



Activity Report 2007

Tuarascáil Gníomhaíocht 2007

IRO



The Irish Regions Office - Brussels
Oifig Réigiún na hÉireann

Irish Regions Office

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Foreword

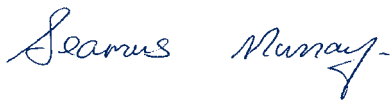
Tá an áthas orainn Tuairisc Gníomhach d'Oifig Réigiúin na h-Éireann 2007 a chur ós bhúr gcomhair. Léiríonn an tuairisc roinnt éachtaí agus tugann sí forbheathnú forleathan ar an réimse seirbhíse a sholáthraíonn an Oifig.

The establishment of the Irish Regions Office (IRO) in Brussels in 2000 was a very important development for the Irish members to the Committee of the Regions and for the Regional Authorities, Regional Assemblies and local authorities. It marked an increased engagement of Irish sub-national authorities in the EU decision-making process and demonstrated a commitment to greater involvement in EU policy formation and in maximising the benefits that Irish authorities could derive from Ireland's membership of the EU.

The momentous changes within the European Union provide the context for our activities as regional representatives. The enlargement of the European Union increasingly requires that local and regional authorities across all states work together. The evolving relationship that Ireland has within the Union requires that EU legislation has to be developed with a better understanding of its impact on the local and regional levels and the people that we represent. It is therefore in our own interest that we take advantage of all opportunities to familiarise ourselves with how this legislation is formulated and seek to influence it where possible.

The work of the IRO in Brussels has greatly facilitated us in meeting these challenges and has ensured that we now have a better appreciation of the body of work, as well as a stronger and more effective presence in Europe. We encourage you to read this Activity Report to see the variety of work in which it has been involved over the last year.

We would like to thank our colleagues on the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions and the Association of Irish Regions for their assistance and co-operation during 2007. We also thank the staff of the IRO for the high quality services and supports that the office provides. Finally, we extend our gratitude to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for supporting the office and recognising its work.



Cllr. Seamus MURRAY
President
Irish Delegation, Committee of the Regions



Cllr. Rainsford HENDY
Cathaoirleach
Association of Irish Regions



1. Introduction

The Irish Regions Office (IRO) provides an EU policy and programme monitoring service which we work to ensure is reliable, responsive to the needs of our partners and has an added-value.

In 2007, we continued to consolidate our services. Our information services are widely used and now well established, the assistance we provide to authorities trying to source EU supports to develop projects is increasingly relied upon and our support service to the Irish members of the Committee of the Regions ensures that they play an active and informed role. We are now also increasingly being used to showcase the EU related activities of our local and regional partners in Brussels and also to give them a platform for highlighting the other valuable roles that they play. This report provides an overview of some of our activities in 2007.

I want to pay tribute to Mr. Eamon O'HARA for the input he made in his four years with the IRO and wish him well in his new post and to also thank our two student placements from the Louvain Institute for Ireland in Europe during 2007, Ms. Jessica ZUZIK and Ms. Katherine ZSCHARNAGK.

Looking ahead, all EU funded programmes for the 2007-2013 period are up and running and the IRO will play its role in raising awareness of the funding opportunities that will exist for local and regional authorities and also assist them in getting involved. In this regard, the IRO's dedicated EU funding tracker website will provide the latest information on relevant funding calls and our new EU Programmes Officer, Mr. Ronan GINGLES, will be available to provide dedicated support. 2008 will also see some significant policy discussions of relevance to Ireland, such as the EU Budget Review and its possible consequences for the financing of all EU policies, the challenging energy and climate change proposals and the continued implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. We will monitor these and report on relevant developments. Finally, we will continue to promote and represent Irish regions and local authorities in Brussels and be active in relevant high profile events.

We value the support of our colleagues at national, regional and local government in using the IRO's presence in Brussels to highlight the continuing contribution of Irish local and regional authorities within the EU and we look forward to working with, and for, them in the years ahead.



Robert COLLINS
Head of Office
Irish Regions Office



Irish Regions Office

2. EU Information – An Established Service

In 2007, the IRO consolidated the information service it provides to Regional Authorities, Regional Assemblies, their local authorities and other relevant partners. This has been achieved through a range of information tools, which strive to provide regular, timely, concise and targeted information:

2.1 IRO PUBLICATIONS

The monthly **EU News Bulletin** provides the latest information on (a) relevant policy developments; (b) funding calls and opportunities; (c) notice of European seminars and conferences; (d) key publications and studies; and (e) other items of news. While the IRO holds editorial responsibility for the EU News Bulletin, the co-operation arrangement with the IPA allows it to have an input in terms of content and circulation. In 2007, a total of 11 EU News Bulletins were produced and circulated, via e-mail, to all Regional Authorities, Regional Assemblies, local authorities and other relevant actors.



The **EU Policy Review** is a complementary publication to the EU News Bulletin and takes a more in-depth look at some priority policy developments. Editorial responsibility for the EU Policy Review is held by the IPA, with the IRO having an input on content, circulation and publication. A total of 6 EU Policy Reviews were produced in 2007.

Regular **Policy Briefings** provide more detailed information on key aspects of EU policy of particular relevance to the Irish regions and local authorities. During 2007 the IRO co-produced a discussion paper on Greener Energy Options, which was circulated at the Open Days event in October.

In 2007, the IRO continued its agreement to provide news items and information for publication in the bi-monthly **Council Review** journal's regular Euro Focus section. The IRO also contributes occasional articles to the Local Authority Journal. Both publications are circulated to all local/regional authority members and senior staff.



2.2 THE IRO WEBSITE

The website is an important tool in the IRO's effort to provide relevant and readily accessible EU information. In particular, the site includes: (i) a **News Service**, which is up-dated weekly and gives users the very latest information on policy, funding opportunities and other news items of interest to sub-national bodies in Ireland; (ii) a **Publications** section, which makes all IRO publications (see above) freely available to users; and (iii) an **EU Funding Tracker**, which provides information on EU funding calls and opportunities accessible directly from the European Commission and other intermediary bodies. The EU Funding Tracker service was refined and up-dated in 2007.



Irish Delegation Brochure: Minister Noel Treacy TD, Minister for European Affairs launches the Irish language version of the brochure on the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions, in March

3. EU Project Work – Facilitating Greater Involvement



Hosting the NWE INTERREG Programme: Mr. Stephen Blair, Director of the S&E Regional Assembly, chairs the NWE Monitoring Committee meeting in January.

To facilitate the involvement of Irish regions and their local authorities and other bodies in EU funded projects the IRO provided the following services:

3.1 IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSISTING PARTICIPATION IN EU PROJECTS

The IRO has facilitated a number of authorities in becoming involved in a range of EU funding proposals. This work involves a combination of attending meetings in Brussels on behalf of Irish partners, providing feedback on preparatory meetings, assisting in the bidding process and liaising with other regional offices and with the European Commission on proposals and evolving opportunities. The following are some examples of the activities undertaken in 2007:

Assisted *Kilkenny County Enterprise Board* in identifying and accessing information on EU funding opportunities of relevance to small and micro-enterprise. This information was being prepared for circulation to all the County and City Enterprise Boards in Ireland;

Assisted *Cavan County Enterprise Board* in identifying and accessing information on seed capital funding for small and micro-enterprises;

Assisted *Fingal County Council* in accessing EU funding for the establishment of a local energy agency;

Assisted *Carlow LEADER* to identify sources of EU funding for rural development initiatives;

Assisted *Dublin City Council* in accessing information on EU funding opportunities;

Assisted *Lionra* in accessing information on EU policy developments;

Assisted *Longford Equal Partnership* in accessing information on EU funding opportunities;

Assisted the *South West Regional Authority* and the *West Regional Authority* in participating in the Green Atlantic for Sustainable Development GASD project (maritime safety) under the EU INTERREG IIIB Atlantic Area programme;

The IRO also attended information events and disseminated information and follow-up reports on the following EU programmes: the Europe for Citizens programme; the EU LIFE+ Programme 2007-2013; the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme; and the EU Framework Programme for Competitiveness & Innovation.

3.2 IDENTIFYING PROJECT PARTNERS

The IRO also facilitated Irish authorities in finding suitable partners for European projects or other initiatives. This work draws on the extensive network of contacts established by the IRO in Brussels and with various regions across the EU.

3.3 FACILITATING PARTICIPATION IN EU FUNDED PROJECTS

The IRO is increasingly being used to directly assist in the implementation of projects and showcase the participation of its partners in EU funded projects. In this regard it:

1. acted as project partner on behalf of the Association of Irish Regions in the EUROTOOL project at various activities during 2007.
2. attended meetings of the REFORM project on behalf of the South-East Regional Authority (SERA) in Bucharest in June.
3. hosted and facilitated a joint meeting of two Regions of Knowledge (FP6) projects – REFORM and CRIPREDE on behalf of the SERA in April.
4. hosted a meeting of the INTERREG North West Europe Programme Monitoring Committee in January, on behalf of the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly.

EU Project Participation: Mr. Robert Collins speaks at the EUROTOOL project final conference in Valladolid in November.



4. EU Networking – Promoting the Regions and Building Alliances

In enabling Irish regions and local authorities to be better involved in EU policy making and project implementation, the IRO works to develop networks with other regions and also to raise the profile of the role and activities of sub-national bodies in Ireland in EU affairs.

4.1 ENHANCING LINKS WITH THE EU INSTITUTIONS

The IRO consolidated its working relations with **Irish MEPs** and continues to keep all MEPs informed of its activities and briefed on policy issues of strategic importance to the sub-national level in Ireland. The IRO is also fortunate to have the support of all Irish MEPs when arranging briefing meetings with visitor groups from Ireland.

In April, the IRO organised a meeting between representatives of the Dublin Regional Authority, Dublin local authorities and Dublin MEPs. An outcome from this meeting was a follow-up meeting between the four MEPs and Dublin local authority managers to discuss issues of mutual interest and strengthen links. It is now proposed to organise such a meeting on an annual basis.

The IRO has developed channels of communication with senior officials in key Directorates-General of the **European Commission**, in particular DG Regional Policy, DG Environment, DG Agriculture, DG Research and DG Transport and Energy. In 2007, the IRO also maintained its good links with the European Commission Representation in Dublin.

The IRO has worked to enhance its links with officials in the **Irish Permanent Representation to the EU** and to develop a good working relationship with officials in key policy areas, in order to better understand the Irish position in negotiations and highlight issues of relevance to the IRO's stakeholders.

Meeting with Dublin MEPs: Representatives from the Dublin Regional Authority and the local authorities meet with the Dublin MEPs in April



Open Days 2007: Cllr. Declan McDonnell and Cllr. Michael Fitzgerald attend the Celtic Connections reception at the office of the Northern Ireland Executive in October.

4.2 PROVIDING A REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE

During 2007, the IRO continued to play a representational role in Brussels. In this regard it:

1. hosted and met with a number of groups from other European regions and local authorities, including amongst others: Central Sweden, East Finland, Iceland and Merseyside.
2. made presentations to a number of study groups on various topics, including amongst others: the IBEC Regional Presidents Council and the North Belfast Partnership.
3. participated in various seminars and workshops organised by the European Commission and in events organised by other regional offices in Brussels.
4. attended meetings on behalf of Irish regions, such as the Energy Regio project for the BMW Regional Assembly and the European Cultural Tourism Network for the Midland Regional Authority.
5. continued to be a member of the informal Brussels based EPRO network (Environmental Platform of Regional Offices) and maintained informal links with other European associations of local and regional government (CPMR, AER).

Future of Europe: Speakers at the Irish Delegation to the CoR event were Minister Noel Treacy TD, Ms. Anne Barrington, National Forum on Europe, Cllr. Seamus Murray and Mr. Gerhard Stahl, Secretary-General of the CoR in March





Regions sign Structural Fund programmes: At the signing of the two regional Operational Programmes are Cllr. James Holloway (S&E), Commissioner Danuta Hubner, Minister Dick Roche TD and Cllr. James Deegan (BMW) in December.

Assisted the *South-East Regional Authority* in exhibiting information on their broadband projects at an information society event in Brussels

Assisted the *South West Regional Authority* in identifying EU speakers and contributors to events in Ireland

Facilitated collaboration between *Waterford Institute of Technology* and the University of South Bohemia, Czech Republic on the commercialisation of research and developing incubation units.

4.4 PARTICIPATION IN HIGH PROFILE EVENTS

The IRO was an active member of the Celtic Connections consortium of regions that participated in **Open Days 2007** in October. Open Days is a week-long series of seminars, exhibitions and events co-organised by the Committee of the Regions and DG REGIO, which attracts some 5,000 participants to Brussels to discuss regional policy actions.



Cross-Border Co-operation: Northern Ireland Minister Margaret Richie MLA talks with Cllr. Conal Kavanagh and Mr. Ivan Grimes from the S&E Regional Assembly and with the IRO staff in October.

4.3 FACILITATING INTER-REGIONAL CONTACTS

The location of the IRO in the heart of Brussels' EU quarter, where there are over 250 other regional offices, makes developing contacts and co-operation between Irish regions and regions in other Member States more straightforward. During 2007 the IRO:

Assisted the *Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly* in identifying EU speakers and contributors to events in Ireland

Assisted *Teagasc* in the organisation of a networking and information visit to Brussels;

Assisted the *South-East Regional Authority* and *Waterford Institute of Technology* in organising a dissemination event with EU partners in Brussels;

Assisted the *Dublin Regional Authority* in participating in a meeting of the PURPLE (peri-urban) network in Brussels

Assisted *Dublin City Council* in identifying relevant city and urban networks at EU level



South-East Regional Broadband: Staff from the South East Regional Authority showcase the SERPANT project at the Bridging the Broadband Gap Conference in May



Promoting Participation of the Regions: Mr. Tom Byrne, Director, South-East Regional Authority and Mr. Eamon O'Hara, IRO discuss the Authority's EU funded projects.

The Celtic Connections consortium included Wales, Scotland, South West UK, Northern Ireland, Brittany, Asturias and Norte in Portugal. Open Days provides an opportunity to profile Irish regions and their experiences with EU funds and programmes. The themes for the consortium’s activities were maritime policy and energy policy. The IRO co-ordinated the consortium’s energy seminar and co-produced a discussion paper ‘Greener Energy Options – through alternative sources and new technologies’, which was widely circulated. Also, Mr. Matthew KENNEDY, Sustainable Energy Ireland, made a presentation at the seminar, which was attended by over 130 people.

As a result of the Open Days collaboration, a number of the offices, under the co-ordination of the Scottish Government Brussels Office, organised **Celtic Cultural Connections**, a programme of events intended to showcase the rich cultural traditions of the Celtic regions. The IRO organised two events as part of this programme and used the opportunity to highlight the role that local authorities play in supporting the arts and culture in their areas. The two events were: ‘A Rough Guide to Flann O’Brien’s Comic Genius’, supported by Dublin City Council; and ‘Breaga – Award Winning Irish Musicians’, supported by Fingal County Council through the Seamus Ennis Centre.

The IRO participated in events marking the **400th anniversary of the Flight of the Earls** and the Louvain 400 celebrations. In response to a call from the Irish Embassy to extend the celebrations in Brussels, the IRO in cooperation with the NASC West of Ireland office organised and hosted a lecture and poetry readings on ‘Irish Bardic Poetry at the time of the Flight of the Earls’ in September.



Flight of the Earls: Ambassador Brian Nason officially opens the IRO-NASC event to mark the 400th Anniversary of the Flight of the Earls in September



Open Days: The IRO participated in Open Days 2007 in the Celtic Connections consortium



Celtic Connections: The Rough Guide to Flann O’Brien’s Comic Genius brought to Brussels by Dublin City Council and the Dublin Regional Authority and hosted by the IRO in November.

5. Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions

Enhancing the Work and Profile of the Irish Members

These activities are undertaken as part of the Irish Delegation secretariat, which is based in the Dublin Regional Authority. 2007 was a particularly busy year for the Delegation and it also saw the use of Irish, for the first time as an official working language at the CoR's Plenary sessions, when Cllr. Seamus MURRAY, President of the Irish Delegation addressed the Plenary session in February.

There were a number of other highlights:

5.1 INFLUENCING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Irish Delegation members were very active in influencing the content of certain CoR opinions during 2007. A number of members worked as rapporteurs, with assistance from the IRO, on the following:

- Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (Cllr. Maria CORRIGAN)
- The CAP Health Check (Cllr. Seamus MURRAY)
- The Contribution of Volunteering to Economic and Social Cohesion (Cllr. Declan McDONNELL)
- The Action Plan on Adult Learning (Cllr. Mary SHIELDS)

The IRO also assisted members in drafting and tabling a number of amendments for commission meetings and Plenary sessions and was directly involved in the negotiations on reaching agreement and compromises on amendments tabled.

The IRO assisted the Delegation in continuing its participation in a number of CoR policy initiatives, such as the Subsidiarity Monitoring Network and also encouraged the involvement of Irish regions in the Committee's Lisbon Monitoring Platform (LMP). As part of the LMP, the Committee held a series of Territorial Dialogues during 2007, at which Cllr. Connie HANNIFFY actively participated, as 1st Vice-President of the CoR's Economic and Social Policy Commission.

Territorial Dialogue on the Lisbon Strategy: Cllr. Connie Hanniffy discusses the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy with Commission Vice-President Gunter Verhuegen in February



Rome Plenary Session: Mr. Pat Cox and Cllr. Maria Corrigan at the special CoR Plenary session in Rome, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome in March

5.2 CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF ROME

The CoR celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome by holding a special plenary session in Rome in March, where it adopted its Declaration for Europe, setting out a vision for the future of the European Union.

Following the Rome meeting, the Irish Delegation hosted a meeting in Ireland on the future of Europe in the context of the 50th anniversary celebrations, with Minister for European Affairs, Noel TREACY TD, Ms. Anne BARRINGTON, Director of the National Forum on Europe and Mr. Gerhard STAHL, Secretary-General of the CoR. This was attended by representatives of the regions and formed part of the CoR's actions under Plan D, on better communicating Europe.

5.3 BRIEFING IRISH MEMBERS

The IRO, in conjunction with the Dublin-based officer, provides Irish members with briefing documents, and speaking points when necessary, for all CoR Plenary sessions, Bureau meetings and commission meetings. During the year this resulted in approximately **50 briefings** being produced for the Irish members to the CoR.

The IRO also supports Irish members who represent the CoR on various committees, such as Cllr. Declan McDONNELL's participation on the CoR-Congress of Europe contact group.

5.4 ENHANCED CONTACT WITH THE IRISH PERMANENT REPRESENTATION

The IRO acts as the point of contact between the Irish Delegation and the Irish Permanent Representation to the EU. In 2007, the system of briefings for members was enhanced, with a series of oral and written briefings by Representation officials. This is supplemented by on-going contacts between the IRO and key officials in the Representation and also by meetings, facilitated by the IRO, between individual members and officials. In November, the Delegation had its annual meeting with Ambassador Bobby McDONAGH at the IRO office, where priority issues were discussed and members had an opportunity to raise issues for future consideration.

In September, as part of on-going efforts by the CoR to enhance its contacts with the Council and Permanent Representations both Cllr. MURRAY and Ambassador McDONAGH attended a meeting of the EU Ambassadors and National Delegation Presidents to explore avenues for future co-operation.

Meeting with Ambassador: Ireland's Permanent Representative to the European Union, Mr. Bobby McDonagh, seen here with Cllr. Seamus Murray, briefs the Irish members to the CoR in November.



Future of Europe: Cllr. Jacqui McConville, Cllr. Connie Hanniffy and Cllr. Patrick McGowan at the Irish Delegation to the CoR's Future of Europe seminar in Athlone in March

5.5 ENHANCED LINKS BETWEEN THE IRISH AND UK DELEGATIONS

The IRO facilitated a joint meeting between the Irish and UK Delegations, which took place in Belfast in December. This was the second such meeting of the two delegations, with Irish and UK members of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE) also attending. The meeting allowed members to forge closer links and to also discuss ways to make their work on the Committee more effective.

5.6 SUPPLEMENTING THE WORK OF THE DUBLIN-BASED SECRETARIAT

As well as the services it provides to CoR members directly in Brussels, the IRO also supplements the support services provided to members by the Dublin office. The Dublin office assists Cllr. Seamus MURRAY, who represents the Irish Delegation at the National Forum on Europe. It also organises and prepares the seven delegation meetings held in Ireland each year and administers the working agreement between the Irish Delegation and the Association of Irish Regions on receiving input and comments on CoR draft opinions and providing policy and administrative support to the members.

The Irish Regions Office – functions

The IRO acts as the Brussels contact point for the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions and provides briefing and support services to members, in conjunction with the Dublin Regional Authority, as the Irish Delegation Secretariat.

In supporting the regions, the IRO works through the Association of Irish Regions and has direct links with local and regional government structures in Ireland and their partners. In this role the IRO has agreed working arrangements with other relevant organisations.

THE IRISH DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS



Ireland has nine members and nine alternate members on the Committee of the Regions. These members are nominated by the Government, on a recommendation of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. This nomination takes into account geographical and gender considerations and all members and alternate members must hold an electoral mandate. All Irish members are also automatically members of their Regional Authority.

Members	Alternate Members
<p>Cllr. Seamus MURRAY (President of Irish Delegation) Meath County Council Mid-East Regional Authority S&E Regional Assembly</p> <p>Cllr. Cathal CROWE Clare County Council Mid-West Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Michael FITZGERALD South Tipperary County Council South-East Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Constance HANNIFFY Offaly County Council Midland Regional Authority BMW Regional Assembly</p> <p>Cllr. Denis LANDY South Tipperary County Council South-East Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Declan McDONNELL Galway City Council West Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Patrick McGOWAN Donegal County Council Border Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Paul O'DONOGHUE Kerry County Council South-West Regional Authority S&E Regional Assembly</p>	<p>Cllr. Terry BRENNAN Louth County Council Border Regional Authority BMW Regional Assembly</p> <p>Cllr. Veronica CAWLEY Sligo County Council Border Regional Authority BMW Regional Assembly</p> <p>Cllr. Peter COYLE Fingal County Council</p> <p>Cllr. Pat DORAN Wicklow County Council</p> <p>Cllr. Michelle MULHERIN Mayo County Council</p> <p>Cllr. John PENDER Carlow County Council</p> <p>Cllr. Noreen RYAN Limerick County Council</p> <p>Cllr. Mary SHIELDS Cork City Council South-West Regional Authority</p> <p>Cllr. Barney STEELE Longford County Council</p>

THE ASSOCIATION OF IRISH REGIONS



The Association of Irish Regions (AIR) is the national representative organisation of the eight Regional Authorities and the two Regional Assemblies in Ireland. The AIR is composed of the Cathaoirligh, previous Cathaoirligh and Directors of the Regional Authorities and Regional Assemblies. Cllr. Rainsford HENDY is the current Cathaoirleach of the AIR, with Mr. Gerry FINN being the Honorary Secretary.

Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. James DEEGAN**

Member: Cllr. Terry BRENNAN

Director: Mr. Gerry Finn

Border Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Gerry CRAWFORD**

Member: Cllr. Danny BRADY

Director: Mr. Matt Donnelly

Mid-East Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Paul KELLY**

Director: Mr. John Byrne

Mid-West Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Lily WALLACE**

Member: Cllr. Eddie WADE

Director: Mr. Liam Conneally

South West Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. John MULVIHILL**

Member: Cllr. Michael CONNOR-SCARTEEN

Director: Mr. John McAleer

Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Conal KAVANAGH**

Member: Cllr. Rainsford HENDY

Director: Mr. Stephen Blair

Dublin Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Bronwen MAHER**

Member: Cllr. Gerry HORKAN

Director: Ms. Patricia Potter

Midland Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Joseph FLANAGAN**

Member: Cllr. Mark NUGENT

Director: Mr. Jim Stone

South-East Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Paddy O'CALLAGHAN**

Director: Mr. Tom Byrne

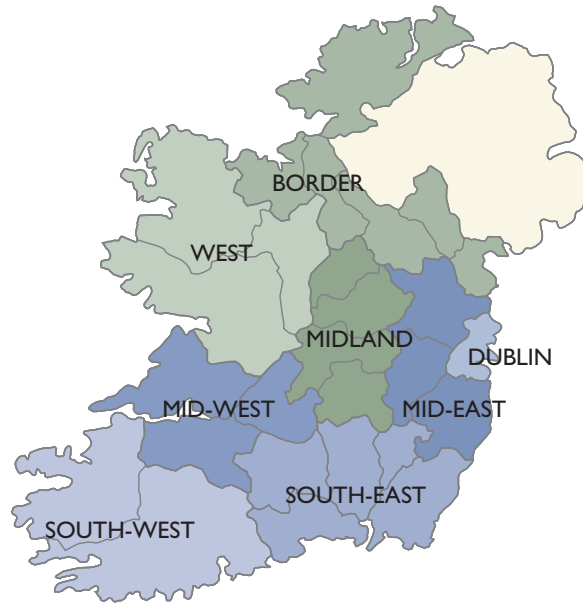
West Regional Authority

Cathaoirleach: **Cllr. Eugene LAVIN**

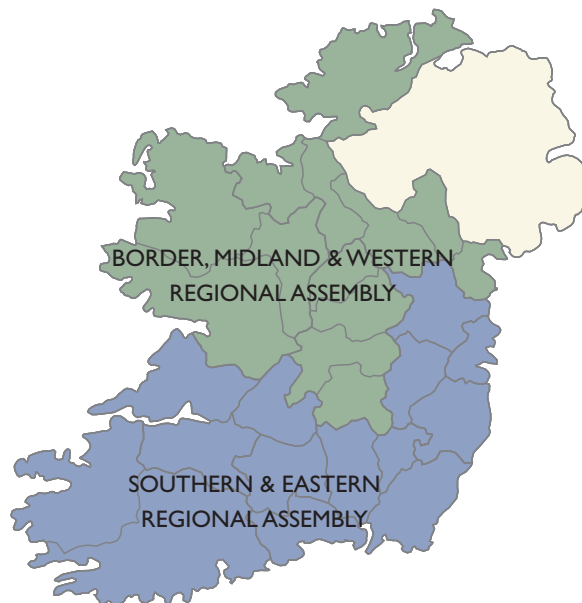
Member: Cllr. Padraic CONNEELY

Director: Mr. Jim McGovern

NUTS III REGIONS



NUTS II REGIONS





Irish Regions Office - Brussels

The Irish Regions Office (IRO) was established in May 2000 as a Brussels-based resource for the Irish members of the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Regional Authorities, Regional Assemblies and local authorities. Its key functions are:

- To support the members of the Irish Delegation to the Committee of the Regions;
- To provide an EU information service to Irish regions and their constituent local authorities;
- To increase the opportunity for these authorities to participate in EU policy debates and project implementation;
- To improve the profile of Irish sub-national authorities in Brussels.

This report provides an overview of the IRO's activities in 2007 and outlines the contribution the office makes to the work of the regions, local authorities and other partners, located in the Irish regions.

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