

<b>Institution: University of the West of Scotland (UWS)</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 19</b>
<b>Title of case study: Restructuring of regional economic development agencies.</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Research by the Regional Studies Research Group at UWS on the role and achievements of regional development agencies (RDA) across Europe led to the concept of a model RDA. The model demonstrates that future performance of RDAs needs to be underpinned by good collaborative working relationships with private sector clients and also targeted interaction with providers of business services and public knowledge institutions such as universities. The insights and recommendations from the group have been adopted into the policies of local and international governments (e.g. the UK, Scotland, Spain, and Mexico), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The Regional Studies Research Group at UWS has been studying the role of regional development agencies (RDAs) since the early 1990s. The team has published widely in the field with over 50 peer-reviewed journal articles, 10 books, more than 60 book chapters and many official reports to local, national and international governments and bodies.</p> <p><b>The model RDA</b></p> <p>In 1997 the group published a seminal paper which analysed a variety of structures and working methods for RDAs [1]. This article offered the first survey of regional development bodies in eight western European countries and analysed the systematic differences between various types of regionally-based development bodies and illuminated possible origins of this pattern of dissimilarity. The researchers concluded that successful future performance of RDAs will require not only good working relationships with private sector clients but also fruitful interaction with providers of business services and public knowledge institutions. The model agency proposed by the researchers has provided the basis for many later studies (71 citations, see Section 3) and was explored, analysed and refined in numerous books on the subject. The team built on its initial innovative RDA research to examine the necessary characteristics that development agencies need to incorporate to be considered effective model agencies.</p> <p>This work led to a focus on renewing the networks of RDAs in Europe (see Section 4) and a number of additional publications, including a paper in Environment and Planning C which was recognised as the 'Editors Choice' paper [3].</p> <p>Danson was elected as a Fellow of The Institute of Economic Development (2007) and of the Regional Studies Association (2011) in recognition of his outstanding research contribution.</p> <p><b>Commissioned research</b></p> <p>Recognising the research group's expertise and authority in regional development, the Scottish Parliament commissioned the group to carry out research and advise on economic development strategies in Scotland. Based on the studies' findings, the team recommended the reorganisation of Scottish RDAs into bodies with formal local economic fora to deliver business development services [4, 5].</p> <p>Scottish Enterprise also commissioned research and benchmarking studies from the research group which revealed that economic development agencies across the world had evolved considerably since the early studies by the team. This global review and examination of current good practice in RDAs suggested that Scottish Enterprise could no longer be considered a model agency.</p> <p><b>Key researchers</b></p> <p>Mike Danson: Professor (with UWS from October 1988 to October 2012)</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

Geoffrey Whittam: Reader (with UWS from April 2004 to April 2013)  
Ewa Helinska-Hughes: Lecturer (with UWs from April 2004 to date)

### 3. References to the research

1. Danson M and Halkier H (1997) Regional Development agencies in Western Europe: a survey of characteristics and trends. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 4(3), 243-256. doi: 10.1177/096977649700400304 [71 citations – source Google Scholar accessed 6 November 2013] ABS (2009) ranked 3\* journal.
2. Danson M, Helinska-Hughes E, Hughes M (2005) RDAs and benchmarking: learning from good practice when the model has broken. *Public Policy and Administration*, 20(3) 4-22 doi: 10.1177/095207670502000303 (11 citations - source Google Scholar accessed 6 November 2013 ) ABS (2009) ranked 2\* journal.
3. Danson M and Lloyd G, (2012) Beyond devolution: roads to coherent autonomies? *Environment and Planning C*, 30(1), 78-94. (11 citations - source Google Scholar accessed 6 November 2013 ) doi:10.1068/c1145r. ABS (2009) ranked 3\* journal.  
***This paper was highlighted by the journal as the 'Editor's Choice'.***
4. Danson M (2005) Old industrial regions and employability. *Urban Studies* 42(2) 285-300 (32 citations - source Google Scholar accessed 6 November 2013) doi: 10.1080/0042098042000316155. ABS (2009) ranked 3\* journal.
5. Danson M (2009) New regions and regionalisation through clusters – city regions and new problems for the periphery. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*. 22(3) 260-271 (3 citations - source Google Scholar accessed 6 November 2013) DOI - 10.1108/09513550910949235. ABS (2009) ranked 2\* journal.

Note: All references are peer-reviewed papers published in academic journals with international editorial and advisory boards. Copies of all references are available on request from the HEI.

### Grants and funding awarded to Danson:

Title	Funder	Award Date	Award value
ESRC Urban and Regional Economics Seminar Group	ESRC	2003	£14,166.29
Benchmarking Economic Development Agencies	Scottish Enterprise	2003	£5,000.00
Internationalisation of Scottish SMEs: Current Support Structures and Delivery Systems	SCOTECON	2004	£7,500.00
Employability and employer attitudes to the unemployed and inactive in Scotland	EU	2004	£41,077.50
Benchmarking Scottish Enterprise against other Economic development agencies, 2004	Scottish Executive	2004	£7,000.00
Action Research for Ayr North Social Inclusion Partnership	Ayr North Social Inclusion Partnership	2005	£6,000.00
Employability Evaluation and Ayr North SIP Economy Theme Group Action-Research Project,	EU	2006	£12,000.00
Impact of the University of Paisley on the Regional Economy in 2006	SHEFC	2006	£9,400.00
Economic and Enterprise Development in Community buy-outs: a pilot research project	Carnegie Trust	2007	£2,390.00

## Impact case study (REF3b)

Assessment of progress with regards to Gaelic Plans that have been approved by Bord na Gaidhlig	Bòrd na Gàidhlig	2011	£666.00
Gaelic Language Development Strategy	Glasgow City Council	2011	£2,997.00
Peripheral and Marginal Regional in Northern Europe	Regional Studies Association	2010	£3,000.00
Third Sector Internship Programme	Scottish Funding Council	2011	£10,000.00
OECD Territorial Review of Chihuahua, Mexico	Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development	2011	£4,800.00
Ageing population attitudes to sensor controlled home energy	EPSRC	2012	£74,716.00
			<b>£200,712.79</b>

### 4. Details of the impact

The first generation of RDAs was established in the 1970s and 80s, but the work of the Regional Studies Research Group was the first major study and evaluation of different working approaches. The notion of 'model RDAs' introduced by Halkier and Danson in 1997 (see Section 3, reference 1) stimulated workshops, conferences and presentations to Eurada (The European Association of RDAs).

Stemming from this initial work, subsequent studies have continued to support and provide evidence for policy developments from 2008 onwards. Three specific examples are summarised to illustrate the broad international impact of the research and its influence in the area of regional development.

#### Pathways to impact

Alongside their academic publications and the specific contributions to policy development outlined below, the researchers have disseminated their findings and recommendations to the policy-making community through a variety of channels, including:

- Three invited presentations by Danson on current themes and debates to the committee responsible for economic develop in the Scottish Parliament.
- The launch in Westminster of the research report and paper (Section 3, reference 7) from work commissioned by the Smith Institute.
- Invitations to make key addresses to the OECD (2011), the Spanish Government (2011), the European Commission (2012), the Krynica Economic Forum (2012)

#### Policy impact (Mexico): contributing to the OECD Territorial Review, Chihuahua, Mexico, 2012

Danson was an expert member of the team responsible for the OECD Territorial Review of Chihuahua, Mexico. This independent peer review body, which published under the auspices of OECD, carried out research to benchmark the Chihuahua region against peers internationally. The output of a Territorial Review is a formal publication of significant importance internationally.

Applying expertise in clusters and city regions (cf section 3.5) Danson and his colleagues contributed to Section 2.3 of the Review which evaluated multi-level governance in the region. He described and made recommendations about models of governance, RDAs and public-private cooperation

The review process gained extensive and daily coverage on the mass media - TV, radio, papers, and led to invitations for Danson to present seminars in Paris to the OECD and independently to the DATAR and Science Po international research centres, in Tyrol and elsewhere.

#### Policy impact (Scotland): input to inquiry/review on Scottish Enterprise

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

The Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee of the Scottish Parliament, during its consideration of the 2010-11 budget, raised questions about the purpose of the enterprise network in Scotland and its role in economic development. As part of its inquiry the Committee took evidence from Danson at its 30th Meeting, 2010 (Session 3), on 10 November 2010 [B]. In its final report “A fundamental review of the purpose of an enterprise agency and the success of the recent reforms, 2011” the committee quotes extensively from Danson’s evidence particularly on: the shape of the agencies and their relationship to government; enterprise agencies’ governance arrangements; the external verification of Scottish Enterprise’s impact assessment; and the examples of good practice in economic development arrangements that may be taken from elsewhere. In each of these cases the concluding statement of the Committee reflects the research-informed contribution from Danson to the inquiry.

**Policy impact (UK): input to House of Commons Select Committee On Business, Innovation and Skills, 2010**

The Committee undertook an inquiry into the proposed New Local Enterprise Partnerships, examining how these new structures would work, alongside issues such as distribution of funding, value for money, accountability, timing, transitional arrangements and required legislation. Danson with colleagues, D Bailey, P Benneworth and H Halkier, co-authored written evidence submitted on behalf of the Regional Studies Association (RSA). The memorandum ‘The New Local Enterprise Partnerships’ drew on current literature and evidence from the UWS research team’s studies regarding the role of Economic Development Agencies (EDAs) and partnerships in delivering economic development at the regional and sub-regional levels. The memorandum commented on the outline proposals for revising English sub-national regional development policies, and listed recommendations about the role and constitution of Local Enterprise Partnerships, their funding and their relationships with central government. In its report, ‘The New Local Enterprise Partnerships: An Initial Assessment’, Select Committee cites the Regional Studies Association contribution to its discussion of, and recommendations for, ensuring the stability of LEPs (paragraph 153).

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

- A. OECD Territorial Reviews: Chihuahua, Mexico (2012). [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/oecd-territorial-reviews-chihuahua-mexico-2012\\_9789264168985-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/oecd-territorial-reviews-chihuahua-mexico-2012_9789264168985-en). See bibliography for references to the underpinning research.
- B. Minutes of 30th Meeting of the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee of the Scottish Parliament, 2010 (Session 3), on 10 November 2010  
<http://archive.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/eet/reports-11/eer11-02-02.htm#34>
- C. ‘A fundamental review of the purpose of an enterprise agency and the success of the recent reforms, 2011’. Final report. <http://archive.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/eet/reports-11/eer11-02-01.htm> (paragraphs: 198, 246,261,285)
- D. ‘The New Local Enterprise Partnerships: An Initial Assessment’. Report of the House of Commons Select Committee On Business, Innovation and Skills, 2010. Interim report  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmbis/434/43402.htm>
- E. Evidence submitted to the House of Commons Select Committee On Business, Innovation and Skills (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmbis/434/434vw76.htm>)