

Roscommon County Development Board

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Balancing the Future of the West

Dublin and the East of Ireland about to Burst

This is the issue that was discussed at the Roscommon County Development Boards conference on **Tuesday November 28th in the Abbey Hotel, Roscommon Town. David Mc Williams**, of the **Big Bite** addressed the conference lending his renowned wit and knowledge to the issues regarding how counties like Roscommon can better position themselves to attract new high-value industry and stimulate enterprise development.



Maps of population growth in Ireland since 1926 show that while the population has grown in the East of Ireland and Dublin, other counties further west are being squeezed out. We are in a situation now where Dublin is about to burst and a rebalancing act is required to protect the development of the west and its people.

It is often assumed that everyone wants the vision of development that has become synonymous with the Celtic Tiger economy. A slice of the rapid economic growth leads to calls at local level for inward investment, multinational companies, population growth, motorways and boom. We in the West want more of the positive aspects of what is taking place in other parts of Ireland, particularly in the greater Dublin area. And what is wrong with that?



This is the key question addressed at the seminar 'Balancing the Future of the West?'

In county Roscommon (like some other counties) many of the indicators of development such as critical mass, innovation, age profile and infrastructure suggest that we face significant challenges in order to be able to participate in the Celtic Tiger economy.

Ireland's transition to a knowledge economy is part of national policy, are we able to take part in that? Issues discussed included What should we be focusing on at county and regional levels? What are our best options to secure balanced regional development, enhanced innovation and entrepreneurship?



Together with David Mc Williams the conference featured input from Mr. Gerry Finn of the BMW Regional Assembly; Dr. Helen McHenry of the Western Development Commission and Mr. Joe Saunders who has compiled a Job Creation Strategy For County Roscommon. This and other Roscommon County Development Board publications are available at www.roscommoncdb.ie

