

# **Title: Attached and Detached Universities: Towards Regional Development Systems in the Dublin and Shannon Regions of Ireland**

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines the role of universities in regional development through the concept of attached and detached universities. The discussion of attached universities raises some limitations of the role of regional innovation systems in regional development. To address these limitations, the concept of regional development systems is posited and described. These concepts are then applied to case studies of the Shannon and Dublin regions in the Republic of Ireland. The University of Limerick in the Shannon region is shown to be an attached university in a region with a strong internally led regional innovation system that exhibits some evidence of an emerging regional development system. The Dublin region exhibits few signs of a formal regional network of any kind let alone of a regional development system. To the extent that the Dublin region has a regional innovation system, it is externally driven by the Irish state, global MNEs and EU funds. In this context, it is not surprising that Dublin's three universities are shown to be detached from the Dublin region, mostly contributing indirectly and unintentionally to the region's development.