

**From:** Dan Smith <dan@railtoursireland.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday 24 January 2019 16:02  
**To:** rses  
**Subject:** Submission to Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy  
**Attachments:** 2017-topline-regional-tourism-performance.pdf

Good afternoon,

This submission refers to the draft RSES Report.

Railtours Ireland notes and welcomes Objectives 115 (a) and 115 (b) of the draft RSES Report which refer specifically to the re-opening of the Western Rail Corridor from Claremorris to Athenry and northwards from Claremorris to Sligo.

As a railtours operator, bringing over 20,000 overseas visitors into Ireland annually, we see enormous potential in the development of these missing rail links. As page 8 of the attached Topline Tourism statistics indicates a figure of 1.6 million tourists visited Galway last year. The reopening of the existing rail link to Mayo could, we believe, lead to a substantial number of these visitors continuing their journeys to places like Westport and Ballina and greatly increasing the current figure of 334,000 for that county.

Kind regards,

Jim Deegan  
Director  
Railtours Ireland First Class!  
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