Meeting local needs: priorities for planning, housing and economic development

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Western Development Commission (WDC)

- 7 county Western Region
- State body – Department of Rural and Community Development
- WDC Act 1998
  ‘...foster and promote the economic and social development of the Western Region’
WDC – What we do

- Inform policy-making through analysis of Region’s issues & needs (e.g. infrastructure, labour market)

- Promotion – www.lookwest.ie

- Development of region’s resources e.g. Creative sector, Tourism, Renewable energy

- WDC Investment Fund – Risk capital to SMEs
Meeting Local Needs: Priorities for Planning, Housing & Economic Development - Travel to Work Analysis

- WDC report 2018 – Census 2016 POWCSAR data
- Travel to work patterns in pop. centres in Western Region greater than 1,000
- Profile of Labour catchments in 7 principal county towns; Galway, Sligo, Ennis, Letterkenny, Castlebar, Roscommon, Carrick-on-Shannon
- Insight into labour catchments in smaller centers in West; 42 labour catchments in total
The 7 principal catchments have a significantly larger labour supply available than Census town population (up to 4.6 times) – a more accurate measure of labour supply – centres for employment growth.

The numbers of resident workers in Region increased by 5.9% in last 10 years.

No. of resident workers in 7 labour catchments increased by 6.8%.

Project Ireland 2014 – population increase requires jobs growth. Issues for RSES – how to align population, housing and employment growth.
Key findings II: Travel to Work Report 2018

- Rural Employment important (centres less than 1,000) – Over one-fifth are employed in rural areas.

- Rural dwellers a key element of labour supply of FDI – *WDC Policy briefing No. 6*. Over ¼ of rural dwellers commuting to work in Galway city work in IDA business parks in East of Galway city.

- Sectoral profile
Figure 4.6: Industry Profile of those living in the Sligo Town Labour Catchment, 2016 (Source: AIRO & CSO POWCAR)

Sectoral employment in Sligo Town L. C.

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 1.1, 1.0
- Manufacturing Industries*: 4.2, 5.2
- Construction: 2.8, 1.9
- ICT and Professional Services**: 25.7, 24.9
- Public Administration and Defence: 20.3, 10.7
- Education, Human Health and Social Work: 6.0, 8.8
- Other Service Activities: 4.3, 4.5

Not Stated: 1.0

* Including agriculture
** Including construction
Figure 9.6: Industry Profile of those living in the Roscommon Town Labour Catchment, 2016 (Source: AIRO & CSO POWCAR)
Policy Implications - WDC Submission to RSES

- The 5 cities serve the East, South, Mid-West & West.... driving development in their regions.

- The North West needs a stronger urban centre, Brexit an additional challenge. Sligo & Letterkenny.

- Importance of intra-regional commuting – improvements in key parts of transport network e.g. Ennis/Shannon/Galway labour catchments and Letterkenny/Derry & Inishowen Peninsula

- Role of other towns – smaller towns in a largely rural Western Region perform functions of larger towns or cities in other regions.
Some other considerations

- Types of work – Self-employment (higher rates in WR), e-working, gig economy, contract work

- Is policy effective? UK Research - Policy can effectively influence the location of FDI in favour of the north of England.

*Scale important*

- Size: Not all centres can or should compete for very large scale investments.

- Smaller centres successful attracting FDI too. And Dublin competed successfully when it was much smaller

- Analysis of smaller labour catchments will provide further insights
Thank You

Q&A

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