a higher rate of early school leaving than the national average and the lowest rates of participation in 3rd level education.¹⁹ In these more uncertain economic times, there is a particular need to address the weaknesses in the Dublin labour market and to enhance the skills and capacities of those most vulnerable to an economic downturn to ensure that Dublin and its people can realise their full economic potential.

To this end, the Dublin economy needs a comprehensive Employment Strategy combining approaches to targeted inward investment, spatial planning of industrial and commercial zones, and effective local and regional strategies targeting labour market exclusion, skills development and long-term unemployment. The framework for the development of such a Dublin Employment Strategy is provided within the EU Employment Strategy agreed by the Member States.²⁰

Recommendations

- **The regional and local authorities for Dublin must work with all relevant economic and social partners to create a planning framework for the economic development of Dublin, developing a common strategy for suitable inward investment based on the needs of the region.**
- **It is imperative that Dublin develops a Regional Employment Strategy. The framework exists for this through the inter-agency collaboration at regional level represented by the Dublin Regional Authority in association with the Dublin Employment Pact. Such an Employment Strategy must promote the upskilling of the labour force and the achieving of equal access to employment opportunities by groups currently disproportionately excluded from the labour market.**

¹⁵ Eithne Fitzgerald et al, *Solving Long-Term Unemployment in Dublin: The Lessons from policy innovation*, Dublin 2001.

¹⁶ The EQUAL Initiative in Ireland (Dept. ETE).

¹⁷ See *ibid.* Also *Social Investment for Disadvantaged Areas in Dublin*, Dublin Employment Pact Policy Paper No.1, Prepared by Goodbody Economic Consultants, Dec.1999.

¹⁸ Census 2002: Distribution of unemployment blackspots by County.

¹⁹ Dr. Mark Morgan, *School and Part-time Work in Dublin – The Facts: Survey, Analysis and Recommendations*. Dublin Employment Pact Policy Paper No. 4, Dublin, 2000, p. 19. Also, Philip O'Connor 'School and Work in Dublin – The Facts', NPC, 2001, pp2. On third level education see T. Fleming, A. Gallogher (NUI Maynooth): *Power, Privilege and Points: The Choices and Challenges of Third Level Access in Dublin* (DEP, 2003).

²⁰ *Employment Guidelines for 2002*, European Commission.



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Education and Skills

Dublin has the highest rate in the country of people who left school before achieving even a Junior Certificate qualification and has a higher rate of early school leaving than the national average.²¹ In addition, Dublin has the lowest level of participation in 3rd level education in the state.²²

Whilst a significant majority of people have been very well served by the education system, a substantial minority has been failed by it. Indeed, educational disadvantage has been identified by government as the main factor in social exclusion.²³ This is reflected in high levels of poor literacy and low skills. Low educational achievement in the disadvantaged areas of Dublin co-exists with the location in Dublin of numerous national educational institutions. It is essential that these resources be re-organised to effectively cater for the education and training needs of the population, especially through a concerted policy to open life long learning opportunities. There is also a need for further integration at local level involving the school, community interests, state agencies and

employers to improve educational participation and achievement, and to develop modules for combining work and education for people of all ages. It is widely recognised that early intervention is the most effective and it is recommended that investment in pre-school provision and educational inclusion programmes at primary level be prioritised by the current government.

It is also essential for the educational and other public interests to combine to develop a regional life long learning strategy for Dublin, opening the educational facilities available and developing a much wider appreciation of skill-based assessment and accreditation.

Recommendations

- **Combating early school leaving and educational disadvantage is the key to social inclusion. It is essential to develop common strategies across Dublin and to seek their prioritisation in disadvantaged areas. The full implementation of the Education Welfare Act of 2000 is imperative.**
- **The most effective educational intervention is early intervention: Programmes and investment must be targeted and adequately resourced at pre-school provision and primary level.**
- **It is essential to provide consistent, multi-year and greatly increased funding for measures to widen access to third level education.**
- **Develop new partnerships between third-level institutions, business and communities to deliver education/training modules in the workplace and promote life long learning opportunities for all.**
- **The diverse needs of ethnic minorities - including Travellers - should be met in an integrated way, and an intercultural, anti - racism approach should be central to education policy.**

²¹ Dr. Mark Morgan, *School and Part-time work in Dublin - The Facts. Survey, Analysis and Recommendations, Report on behalf of the Dublin Employment Pact. May 2000*

²² T. Fleming, A. Gallagher (NUI Maynooth): *Power, Privilege and Points: The Choices and Challenges of Third Level Access in Dublin* (DEP, 2003)

²³ Minister Eoin Ryan, speech to DEP Early School Leaving Conference 2001



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Housing

The overall aim of housing policy in Ireland is to “enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and as far as possible at the tenure of its choice”.²⁴

The predominant trend in housing in Dublin has been one characterised by an inadequate supply to meet demand, thereby forcing house prices strongly upward. The supply deficiency has been compounded by a failure of new housing provision in Dublin to match national rates of increase, thereby adding to regional price inflationary pressures.²⁵

Housing statistics from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government indicated the effective stagnation of housing construction in Dublin between the mid-1990's and

2001.²⁶ This trend has been somewhat reversed since 2002, when housing output for the GDA increased by 25% over the previous year (see table 2 below). However, the ongoing undersupply of housing in the region has meant that there is a severe affordability crisis.

The decline in housing affordability has also manifested itself in a growing demand for social housing and shared ownership schemes, which in turn have not attained levels of supply to match demand.

Table 2 – House Completions by County and Region in the GDA (1996 – 2002)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Dublin City	4,125	3,427	3,777	2,804	2,362	3,091	4,124
DL – Rathdown	1,053	712	549	886	860	1,166	785
Fingal	2,024	2,707	2,618	4,296	4,044	3,602	4,308
South Dublin	2,244	2,479	2,013	2,049	2,139	1,746	3,406
Dublin Region	9,446	9,325	8,957	10,035	9,405	9,605	12,623
Kildare	1,900	2,095	2,509	2,419	2,366	2,426	3,126
Meath	1,154	1,318	1,422	1,480	2,303	2,553	2,924
Wicklow	1,168	1,147	1,335	1,294	1,484	1,914	2,002
Mid-East Region	4,222	4,560	5,266	5,193	6,153	6,893	8,052
Total GDA	13,668	13,885	14,223	15,228	15,558	16,498	20,675

Source Housing Statistics Bulletin Dept. of the Environment & Local Government

²⁴ www.enviorm.ie/housing/policy.html

²⁵ Williams, B., Hughes, B., Walsh, S. and Shiels, P. (2001) *Future Growth of Housing Needs in Dublin*, Society of Chartered Surveyors, Dublin

²⁶ *ibid*

Recommendations

- **The 20% provision for social and affordable housing in the 2000 Planning Act is welcome and should be retained as it has the potential to promote integrated and sustainable housing development. However, guidance should be issued to Local Authorities to give social rented housing priority over affordable housing where there exists unmet social need.**
- **A comprehensive review of social and affordable housing programmes on a regional level is required to gain a comprehensive view of the housing needs of the region as a whole in order to aggressively implement programmes to reduce the housing waiting lists.**
- **The trend in Local Authority housing to move away from large estate development towards infill and mixed development has a number of social advantages, but requires significant resourcing if it is to be continued into the future.**



This marked increase in the demand for social housing and the grossly inadequate supply to meet this demand is reflected in the lengthening of local authority waiting lists. At the height of the economic boom, local authority housing production in Dublin declined by 11.6% from 489 in 1994 to 438 in 1999.²⁷ At the same time waiting lists in the region increased to almost 14,000 in 2000. It remains to be seen what impact Part V of the 2000 Planning Act will have on the provision of social and affordable housing.

Part V obliges local authorities to draw up a housing strategy assessing the needs of all segments of the population. Under the housing strategies private developers can be obliged to provide for up to 20% social and affordable housing as part of a new development. Whereas these measures are warmly welcomed they cannot alone provide for the social housing need in the Dublin region and have to be matched by ongoing investment by the local authorities.

²⁷ *ibid*

One of the most serious consequences of the housing crisis and the undersupply in social and affordable housing has been the increase in the number of homeless people in Dublin.

Homelessness

A recent report by the four leading voluntary organisations in this sector notes that “with rents escalating and local authority waiting lists lengthening, low-income and vulnerable households are being forced into inappropriate, often sub-standard accommodation or homelessness.”²⁸

The most extreme form of homelessness is people having to sleep rough in doorways, parks, derelict sites etc. However, the ‘invisible homeless’, people who live in emergency accommodation (shelters, hostels, B&Bs) or double share with friends and relatives make up about ten times the people sleeping rough. According to the annual report of the Dublin Simon Community, the number of homeless adults in the Greater Dublin Area was 2,920 in 2002, remaining at the same crisis level as 1999 while at the same time the number of families and children experiencing homelessness increased significantly since 1999. Families with children increased from 540 to 640 families. The number of dependent children who were homeless increased by 15% from 990 in 1999 to 1,140 children in 2002.²⁹

Two of the main causes of homelessness are the housing shortage and the high cost of private rented

accommodation; others are mental health difficulties, addiction problems and problems associated with leaving care or prison. National policy responses have been the publication of the policy document ‘Homelessness – An Integrated Strategy’ and the provisions included under Part V of the 2000 Planning Act (Local Authority Housing Strategies to assess all housing needs incl. homelessness). Some progress has been made under the Homeless Agency’s Dublin Homeless Action Plan, such as the targeted provision of 300 sheltered housing units and the actual provision of 130 transitional housing units as well as an additional 100 beds for people who would otherwise sleep rough. According to the Homeless Agency, the provision of health services to homeless people has improved and the funding scheme (responsibility of the agency) has also been increased from 10 million in 2001 to a projected figure of 24 million in 2003.³⁰

However, problems remain in relation to the lack of adequate information on homelessness and a fragmentation between statutory services in the region. Moreover, the prevention of homelessness can only be achieved if there is an adequate supply of housing for low income groups.

Recommendations

- **Funding to tackle homelessness has only increased recently and needs to be sustained to significantly reduce the number of homeless people. This must also include increased spending on social housing.**
- **More emphasis on innovative services to move people out of homelessness on a permanent basis is needed to permanently replace the archaic system of funding hostel bed accommodation. These services need to reflect the continuum of care needed from crisis through move-on accommodation to settlement.**
- **All public bodies should work together to plan to meet the needs of vulnerable groups of people in the region, this should be done in consultation with voluntary bodies.**
- **Adequate community-based services are needed to identify people who may be at risk of becoming homeless.**

²⁸ Focus Ireland, Simon Communities of Ireland, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Threshold (2003) *Housing Access For All? An Analysis of Housing Strategies and Homeless Action Plans*. (http://www.focusireland.ie/html/housing_homelessness/fi_research/index.htm)

²⁹ Dublin Simon Community: *Annual Report 2002/2003* (www.dublinsimon.ie/reports.htm)

³⁰ Information obtained from Mary Higgins, Director, Homeless Agency.



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Drug Misuse and Alcohol Abuse

The reports of the Ministerial Task Force on measures to reduce the demand for drugs (1996,1997) stated that ‘Drug use is concentrated in communities that are characterised by large scale social and economic deprivation and marginalisation’.

The Health Research Board (HRB) refers to drug misuse or problem drug use as ‘social, psychological, physical or legal difficulties as a result of an excessive compulsion to continue taking drugs’.

A number of studies suggest that the most commonly used illegal drug in Ireland is cannabis.³¹ However in terms of harm to the individual and the community, heroin has the greatest impact. The estimated number of opiate users in Dublin in 1996 was 13,460,³² a similar study estimated a slight decrease in the numbers for 2001 (recorded in Dublin in 2001 – see table 3 below). Both data from research carried out for the Health Research Board and data from An Garda Síochána indicates that heroin misuse remains almost exclusively a Dublin phenomenon – 89% of Heroin offences were recorded in Dublin in 2001 (see table 3 below and table 4 on the following page).³³ Research indicates

that the majority of those presenting for treatment are male, under 30 years of age and are unemployed while over half had already left school by the age of 15.³⁴ More drug users are currently outside of treatment than are on treatment programmes of one type or another. Research undertaken by the Merchant’s Quay Project indicates that residential drug treatment is the best way of helping drug users give up drugs for good.³⁵ However, there are less than 200 residential detoxification beds in the state.

Since 1996 the number of methadone treatment places has increased from 1,800 to 6,000. Methadone reduces the risk of death from overdose or infection, its use is associated with reductions in problems such as crime, homelessness and unemployment.

Table 3 – Opiate users aged between 15-64 (Males and Females) for 2001 and 2002*

	Total Ireland		Dublin		Rest of Ireland Excl. Dublin	
	Estimate	Rate/1000 pop.	Estimate	Rate/1000 pop.	Estimate	Rate/1000 pop.
Year 2001	14,158	5.6	12,268	16.1	2,526	1.0
Year 2002	14,452	5.6	12,456	16.0	2,225	0.9

* Small Area Health Research Unit “A 3-Source Capture Recapture Study of the Prevalence of Opiate Use in Ireland 2000-2001: Key Findings Summary Tables”, published May 2003 by Dept of Community Health & General Practice (Trinity College Dublin) for the National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NCAD).

³¹ Moran, R, O’Brein, M and Duff, P. (1997) *Treated Drug Misuse in Ireland, National Report 1996*. Dublin: The Health Board

³² Comiskey, C. (1998) *Prevalence of Opiate Use in Dublin, Ireland during 1996*. Dublin: Institute of Technology Tallaght

³³ National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 *Building on Experience*. Dublin: Government Publications

³⁴ *Ibid*

³⁵ Cox, G.M. & Lawless, M.C. (2000) *From Residential Drug Treatment to Employment, Final Report*. Dublin: Merchants Quay Project.

Drug Misuse and Alcohol Abuse

Recommendations

- There is a need for ongoing support for the Local Area Drugs Task Forces and the Regional Drugs Task Force.
- There should be ongoing support for and expansion of existing services including residential drug treatment, methadone treatment, needle exchange programmes and after-care and support facilities for former drug user and the expansion and development of new and innovative measures aimed at helping drug users and former drug users.

Needle exchange programmes have also proven to be highly effective as a Public Health Initiative reducing some of the potential risks associated with drug use including HIV and Hepatitis C. There is only one full-time needle exchange service in Ireland (based in Dublin) and there is no such service in the evenings or at weekends.³⁶

Research also indicates that after-care and support including training and education programmes have been effective mechanisms in supporting former drug users to maintain their drug free status.³⁷ The area-based approach taken by the local Drugs Task Forces has proven uniquely successful in tackling drug abuse in the community and assisting individuals with substance abuse problems on the path to recovery.

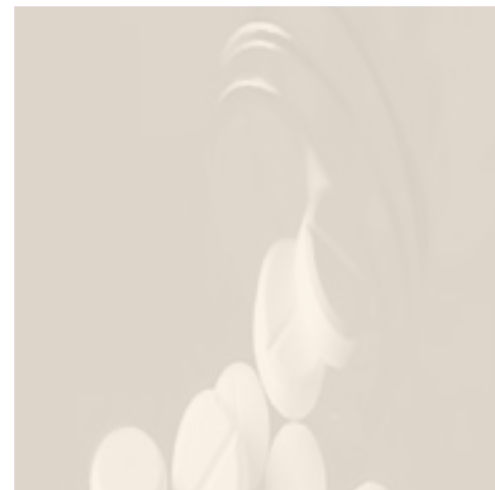


Table 4 – An Garda Síochána Regional breakdown of possession. Offences by drug type in 2001*

Region	Cannabis and Cannabis Resin		Heroin		LSD		Ecstasy		Amphets		Cocaine		Other **		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Eastern	582	63%	45	5%	1	<1%	215	23%	47	5%	14	1.5%	14	1.5%	921
Dublin	1708	52%	806	25%	0	0%	478	15%	28	<1%	184	6%	59	2%	3265
Northern	385	58%	26	4%	0	0%	223	34%	7	1%	13	2%	5	<1%	659
South Eastern	604	61%	16	2%	11	1%	272	28%	45	5%	18	2%	13	1%	985
Southern	1379	69%	6	<1%	8	<1%	482	24%	45	2%	51	2%	9	<1%	1988
Western	461	65%	9	1%	0	0%	175	25%	35	5%	17	2%	9	1%	711
Total	5119	60%	908	11%	20	<1%	1845	22%	207	2%	297	3%	109	1%	8529

* An Garda Síochána Annual Report 2001

**Others include morphine sulphate tablets, medical and non-medical methadone and other opiates, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, hypnotics and sedatives and non-LSD Hallucinogens as well as possession of forged prescription.



³⁶ Cox, G.M.; Lawless, M.C.; Cassin, S.P.; Geaghan, I.W. (2000) Syringe Exchanges: A Public Health Response to Problem Drug Use. Irish Medical Journal, Vol. 93; No. 4

³⁷ Cox, G.M. & Lawless, M.C. (2000) op. cit.

Alcohol abuse and the associated costs to the individual and to society at large have recently made the headlines in Ireland. Alcohol consumption in this country has steadily been on the increase over the last decades.

Alcohol Abuse

Between 1989 and 1999 alcohol consumption increased by a staggering 41% in this country, while ten other EU member states showed a decrease and three showed only a modest increase during the same period.³⁸ Drinking patterns have been influenced by societal changes, changing lifestyles and expectations, more disposable income, the lessening of parental control on young people and a strong focus on consumerism.

The negative effects to the individual extend beyond physical health issues to mental, social and financial problems. Unintentional injuries, the breakdown of personal relationships, crisis

pregnancies, interpersonal violence and mental health problems are just some of the negative aspects of excessive alcohol consumption. Of particular concern are the levels of underage drinking and binge drinking. Negative effects of alcohol abuse to the wider society include public safety issues and drink driving incidents. An estimation of the total cost to society by alcohol abuse is given in table 5 below. Excessive drinking also increases the risk of drunkenness, fights, assaults and violence. In Ireland there has been a steady increase since 1995 in assaults and public order offences associated with alcohol (see table 6 on the following page).

Table 5 – Total costs of alcohol related problems in Ireland in 1999*	
Alcohol Related Problems	In Millions of Euro
Healthcare Costs	279
Costs of Road Accidents	315
Costs of Alcohol Related Crimes	100
Loss of Output due to alcohol related absence from work	1,034
Alcohol related transfer payments	404
Taxes not received on lost output	234
TOTAL	2,366 Million

*Source: European Comparative Alcohol Study, published in the 'Strategic Task Force on Alcohol – Interim Report'

Recommendations

- Alcohol education programmes should be aimed at primary and secondary schools and adult education programmes should be implemented to encourage responsible alcohol consumption.
- An alcohol awareness campaign should be launched alerting the general public to the consequences of alcohol abuse (similar to drink-driving campaigns or anti-smoking initiatives).
- There is a need for the provision of alternative recreational facilities for young people.
- The provision of adequate public transport facilities at specific peak times (i.e. after pub/club closing times) is needed to ensure people can get home rapidly and safely.
- More on-the-ground police services are needed to enhance public safety.

³⁸ Strategic Task Force on Alcohol (2002) *Interim Report*, Dublin: Government Publications.

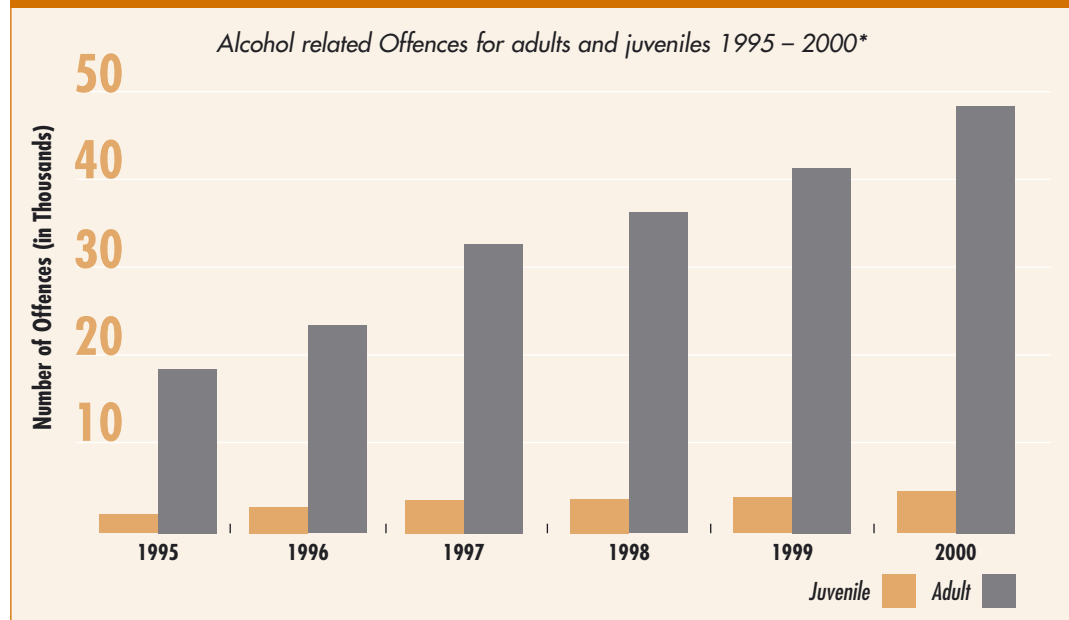
Drug Misuse and Alcohol Abuse

A recently published report by the National Crime Council shows that Dublin is at the forefront of public order offences that are related to alcohol consumption.³⁹

At particular times of the night and particularly at weekends the city streets are swamped with drunken

people and public order offences are rampant. At those times A&E Departments in the city's hospitals are overcrowded with intoxicated persons diverting resources which are much needed elsewhere. These behavioural patterns have given rise to serious concern amongst policy makers and the general public.

Table 6 – Increase in Alcohol Related Offences



*Source: An Garda Síochána, Annual Reports

³⁹ National Crime Council (2003) *Public Order Offences in Ireland, Dublin: Government Publications.*

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Immigration



The recent success of the Irish economy has meant that immigration has become a major feature of Irish society, especially since 1995. Most of the recent in-migration is focused within the Dublin region.

This represents a unique chance for Dublin to become a truly multicultural and diverse city region which will be a great asset in an increasingly globalised economy. There are a number of different types of immigrants. Most of them are Return Irish Migrants (ca. 50% up to 2000) and the second biggest group are migrants from Europe (see Table 7). These two groups integrate more easily into Irish society as they have almost all the rights of Irish citizens (except for limited voting rights in the case of EU citizens). There are a number of other groups which need special attention, namely migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees and 'residents'(persons with leave to remain).

Types of Immigrants

Migrant workers are persons that come to Ireland on a work permit or a working visa issued by the state. In 2002 a total of 40,321 work permits and 1,100 work visas were issued (16,562 of the work permits were renewals from previous years).⁴⁰ Migrant workers can apply for Irish citizenship after 5 years of staying on a work permit or visa. It is important that they can avail of all integration programmes available.

Asylum seekers are persons applying for asylum under the 1951 UN Refugee convention. Until a decision has been made whether they qualify as refugees under the convention they are dispersed throughout the country, put into direct provision (hostel accommodation incl. meals) and get a reduced supplementary welfare allowance of 19.10 (9.60 per child) per

week. Asylum seekers do not have the right to work. Despite the government's dispersal policy, asylum seekers are heavily concentrated in urban areas, particularly Dublin. The numbers of people seeking asylum rose from 39 in 1992 to 11,634 in 2002.⁴¹

Although asylum seekers probably constitute no more than 10% of all foreign immigrants to Ireland since 1995, they have been the subject of considerable media coverage, some of it negative. As they often flee persecution and might have had traumatic experiences it is important that counselling services are available to them.

In the past, the backlog of applications has meant that some asylum seekers were waiting for a decision on their application for several years. At the time of writing, recommendations (1st instance) were issued within 4 months on average and substantive appeals also took approximately 4 months to process. Therefore, a person being refused in the first instance and appealing that decision would wait for 8 months on average. However, in a total of 1,816 cases (at 31st of May 2003) the recommendations and appeals took longer than the 6 month target (for the first instance and appeal respectively).⁴²

Recognised refugees are persons that have been granted refugee status. They can apply for citizenship and are eligible for mainstream social welfare payments, rent supplement and

⁴⁰ Figures from the Dept. of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (www.entemp.ie/ftd/wp-statistics.htm)

⁴¹ Office of Refugee Applications Commissioner: Annual Report 2002.

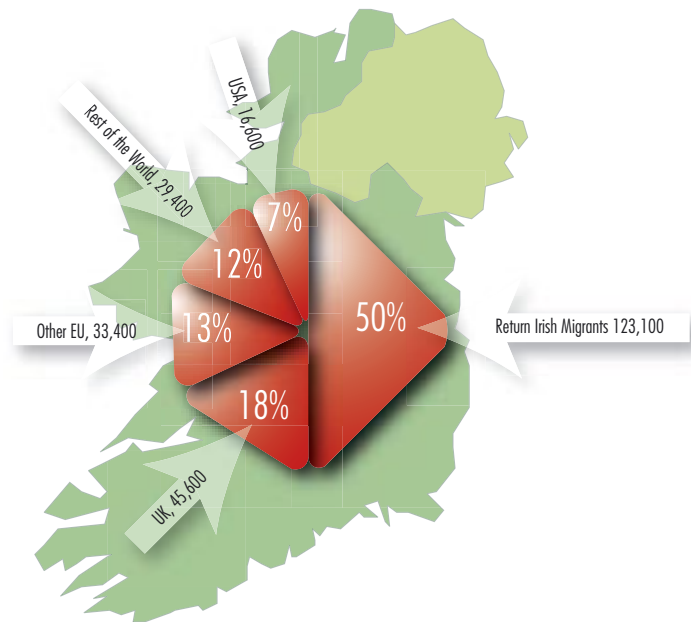
⁴² Information obtained from Anne Barry, Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Asylum Policy Section.

Local Authority housing and can avail of FAS, VTOS or PLC courses. They also have the same employment rights as Irish nationals and are now entering the labour market in increasing numbers. However, research has shown that refugees experience a number of barriers to employment, of which racism ranked as the most important by those surveyed.⁴³

'Residents' are persons that have been granted leave to remain either on humanitarian grounds (granted at the discretion of the Minister for Justice) or on the

grounds of having an Irish child. Whereas numbers granted residency under the first category are very small, numbers applying for residency under the second category has been steadily increasing. However, since the Supreme Court judgement of 23/01/03 parents of Irish born children do not automatically have the right to remain in the state as residents. Currently there are ca. 10,000 applications for residency outstanding.⁴⁴ Residents have most but not all the rights of refugees. They can apply for citizenship after 5 years.

Table 7 – In-Migration to Ireland 1995 – 2000



Source: CSO Quarterly National Household Survey as published by Irish Centre for Migration Studies, University College Cork.

Recommendations

- There should be a realistic transition period for recognised refugees between hostel living and independent living. Integration Officers should be appointed to help recognised refugees adapt to their new rights and obligations. They should work with the refugee in drawing up an integration programme including English Language Training, vocational training and employment supports.
- Step-down accommodation facilities should be provided for those who are leaving direct provision hostels to enable them to ease themselves into independent living.
- Integration should start at the level of asylum seekers as they often remain in the state as refugees. They should have access to Integration programmes including English Language Training. A positive experience in their host country will also help them in case they have to return to their home country.
- English Language Training should also be available to migrant workers.

⁴³ National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (2002) *Migration Policy: Reform and Harmonisation (Advocacy Paper One)*

⁴⁴ The Irish Times, 7th of June 2003.

Recommendations

- **Immigrant Support Groups and ethnic minority specific groups should be supported so as to build capacity in the immigrant community.**
- **Anti-Racism in the workplace initiatives and public awareness campaigns should continue to be supported.**
- **It is important for Dublin to look to the future and do everything possible to welcome and integrate the newcomers and their diverse cultures to become a city region rich in diversity which is on an equal footing with other great global cities.**

Integration

Integration has now become an important issue for Irish society that needs to be tackled in a positive manner. Integration is a two way process that places demands on both the receiving society and the newcomer. It is a long term process and it is multidimensional in that it incorporates social, cultural, civil and political aspects of society. A commonly used definition of integration is “the ability to participate to the extent that a person needs and wishes in all the major components of society, without having to relinquish his or her own cultural identity.”⁴⁵

Integration - A comparative study

Other countries have had longer experience with integration and have developed different models of integration that are based on their particular historical and political circumstances.⁴⁶

In France, integration can be perceived as assimilation. The view is that France is one great homogeneous and centralised state and all therein are “French”. Therefore, there are no “minorities” in need of special consideration of their differences as all citizens are equal under the law and have the same rights and entitlements.

In the UK the approach is more flexible and there is a focus on “ethnic and race relations” rather than “integration”. There is no significant expectation that immigrants should become good English, Scots or Welsh but there is a focus on people being loyal and law-abiding British citizens.

In Sweden the refugee integration programme which is devised by the National Integration Office puts the responsibility for the care of refugees in the hands of the municipalities (Local Authorities). Individual plans are agreed between the municipalities and the refugees, in collaboration with other state agencies.

The municipalities aim to give each refugee housing, financial support and a working knowledge of the Swedish language and culture. Responsibility for preventing and counteracting racism, xenophobia and ethnic discrimination lies with the National Integration Office.

In Denmark, the responsibility for integration lies also with the local government, whose Refugee integration programme consists of language and culture classes and vocational guidance and is available for three years. The programme is obligatory and an allowance is paid to participants.

In Canada, programs and services are in place to help newcomers adapt during their first year and help them to become participating members of Canadian society. The programs are also aimed at Canadians to help them understand the immigration, settlement and integration process.

Integration in Ireland

According to Integrating Ireland – the national network of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrant support groups – the biggest obstacles to integration in Ireland are seen as the following⁴⁷:

- **Language skills: they are crucial for access to employment, training and other services as well as social interaction**
- **Employment: there are great difficulties in accessing the job market**
- **Training and Education: there is a lack of equal opportunity in accessing education**
- **Recognition of qualifications: refugees often have to take up employment that does not match their skills**
- **Accommodation: the continuous accommodation crisis in Dublin is an acute problem for refugees and immigrants as they often face racism from potential landlords.**

⁴⁵ Integrating Ireland *Integration of Refugees in Ireland (Information Leaflet)*

⁴⁶ The following list of diff. country's models is taken from the Integrating Ireland leaflet (ibid.)

⁴⁷ ibid

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Participation and Governance in Dublin



Recommendations

- **The creation of a Greater Dublin Authority (GDA) for land use and transport planning should proceed urgently to tackle the transportation, housing and planning issues facing the region. These issues are not stand-alone questions and must be integrated in the social and other relevant policy areas. This would best be achieved through the linking of the GDA with the representative Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities and a role for these representative institutions at the Greater Dublin level.**
- **Participative structures developed in recent years at the local authority and community level need to be further consolidated and their roles expanded in the development of the Dublin Region. Methods of deepening participation must be explored and developed.**
- **To benchmark the development of representative, devolved and participative structures in Dublin, the EU common indicators on local sustainability should be applied.**
- **At national level there is a need for the development of urban policy, and specifically the establishment of a Department of Urban Development.**

Since the late 1990s there has been a rapid evolution of the structures of governance in Dublin. At the “macro” level of the Greater Dublin Area, there is continued discussion on the need to create a “Greater Dublin Authority” with statutory powers in the area of strategic land use and transportation planning.

In addition, the Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities, set up in 1994 under the Local Government Act 1991, are collaborating increasingly on issues affecting the Greater Dublin Area, in particular on the issue of strategic planning. The Authorities are currently acting jointly to produce the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area.

At the regional level, the Dublin Regional Authority co-ordinates the activities of the local authorities and Public Service agencies in the region in a variety of issues, while the Dublin Employment Pact acts as a participative structure engaging with employment issues at the Dublin-wide level. At the local authority level, there has been the development of the City and County Development Boards and of Area Committees. The Development Boards have completed their 10-year strategies for economic, social and cultural development and implementation of these has now commenced.

At the local level the Partnership companies established in the 1990s have consolidated as participative local development structures, and have been augmented by local Drug Task Forces, Community Development Programmes and other participative community level structures. There are also the RAPID initiatives in disadvantaged areas charged with planning the front-loading of investment in social infrastructure in disadvantaged areas.

For city-regions to function, coherent governance is required at a regional level. The Dublin region should be amalgamated with the Mid-East region to form a Greater Dublin Authority, which would address the spatial planning and transportation issues as well as the associated social, economic and cultural issues of the area. This amalgamation should be enhanced by the devolution of the necessary powers and resources

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Comparable EU City Regions



In light of the ongoing debate over the new governance structure at regional level the following represents a brief overview of governance models in three other European city regions.

Copenhagen and Helsinki were chosen because the two cities are similar to Dublin in that they take up a dominant role in their respective countries. Copenhagen has a stronger authority than Helsinki because it has a wider area of competence and a bigger administration. Stuttgart was chosen because it represents a different model of political organisation at regional level which is based on the direct election of regional assembly members. Both Stuttgart and Copenhagen have only quite recently implemented their respective regional authorities.

Copenhagen – Denmark⁴⁸

The Greater Copenhagen Area occupies a similarly dominating role in Denmark as Dublin does in Ireland. One third of the population live in Greater Copenhagen (1.8 million of Denmark's 5.37 million inhabitants) and the region is home to the key industries and educational institutions. The airport and port act as major transport hubs for the country.

The regional organisation covering the Copenhagen region is the Greater Copenhagen Authority which was founded in 2000 ('Hovedstadens Udviklingsråd' - HUR). The governing HUR council is made up of 11 regional politicians from the three counties and two cities in the region. Council members and committees are appointed subsequent to every county and city council election. The administrative organisation of the HUR consists of approx. 320 employees and the authority is divided into three divisions - Transport, Service and Planning - which are complemented by one Management Secretariat. The strategic tasks of the HUR are to:

- 1. Co-ordinate, develop and manage public transport within the region**
- 2. Develop and follow up on regional plans**
- 3. Provide a co-ordinated traffic plan**
- 4. Co-ordinate tourism in the region**
- 5. Co-ordinate and develop regional business and industrial policy**
- 6. Be instrumental in the development of cultural schemes and implement regional initiatives**
- 7. Harmonise and supervise tasks in connection with Øresund co-operation**

Despite its relative youth, the authority has made progress in a number of areas. These include the introduction of innovative measures in the bus service provision, the adoption of a regional land use plan, the development of a regional transport plan, the publication of an industrial development strategy and the ongoing support for a range of cultural institutions.

Helsinki – Finland⁴⁹

The greater Helsinki region is made up of 12 municipalities and has a population of 1.1 million. The region accounts for one fifth of the population of Finland and one quarter of employees and one third of the GDP of the country approximately. Population growth in the region has been rapid and job creation has been fuelled by the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment. One of the negative outcomes has been a housing shortage in recent years.

The authority responsible for the urban Helsinki region, made up of the 4 most populous of the 12 municipalities, is the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council ('Pääkaupunkisendum Yhteistyövaltuuskunta' - YTV). The YTV is led by a council made up

⁴⁸ All information taken from: Copenhagen Capacity, www.copcap.com and Greater Copenhagen Authority, www.hur.dk

⁴⁹ All information taken from: www.ytv.fi and: Holstila, E. "Finland" in: *National Urban Policies in the European Union*, van den Berg, I & Braun, E. & van der Meer, J. (eds.) (1998) Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing

of representatives appointed from the four municipalities. The areas of competence of the YTV are the following:

- 1. Development Planning**
- 2. Public Transport**
- 3. Waste Management**
- 4. Air Quality Management**

Since its establishment in 1970, the YTV has been particularly strong on regional development planning issues. Co-operation plans are prepared every 5 years for the purpose of regionally coordinating the land use objectives of the various municipal development plans. The latest such plan is the "Helsinki Metropolitan Area Vision 2020". It includes a framework for the location of housing, jobs and transport, targets to increase housing output and guidelines to promote high density development near public transport.

Stuttgart - Germany, state of Baden-Württemberg⁵⁰

The Stuttgart urban region occupies a central role in the southern German state of Baden-Württemberg. It only covers 10% of the state's territory, but is home to 25% of its inhabitants and produces 30% of the state's GDP. The region is made up of 6 counties and 179 cities, towns and smaller municipalities. The total population is 2.59 million; the biggest city in the region is Stuttgart with ca. 580.000 inhabitants. The region has a strong, long established industrial base and a low unemployment rate compared to the rest of Germany and has therefore been the focus of strong in-migration from other parts of Germany.

The Stuttgart Regional Authority ('Verband Region Stuttgart' - VRS) was established in 1994 and represents a new institutional layer in the three tier structure of government organisation in Germany. The VRS is a political organisation with its own directly elected assembly (deputies are elected by the population every 5 years) and its own

competences. Politicians are directly involved in policy formulation through committees and working groups. The assembly elects a regional director who is the lawful representative of the assembly and is also in charge of the administrative office. The administration is comprised of 38 staff (mostly professionals such as planners and economists) and manages a budget of about 110 million a year. The VRS has a wide range of competence:

- 1. Regional Planning: development of a strong vision and legally binding framework plan for settlement patterns, transport, economy and environment**
- 2. Landscape Protection: designation of greenbelts and zones of protection**
- 3. Regional Transport Planning: planning for roads, rail lines and cycle tracks**
- 4. Regional Economic Promotion: promotion of Stuttgart as an attractive location for industry**
- 5. Regional Public Transport Provision: management of regional commuter train network and night buses**
- 6. Parts of Waste Management: disposal of mineral deposits and contaminated soil**
- 7. Tourism Marketing**

The success of the governance model adopted by the Stuttgart region is shown by the fact that other urbanised regions in Germany are discussing the introduction of similar models. Overall, the VRS has been very effective and efficient in implementing its policies and plans while at the same time ensuring democratic accountability through the involvement of directly elected representatives.

⁵¹ Information taken from: www.region-stuttgart.de and: Knapp, W. "Competition and Co-operation: Experiences of German Urban Regional Development and Governance" in: Williams, B (ed.) (2001) *Shaping Dublin's Future: Economic Competitiveness and Urban Governance*. Dublin: DIT



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Conclusions and Acknowledgements

Population Growth and Spatial Planning

Dublin as an international gateway is increasingly competing with other global cities. To stay competitive it needs a coherent and coordinated approach to spatial planning at a regional level incorporating high density, high quality urban development and an efficient and integrated public transport system in order to create a well-functioning, socially balanced, attractive and sustainable city region.

The Dublin Economy

The success of the Dublin economy over recent years has been unprecedented. In order to sustain this success it is important to develop an inward investment strategy for the region and to establish a coherent and separate economic planning structure at the GDA level comprising representatives of all key economic players.

Transport

In order to ease the traffic congestion in the Dublin region, investment in public transport needs to be sustained and integrated land use and transportation frameworks need to be adhered to. On a local level, local transport plans reflecting community needs have to be implemented and social audits should be devised for all public transport plans to make public transport more inclusive and accessible for everybody.

Employment

Although unemployment has fallen dramatically in the Dublin region, long-term unemployment remains a problem as well as barriers to employment such as disability and the lack of childcare facilities for lone parents. It is therefore imperative that Dublin develops a Regional Employment Strategy to promote equal access to employment opportunities for groups disproportionately excluded from the labour market.

Education and Skills

A common strategy is needed for the region to tackle educational disadvantage and early school leaving. This should include actions taken at primary and pre-school level, increased funding to widen access to third level education, the promotion of life long learning opportunities for all and an increased awareness of the needs of ethnic minorities and Travellers.

Housing and Homelessness

The housing affordability crisis has particularly affected low income households and action is urgently needed to clear Local Authority waiting lists and to put in place effective mechanisms to tackle homelessness.

Drug Misuse and Alcohol Abuse

Drug abuse remains a problem in the Dublin region and innovative measures and approaches such as those taken by the Local Drugs Task Forces need to be further promoted. Action also needs to be taken to counteract the increase in alcohol abuse and public order offences related to alcohol and substance abuse.

Immigration

Immigration has now become a major feature in Dublin and it is important for Dublin to take this chance to become a multicultural and diverse region by doing everything possible to fully integrate the newcomers.

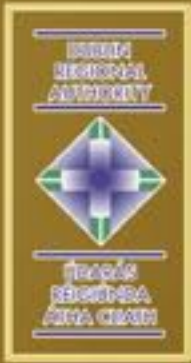
Participation and Governance in Dublin

Many of the issues facing the Dublin region and the Greater Dublin Area need coordination at regional level. It is therefore important to put in place a strong implementing authority to oversee coordination of these issues in a coherent and integrated manner.

Acknowledgements

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