



The Centre for
Cross Border Studies

MEDIA WATCH

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Energy costs 'will rise for families after hard Brexit'

Brexit will threaten the peace process, increase division in Northern Ireland and hamper relations with the Republic, a new study has warned.

The study by BrexitLawNI - researchers from Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) - claims that Britain leaving the EU will also weaken human rights and equality protections.

Project leader Professor Colin Harvey from the School of Law at QUB said: "This is a profound constitutional moment for Northern Ireland and the island of Ireland. Brexit will threaten the peace process and weaken protections for human rights and equality.

"It risks disrupting North-South co-operation, increasing racist immigration enforcement and dividing British and Irish citizens. It could also reduce international oversight of human rights and introduce a new focus for conflict between divided communities. Many of these matters have simply been neglected in the discussions thus far and that must change."

For 18 months, the BrexitLawNI team conducted interviews, consultations and town hall meetings to explore the possible impact of Brexit.

The research indicated widespread anxiety about the long-term impact of Brexit on relationships on the island.

"We urgently need a bespoke solution for this region that will minimise the negative impact of Brexit and provide a positive way forward," he said. "It remains clear that Northern Ireland will require a special arrangement if the problems we identify are to be credibly addressed."

The study also found that Brexit has had a political impact across the island of Ireland in 'mainstreaming' discussions on Irish reunification.

Professor Rory O'Connell, of the Transitional Justice Institute at UU, said: "The 1998 Agreement found nuanced solutions to difficult issues of sovereignty, identity and the border, embedding these in a rights-respecting framework. Brexit risks unpicking these carefully, painfully-worked out solutions"

Brian Gormally, CAJ director added: "There is a real danger that Brexit could re-ignite conflict here. As the leaving process lurches ever nearer to a 'hard' or 'no-deal' Brexit, there is a risk of nationalists becoming more and more disillusioned at the disregarding of the will of the majority here while unionists come together in defence of Brexit and the border.

"The last thing we need is a new bone of contention."

Source: RTE

28 September 2018

Vehicles cross the border 45 million times each year

There are more than 45 million vehicle crossings between Northern Ireland and the Republic each year, new figures

reveal.

A statistical report released last night shows the scale of the disruption which would be caused by a 'hard border' in the wake of Brexit.

The figures, released by the Department for the Economy's Analytical Services Division, only count the vehicles at 15 of the border's 208 recognised crossing points.

The vast majority of journeys were taken by car, with almost 36 million crossings in personal motor vehicles between July 2017 and last month.

Freight traffic – likely to be a key focus of border inspection should the north exit the customs union and single market in a 'hard Brexit' – makes up more than eight million journeys.

The data collected by statisticians is from the Transport Infrastructure Ireland traffic counters located on the National Road Network of

Ireland.

It relates to just 15 of the border locations which provide passage between the two jurisdictions. Officials stressed that it should be regarded as "subset of all border crossings and would not present full coverage of all vehicle border crossings".

Ireland has 208 border crossings, according to analysis carried out earlier this year – the first officially agreed count since the island was partitioned.

SDLP Brexit spokeswoman Claire Hanna said the report underlined the “absolute impossibility of a border on this island”.

“The fundamentals that the SDLP have stated time and again have not changed, that if any part of this island is out of the single market, having different products, standards and regulations, and out of the customs union, having different trade rules and tariffs, then there has to be a border somewhere,” she said.

Sinn Féin MLA Máirtín Ó Muilleoir said: “The prospect of border checks would spell disaster for trade, for the economy, for students and for workers across the island of Ireland. This would wreak havoc on people’s lives.”

Source: The Irish News