

Teagasc Rural Towns Index

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Context

Context

- Small and Medium Towns
 - Towns outside of the cities with populations of 1500+
- Characterised by
 - Economic centres of activity
 - Commuting/Dormitory towns
- National Spatial Strategy and Development Plans → Low Focus

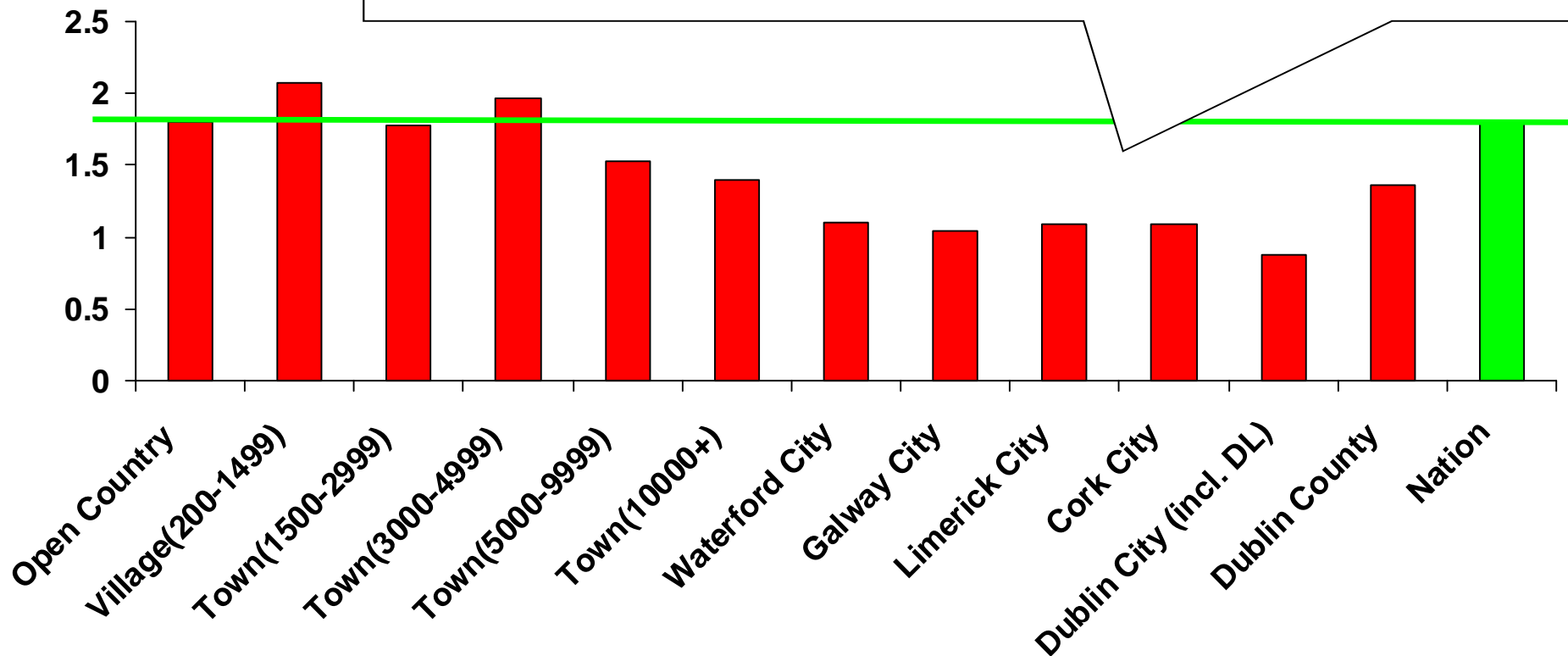
Population Share

Area Type	Population Share
Rural	29.4
Towns	34.8
Cities	35.7

Economic Crisis

Impact of the economic downturn on Unemployment Rate (% Change) – Type of Area

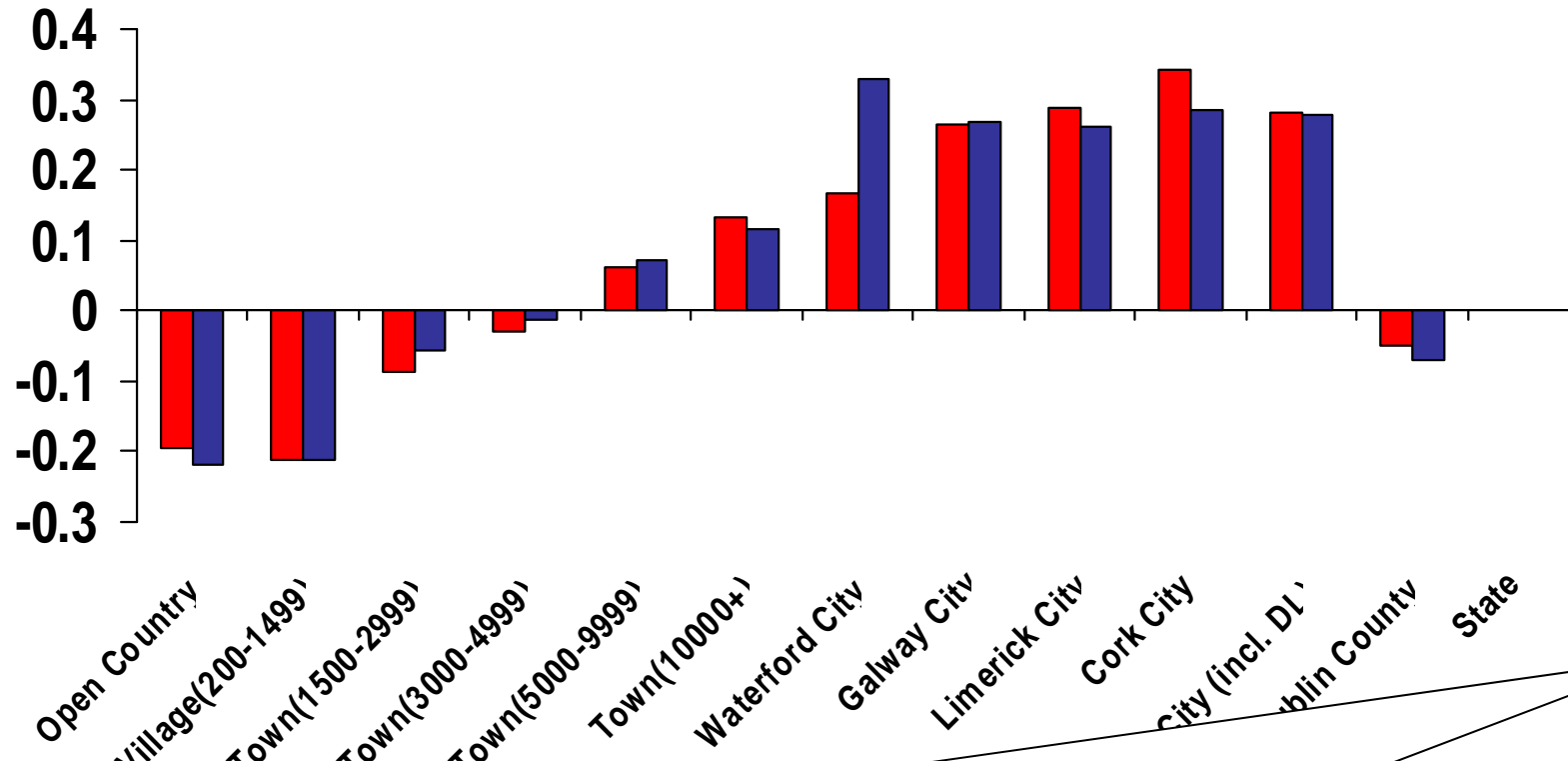
Small and Medium sized towns → biggest impact – change in unemployment



Consequence of Crisis

- Poverty rates are higher (10%) in small towns than cities (5%)
- One third of working age households have no one in work in small towns compared with under 20% in cities
- Spending has fallen faster in smaller towns than in urban areas as a consequence → vicious cycle, higher unemployment change results lower spending, which means more local shops close etc
- More vacant properties

Net Jobs Share 2006-2011 (Jobs-Employment Divided by Population over 15)



Jobs – where workers work; Employment – where workers live

- Net Jobs – Jobs minus number in employment

Towns 5000+ → more Jobs than Employed Residents

- Source of jobs for hinterland

Question – can balance shift between urban and rural or is it a given?

Situation complicated however

Rural Towns Index

Teagasc Rural Towns Index

- Focus on “Economic Strength”
 - Combination of Unemployment Rate and Net Migration Rate in 2011
 - Low Rank ~ Strong
 - High Rank ~ Weak
- Utilises CSO Small Area Population Statistics
- Focuses on towns and their hinterlands of more than 1500 inhabitants
 - Outsides Cities
 - Based upon districts, given spread of settlement patterns

Characteristics by Strength

National Average = 100

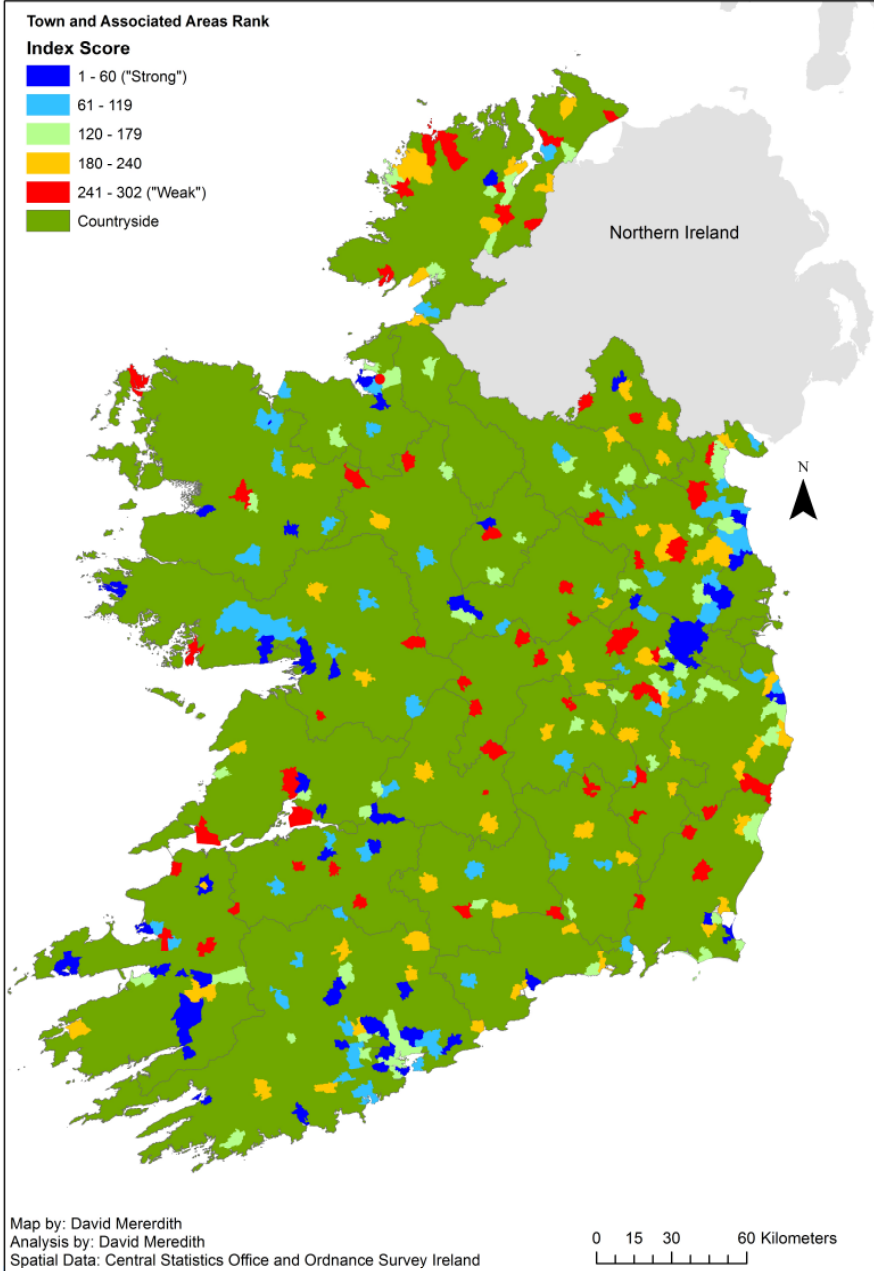
	Unempl oyment Rate	Depend ency Ratio	Tert Ed Share	Occ Housi ng	Distance to Closest Hub	Net Migrati on	Share of Net Jobs
Strongest	75	96	124	102	76	0.23	-420
2	90	101	102	99	85	0.05	-130
3	99	97	103	101	106	0.03	171
4	107	102	90	100	113	-0.02	142
Weakest	125	103	84	98	124	-0.04	577

Spatial Pattern

Midlands, SE and West highest share of “weakest” towns
 West, SW and East have highest share of “strongest” towns

	Strongest	2	3	4	5	Share of Population
Border	0.07	0.28	0.28	0.16	0.22	0.17
East	0.26	0.16	0.14	0.26	0.19	0.08
Midlands	0.07	0.16	0.24	0.11	0.42	0.1
Mid-West	0.23	0.16	0.1	0.27	0.24	0.12
SE	0.04	0.16	0.24	0.28	0.29	0.18
SW	0.27	0.23	0.29	0.17	0.04	0.16
West	0.31	0.29	0.02	0.11	0.28	0.17

Spatial Location



Average Index by County

County	Average of Index Rank
31 Sligo	105
18 Cork County	105
27 Galway County	106
19 Kerry	119
10 Louth	128
06 Kildare	133
32 Cavan	137
25 Waterford County	141
29 Mayo	143
09 Longford	149
21 Limerick County	151
11 Meath	152
28 Leitrim	152
13 Westmeath	164
07 Kilkenny	168
16 Clare	168
08 Laoighis	170
22 Tipperary North	180
14 Wexford	181
15 Wicklow	184
30 Roscommon	186
23 Tipperary South	209
33 Donegal	209
34 Monaghan	210
01 Carlow	236
12 Offaly	251

Summary

- Not necessarily an East-West Issue
 - East coast rural towns disproportionately affected by change in unemployment
 - Demographic profile and economic structure more pronounced in West
 - Similarity of issues in Limerick and Waterford Cities to Rural Areas
 - Complexity of issues → location specific
- Challenges
 - Short term job creation
 - Measures to facilitate entrepreneurship
 - Long term structural change
 - Enhance skills and infrastructure
 - Future role of small and medium towns

Thank You
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