



Border, Midland & Western
Regional Assembly
Investing in Your Future

Comhthionól Réigiún na Teorann
Lár Tíre agus an Iartar
Ag Infheistiú i do Thodhchaí

Press Release

Gateways Development Report Launched

A new report on the development of the nine National Spatial Strategy Gateways was presented at the Annual Conference of the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly in Roscommon today. The Gateway Development Index report had been prepared in close co-operation with the Spatial Planning Unit within the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

The Gateway Development Index which was commissioned by the Border, Midland and Western (BMW) and Southern and Eastern (S&E) Regional Assemblies, will measure the extent to which the designated gateways are progressing as drivers of regional economic development. The index takes account of the current level of development and trends across a common framework of key indicators which include population, enterprise, environment, economic, employment and social factors. A public awareness survey was also conducted to capture residents' views of the quality of life and the impact of Gateway designation in each Gateway city/town.

Welcoming the publication of the report, Mr. Gerry Finn, Director of the BMW Regional Assembly stated that the Gateway Development Index will form a valuable policy analysis tool to evaluate the impact of investment in the Gateways and will identify areas that require further development. Mr. Finn stated that the first findings of the index study broadly correlate with expectations as to how each Gateway and its commuting catchment is performing across a range of selected indicators. He stated that the Gateway Index was a proven mechanism for measuring Gateway performance and that it should be widely used to monitor the impacts of public policies across Government.

Mr. Stephen Blair, Director of the S&E Regional Assembly stated that the Gateway Development Index was the first such assessment of its kind in Ireland focusing solely on the effectiveness of the country's regional development strategy in the context of Gateways as

drivers of their regional economies. He further stated that it is widely recognised that regions must be dynamic and attractive in order to win investment and sustain high value economic activity. Achieving a critical mass of human capital, underpinned by high quality infrastructure and a favourable business environment is necessary if gateways are to fulfil their prescribed roles.

The main objective of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published in 2002 is to achieve more balanced and sustainable regional development in Ireland by delivering a better quality of life for everyone, which includes the delivery of vibrant urban and rural areas and an improved environment. Under the NSS, Gateway cities and towns are identified as key catalysts to stimulate regional growth in different regions, whereas strategically placed hubs are charged with driving development in their catchment areas while also supporting the activities of gateway cities. The Gateway Development Index evaluates the impact of investment in the gateway cities under the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs) for the period 2007-2013.

The project was managed by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from the two Regional Assemblies and the Spatial Policy Unit of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The index was constructed by a consultancy team led by Fitzpatrick Associates. The domains and indicators used were identified at national and regional workshops held during 2008. The Gateway Development Index will be re-produced in 2010 and 2013. The compilation of the index study was co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

.../ENDS

For further information contact:

Mr. Gerry Finn, Director, BMW Regional Assembly Tel: 087 6370207

Mr. Stephen Blair, Director, S&E Regional Assembly Tel: 087 6481599

Editors Note:

BMW Region Gateways: Dundalk, Galway, Letterkenny, Midland and Sligo.

S&E Region Gateways: Cork, Dublin, Limerick/Shannon and Waterford

This report is available for download from the Assemblies' Website:

www.bmwassembly.ie or www.seregassembly.ie



Ireland's EU Structural Funds
Programmes 2007 - 2013

Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union

An Chearnóg, Bealach an Doirín, Co. Ros Comáin

Tel: 00353 94 9862970 Facs: 00353 94 9862973 R-phost: info@bmwassembly.ie Gréasán: www.bmwassembly.ie

The Square, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon

Tel: 00353 94 9862970 Fax: 00353 94 9862973 Email: info@bmwassembly.ie Web: www.bmwassembly.ie

