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Territorial dimension in Integrated Territorial Development Strategies: Insights from Ireland

Warsaw

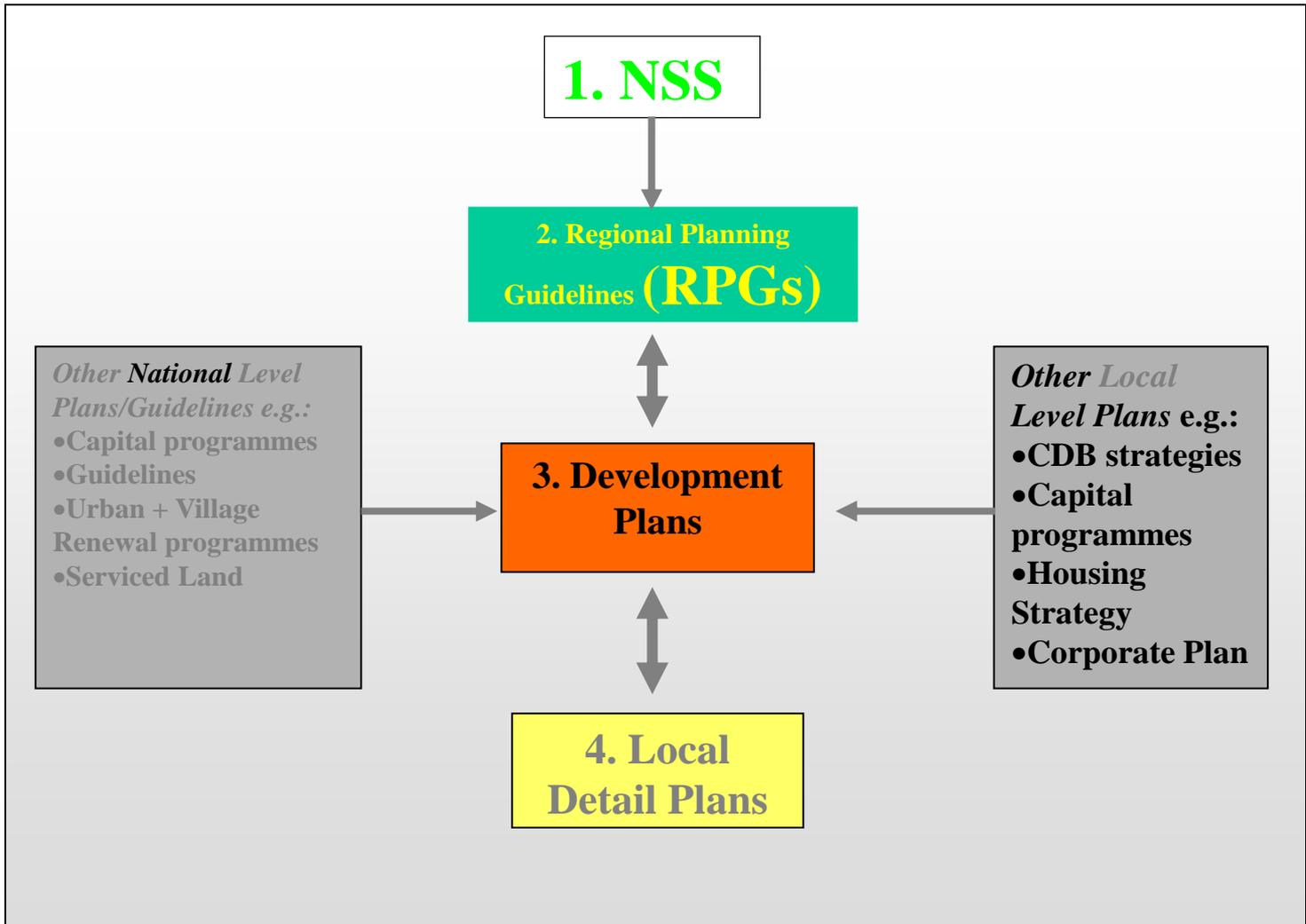
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Dr. Cian O' Callaghan



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Planning policy structure in Ireland



Need for NSS

- Increased growth during the 1980's which accelerated in the 1990's
 - Unemployment rates fell from 14% in 1994 to less than 4% in 2000
 - Numbers at work rose from 1 million in 1990 to 1,500,000 in 2000
 - Population rose quickly
- Greater Dublin Area (1.6million) experienced highest growth, but also housing shortages, traffic congestion,
- Many rural areas suffered from decline
- Number of reports carried out supported the need for strategic, national spatial frameworks
- Need for NSS mandated by Government in the National Development Plan 2000-2006



Key spatial policies of the NSS

- More balanced regional development
 - More efficient greater Dublin - vital national role
 - Seeks to maximise development potential through accelerated development at strategic locations (9 gateways and 9 supporting hubs)
 - Harnessing potential of different places
 - Framework of co-ordinating local planning (population targets/ for region, gateway/ hubs)
- Importance of new relationship between urban and rural areas
- All policies to promote sustainable forms of development e.g. compact city
- NSS to be supported by national transport, energy and communications framework

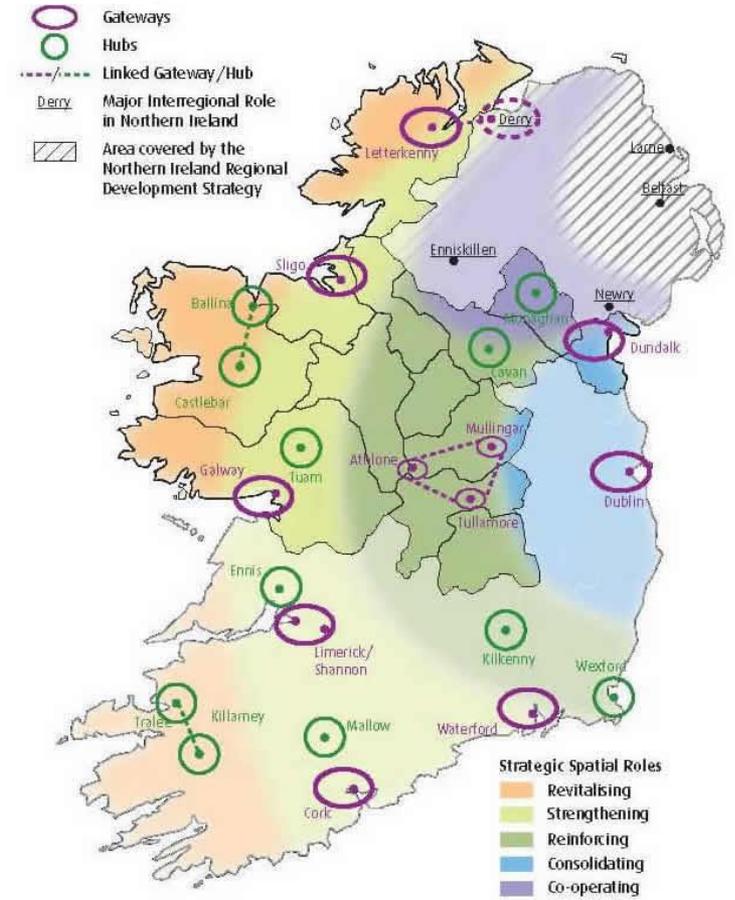
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Shortcomings of Implementing the NSS

- NSS aimed to create a strong polycentric urban national framework, but political pressures saw too many areas selected for growth.
- NSS was further undermined by excessive zoning and planning permissions given at local level.
- Lack of joined up planning.
- Tax incentive schemes rolled out by Department of Finance did not link into objectives of NSS.
- NSS is a growth oriented strategy - Post crash, this system has now left Ireland with a 'growth agenda without growth' (Raco, 2009).





The current context

- Contributing factor to current housing crisis is failure of planning system to shape development trends at a strategic level
- Need for enhanced level of oversight at national and regional levels – assess applications against need for development
- Enhanced role of Regional Authorities to oversee implementation of Regional Planning Guidelines.
- Need to be able to measure the ‘added value’ of spatial planning

Key Challenges to Territorial Dimension

- Planning for a period of stagnating growth.
- How to make best use of decreased budgets for infrastructure projects.
- Ensuring poly-centric development
- To make territorial information collection and analysis better coordinated.
- To develop indicators and monitoring tools that are easy to use. These should not only be used to benchmark territorial trends, but used intuitively by planners and policy makers to better understand their area.
- To plan effectively for the cross-border context. Key challenge is to prepare flexible development strategies tuned to functional territories, rather than more traditional “comprehensive” plans confined by administrative boundaries.
- Lack of territorial emphasis in sectoral policies (such as economic development strategies).
- Need to move away from ‘value for money’ understanding of planning. Need to show ‘added value’ of planning more holistically.
- Need to take into account the political dimension. Need to be a better dialogue between politicians and planners.

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How can these challenges be addressed by learning from ESPON?

- Learning from applied ESPON research in Ireland – such as CAEE project on Agglomeration economies in Dublin region.
- Using indicators and monitoring broad trends – Using indicators to see how Ireland fits into what's happening in Europe. Learning from methodologies for best practice in developing indicators.
- Learn from experience of planning for cross-border regions.
- Using ESPON results reflexively to allow people working in region to get from them the key lesson and key story of THEIR region.