

Planning for an island of 8 million people

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Public Management in Ireland

Critics might suggest...

- Many features remain embedded upon 19th century configurations...Education, local government, policing and justice
- Rural driven policy or a lack of?
- On-going management re-configuration but limited structural change
- Highly disaggregated with limited co-governance and interface between thematic policy and spatial development
- Under developed systems of accountability based upon policy outcome transparency
- Concealed Administration

Ireland in the coming times (1)

- From 3.2 million to 6.5 million: 1980 to 2050
- Island to hit 8.5 million people 200 years after famine?!!!
- Means a Limerick and environs every year for the next 35 years!
- Where do we put them?
- How to set political/administrative priorities for the next 20-35 years

Ireland in the coming times (2)

- Planning for the 4th Industrial Revolution?
- Aging society or fully engaged society?
- Artificial intelligence, robotics and the interface between the two in a public service environment
- The internet of things and the advancing of 3D Printing
- Skills, new or renewed?
- To include the capacity to solve complex problems, people management, human factors and the interface with technology, sustaining quality services that are people centred, creativity and active listening

Public Administration on the island

- Need to have rural and urban competences underpinned by 21st century structures?
- Need for separate Gateway institutional settings?
- Cross border corridor development in light of a Brexit?
- Lack of an informed debate to date
- Absence of economic analysis in institutional reform
- Citizen centred service delivery
- Performance and management
- Leadership and transition

Public Administration- In other countries

- Need to treat with caution but useful as learning platforms
- Focus on spatial delivery the norm
- Iterative/co-governance models
- Citizen centred services locally organised through democratically accountable and responsible bodies
- Variations within states for sub national/regional governance
- Multi annual compacts
- Service standards and evaluation

Spatial planning in Ireland

- The National Spatial Strategy
- ...some successes but...
- Limited embedding into national policy perspective
 - Timing of the Strategy with national infrastructure delivery?
 - Challenge of national development plan/exchequer finance process integration
 - Limited cohesion with the local government reform process
- ...but still an over riding need for long-term spatial perspective in Ireland...due to renewed growth

On-going Challenges

- Population spread across the island of Ireland?
- Civic engagement and participation
- Adequate/uneven evidence base
- Understanding intangible features of identity into a rigorous policy framework
- Integration of spatial planning with the management of the environment in a growing economy
- Competing demands of an urbanised state and rural development
- Need for tools to allow for proper policy development

Public Service reform across the Globe

- Change the only constant...
- Internal competences and skills
- Re-characterisation of the skills profile of the public servant
- Oversight and scrutiny
- Balancing efficiency and effectiveness with democracy
- Function versus theme
- Localisation versus national direction

Conclusions and key messages

- A robust and substantive debate about what Ireland is to look like in 2035/2050 is now required
- What role for local government?
- Where is the scope for independent regional dynamics
- Cities to become more effective drivers of regional economies
- Rural development focused on rural communities
- Gateway cities also need more financial autonomy
- Start a full and frank debate on how the public management system and political institutions should be re-configured