What is a functional region?
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

THE CONCEPT

• A functional region is a territorial unit resulting from the organisation of social and economic relations in that its boundaries do not reflect geographical particularities or historical events. It is thus a functional sub-division of territories. The most typical concept used in defining a functional region is that of labour markets (source: OECD)

• A region is an area that is differentiated from other area according to certain criteria. In other words, an area having the homogeneity in terms of physical aspects, cultural aspects etc.

• Functional regions are often organized around a central point which is also called node.

• The concept of functional region provides a way to examine the linkages and flows that create interdependence among people.

• According to Fouberg, Murphy, and de Blij’s introductory textbook on human geography (eleventh edition), “a functional region is defined by a particular set of activities or interactions that occur within it.”

Source: https://www.quora.com
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

THE CONCEPT

• **Regions** are defined either as **homogeneous regions** that share certain characteristics, or as analytical or **functional regions** that are made up of places that are interdependent, or as administrative regions established to manage certain activities (Dunford, 2009).

• **Functional regions** are defined by their organizational structure. They are also called **nodal regions** because they usually **revolve around a focal center**, such as the downtown core of an urban region or the local service area surrounding a library or post office or shopping mall (Dunford, 2009).

• Functional regions are behaviorally based activity areas and although they too can be defined by outside observers, they are also active parts of everyday life in the empirical world (Dunford, 2009).

• The idea of the **functional region** captures the idea of a territory characterized by spatially related human activities (Tomaney, 2009).
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL LABOUR MARKETS

Source: (Tomaney, 2009)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGION

- From a morphological perspective, a town or urban settlement is defined as a compact built up area with a certain minimum concentration of population;
- From an administrative point of view, a town or urban municipality is defined as a territorial unit of local government that contains one or various urban settlements;
- Finally a functional criterion defines a town or urban centre as an urban settlement or urban municipality containing a concentration of jobs, services and other functions that serve other settlements in its hinterland, acting as the core of an urban (functional) region, which is a larger area that contains the urban centre and its hinterland, forming together a socio-spatial system integrated by functional inter-relations. (ESPON TOWN)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGION

[Map showing functional urban regions in Europe]

FUA population, 2006 (Functional Urban Areas)

- 500,000 - 1,000,000
- 250,000 - 500,000
- 100,000 - 250,000
- 50,000 - 100,000

No data
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?


Figure 3 – Gross Domestic Product per capita 2006 in the FUA delineation
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS – TRAVEL TIME

Average travel distances in Europe's functional urban areas.
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

This map does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ESPON Monitoring Committee.
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS - COMMUTING
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS - COMMUTING
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS – LABOUR MARKETS
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS – LABOUR MARKETS

Source: (ESPON)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS - COMMUTING

Map 10 Catchment areas (dot density) of major workplace locations, 2011

Urban Area (Daytime working population)
- Dublin city and suburbs (469,867)
- Cork city and suburbs (22,150)
- Galway city and suburbs (41,402)
- Limerick city and suburbs (40,464)
- Waterford city and suburbs (23,332)

https://twitter.com/2ha_magazine/status/847054488951275521
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS - COMMUTING

WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL URBAN REGIONS - COMMUTING

Source: (ESPON)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS AND SPATIAL PLANNING

Source: (ESPON)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS – CROSS-BORDER COMMUTING

Cross-Border Commuting (n°)

- < 1,000
- 1,000 - 5,000
- 5,000 - 10,000
- 10,000 - 50,000
- > 50,000

Source: (Nerb, et al, 2009)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS – CROSS-BORDER COMMUTING

Map 26 Origin and destination of cross-border commuters from Ireland to work or study in Northern Ireland

https://www.slideshare.net/JustinGleeson/npf-the-state-of-play-derrylondonderry-presentation
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

FUNCTIONAL REGIONS – CROSS-BORDER COMMUTING

Flow of cross-border commuters

Source: (mot)
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

POTENTIAL CROSS-BORDER FUNCTIONAL REGIONS
WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL REGION?

THANKS FOR WATCHING

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