



**THE ASSOCIATION OF IRISH
REGIONS' ANNUAL TRAINING
SEMINAR 2024**

REGIONS IN FOCUS

**IRISH REGIONS: BUILDING CAPACITY TO
ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF A CHANGING
IRELAND**

**February
7th-8th
2024**

Fitzgerald's Woodlands
House Hotel & Spa,
Co. Limerick
V94 F1P9

Moderator:

**Olivia O'Leary- journalist,
writer and current affairs
presenter**



**Tionól Réigiúnach
an Deiscirt**

**Southern Regional
Assembly**



**Tionól Réigiúnach
Tuaiscirt & Iarthair
Northern & Western
Regional Assembly**



**Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre
Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly**



**Cumann Réigiún na hÉireann
Association of Irish Regions**

Wednesday 7th February 2024

Registration starts at 10:00 followed by Lunch at 12:30

13.30-14.00: Opening address- Cllr. Dermot Lacey, Cathaoirleach of the
Association of Irish Regions

**Session 1 at 14:00: The important, and sometimes misunderstood Role of
Regional Assembly Members**

The role and challenges facing Councillors has been discussed in various fora recently in anticipation of the 2024 local elections. The focus of this session is to examine an important element of this debate – the statutory Role of Members of the Regional Assembly.

Speakers

- David Kelly, Director of the Southern Regional Assembly
- Clare Bannon, Acting Director of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

Panelists

- Denis Kelly, Director Northern and Western Regional Assembly
- Ann Marie O'Connor, Deputy Regulator at the Office of the Planning Regulator
- Cllr. John Sheahan, Southern Regional Assembly, Cllr. David Healy, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly and Cllr. David Maxwell, Northern and Western Regional Assembly

16:00- 16:15 Tea/Coffee break

Session 2 at 16:20: Overview of EU Funding Opportunities in the Regions and Irish Regions European Office update

Followed by Q&A

Speakers:

- Brendan Mooney, Northern and Western Regional Assembly
- Teresa Lennon, Irish Regions European Office

Networking Buffet at 18:30

Take the opportunity to network with fellow Elected Representatives and Assembly Staff. Hosted by Councillor Gerald Mitchell Mayor of the City and County of Limerick

Thursday 8th February 2024

Registration from 8:45 - 9:30

9:30-9:45: *Opening address-* Olivia O’Leary, Moderator

**Session 1 at 9:45: Regional Government in
Ireland**

The Role of the Regional Government in Ireland is ever evolving. This panel will discuss how well is the work and benefits of the Regional Tier of Government known and how well it is performing.

Opening address by Minister Norma Foley TD

Application of the European Charter of Local Self Government in Ireland in 2023.

Panel Discussion and Q&A

Speakers:

- Minister Norma Foley TD, Minister for Education
- Dr. Vladimir Prebilič, Member of Council of Europe’s Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE)

Panelists:

- Dr Sean O’Riordáin, Independent public policy consultant
- Cllr. Kate Feeney, Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

11:15- 11:40 Tea/Coffee break

Session 2 at 11:40: European experience of Regions

It is important to benchmark one's progress therefore this panel will look at examples of how well other regions in Europe are performing and building the capacity of their regions to ensure there is balanced and effective regional development.

Panel Discussion and Q&A.

Speakers:

- Roger Buch, Professor in Political Science on Danish School of Media and Journalism
- Peter Austin, Planning Adviser, Urban Development Department, City of Oslo

Panelists:

- Dr Frank Crowley, Associate Professor in Economics, UCC
- Cllr. Kieran McCarthy, Lord Mayor of Cork City

13:15-14:15 Lunch

Session 3 at 14:15: Potential and opportunity for Irish Regions

It's time to look to the future, having explored the role of the regions and looked at case studies of how other regions are structured, the final panel of the day will look at Potential and opportunity for Irish Regions

Panel Discussion and Q&A

Speakers:

- Kevin Lynch, Assistant Director, Southern Regional Assembly
- Michael Flood, Policy Analyst, OECD
- Dr Carla Kayanan, Assistant Lecturer, Maynooth University

Panelists:

- Karen Kenny, Senior Advisor, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Cllr. Orla Leyden, Northern and Western Regional Assembly Member
- Professor Vincent Cunnane, President of Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)

**Dinner and Keynote Speech by Minister of State,
Jack Chambers TD at 18:30**

**THRIVE (Town Centre First Heritage Revival Scheme) launch
and photo call with Minister of State Kieran O'Donnell TD at 20:00**

Speakers and Panelists



Olivia O'Leary (Moderator) is a journalist, writer and current affairs presenter.



Cllr. Dermot Lacey is Cathaoirleach of the Association of Irish Regions.

Speakers and Panelists



Minister Norma Foley TD was appointed Minister for Education in June 2020.



Minister Jack Chambers TD is Minister of State, attending Cabinet, in the Department of Transport and the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications.

Speakers and Panelists



David Kelly is Director of the Southern Regional Assembly.



Clare Bannon is the Acting Director at the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

Speakers and Panelists



Denis Kelly is Director at the Northern and Western Regional Assembly.



Anne Marie O'Connor is the Deputy Regulator at the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR).

Speakers and Panelists



Cllr. John Sheahan is an Assembly Member with the Southern Regional Assembly.



Brendan Mooney has over a decade of experience working with European Regional Development Funds. Brendan has worked as both Auditor and National Contact Point to several ETC Programmes and has for the last year been acting in the Assistant Director's role.

Speakers and Panelists



Teresa Lennon is the Head of the Irish Regions European Office in Brussels and the National Coordinator to the Irish Delegation to the EU Committee of the Regions.



Cllr. Gerald Mitchell is the Mayor of the City and County of Limerick.

Speakers and Panelists



Dr. Vladimir Prebilič serves as an associate professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana. He is the head of the delegation of the Republic of Slovenia in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.



Dr. Seán O Riordáin is an independent public policy consultant with over 30 years experience. He has advised on both local and national policy in Ireland.

Speakers and Panelists



Cllr. Kate Feeney is an Assembly Member with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.



Roger Buch is professor in Political Science at the Danish School of Media and Journalism.

Speakers and Panelists



Peter Austin is a Planning Adviser at the Urban Development Department, City of Oslo.



Dr. Frank Crowley is Associate Professor in Economics, Cork University Business School, University College Cork.

Speakers and Panelists



Cllr. Kieran McCarthy is Lord Mayor of Cork and Assembly Member of the Southern Regional Assembly.



Kevin Lynch is Assistant Director at the Southern Regional Assembly with responsibility for the development and implementation of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

Speakers and Panelists



Michael Flood is a Policy Analyst at the OECD Centre of Entrepreneurship, SME's, Regions and Cities.



Dr. Carla Kayanan is an assistant lecturer at Maynooth University with joint appointments in the Social Sciences Institute and the Department of Geography.

Speakers and Panelists



Karen Kenny is a Senior Adviser in the National, Regional and Urban Planning Policy section at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.



Cllr. David Healy is an Assembly Member with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly.

Speakers and Panelists



Cllr. David Maxwell is an Assembly Member with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly.



Cllr. Orla Leyden is an Assembly Member with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly.

Speakers and Panelists



Professor Vincent Cunnane became the inaugural President of Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest on the 1st October this year.



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