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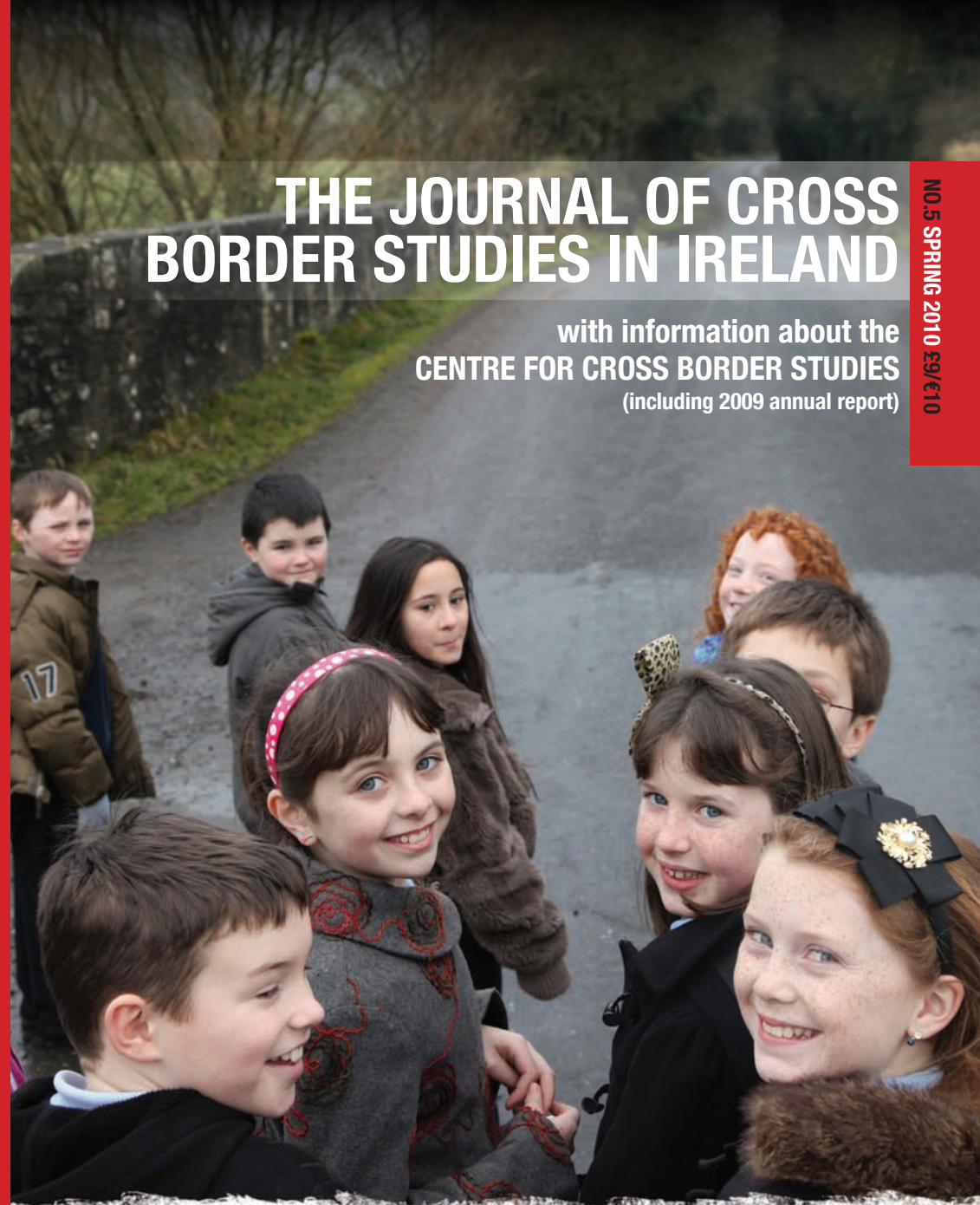
THE JOURNAL OF CROSS BORDER STUDIES IN IRELAND

NO.5 SPRING 2010

THE JOURNAL OF CROSS BORDER STUDIES IN IRELAND

with information about the
CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES
(including 2009 annual report)

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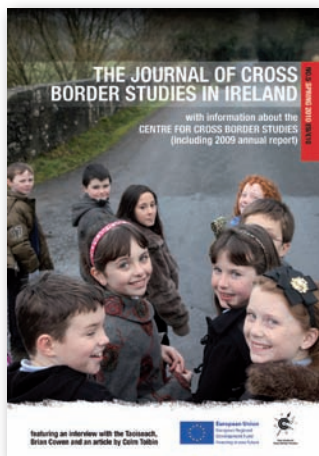
featuring an interview with the Taoiseach,
Brian Cowen and an article by Colm Toibin



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Children from Clara National School, north Monaghan, on Ravella bridge across the Blackwater River on the border. Photo by Derek Speirs

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The Taoiseach, Mr Brian Cowen TD, with chair Dr Chris Gibson, vice-chair Dr Pauric Travers and the Centre for Cross Border Studies staff at the Dublin launch of the 2009 'Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland'.

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A word from the Chairman

Chris Gibson OBE

March 2010

The Centre for Cross Border Studies enters its eleventh year in 2010 in good health. Its work of practical, common sense cooperation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is as relevant as ever, whatever the temporary political vicissitudes at time of writing. The Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, says as much in his interview in this journal. President Mary McAleese clearly agrees with him. We were honoured last September when the board, the staff and some key friends of the Centre were invited to a 10th birthday reception in Aras an Uachtaráin by the President who – along with her husband Dr Martin McAleese – has been one of its strongest supporters. A year ago the fourth *Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland* - featuring an interview on North-South cooperation with Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson – was launched in Dublin and Belfast by the Taoiseach and the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Bruce Robinson, respectively. We have come a long way since Andy Pollak and Mairead Hughes set up shop in two half-decorated rooms in the old Armagh Infirmary building in September 1999.



Chris Gibson

Despite the economic recession, financial cutbacks in Dublin and continuing problems with the DUP-Sinn Féin coalition in Belfast, the past year has been another story of new developments and significant progress in the areas of North-South and cross-border research, information and networking in which the Centre has taken a lead. Four of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-border Cooperation Observatory (INICCO) projects started in January 2009 with EU INTERREG IVA funding (managed by the Special EU Programmes Body) and are

now up and going strong: the Reviving the Border Region Economy research project, led by Dr John Bradley, formerly of the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin, and Professor Michael Best of the Universities of Cambridge and Massachusetts (in partnership with InterTradelreland); the Cross-border Spatial Planning and Training Network (CroSPlaN), led by the Centre's sister organisation, the International Centre for Local Regional Development, and its director John Driscoll; the Cross-Border Hospital Services research project, led by the Centre's new deputy director,



Ruth Taillon (in partnership with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland); and phase two of the Border People cross-border mobility information website, led by the Centre's IT manager, Joe Shiels (in partnership with the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat). The fifth project, a pilot Impact Assessment Toolkit for cross-border cooperation, will begin in May 2010. Indecon International Economic Consultants were appointed to evaluate the overall INICCO 'basket' of projects, which will run until the end of 2011.

Of these projects, the Border People cross-border mobility information website is probably the one that developed most in 2009. This website for cross-border workers, students and others (along with its regular User Group meetings) is an example of pragmatic cross-border cooperation at its very best: an online information service to help citizens tackle the everyday problems of moving across the border in areas like employment, taxes, health services, welfare payments, bank transfers and so on. One idea we have for 2010 is to learn from US experience and turn a forthcoming User Group meeting into a pilot 'data day' to explain to and discuss with the public – in our case, a cross-border public – how the use of statistical and other data is becoming more and more important in all our lives.

Flourishing all-island networks

These new projects have taken up a significant amount of the Centre's time and energy in the past year. In addition, the three all-island networks the Centre

manages are active and growing. Universities Ireland continued to act as the finance manager and workshop organiser (and reporting officer to the Higher Education Authority and Irish Aid) for the 13-university network which makes up the Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (IAP for short). The IAP held a third workshop in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, in May 2009, with over 70 senior academics from Ireland, North and South, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa participating. An additional fourth workshop for vice-presidents for research and other senior research office personnel was held in Dublin City University in October 2009, and planning for the fifth workshop in Zomba, Malawi, at the end of March 2010, is being finalized. Universities Ireland's North/South Postgraduate Scholarship scheme – in partnership with the Joint Business Council of IBEC and CBI (Northern Ireland) – will this year incorporate a new element: a three month work placement in an Irish or Northern Irish company to be managed by IBEC's Export Orientation Programme, the Republic of Ireland's longest-running and most successful graduate placement scheme.

The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) continues to be one of the most dynamic networks the Centre organizes. It has seed-funded no fewer than 51 North-South research projects over the past six years, with another 10 about to be funded at time of writing. Last autumn an *Irish Times* profile of Ireland's most distinguished, internationally-known educationalist, Professor John



The Taoiseach and Dr Chris Gibson at the Dublin launch of the 2009 journal

Coolahan, noted that his proudest achievement was his involvement in initiating and developing SCoTENS, “regarded as one of the most successful North/South initiatives ever established, thanks to the high level of co-operation and dialogue it has engendered.” SCoTENS is also funding a sixth year of the pioneering (and CCBS-managed) North-South Student Teacher Exchange programme, which has seen nearly 150 students from Belfast, Dublin and Limerick doing a key part of their assessed teaching practice in schools in the other jurisdiction.

Thirdly, there is the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD), which after six years in existence, is now widely acknowledged as a valuable new part of the planning landscape on both sides of the Irish border, with an annual conference

every January that is a ‘must attend’ for senior planners North and South and further afield. The 2009 conference in Letterkenny was addressed by the chief planners of England, Scotland and Wales, while the keynote speakers at the 2010 conference in Enniskillen were the US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland, Declan Kelly; the outstanding Irish economist, Professor John Fitzgerald; and two senior planners from Boston, Massachusetts, Charlotte Kahn and Holly St Clair. The ICLRd was also involved in training local councillors and local authority officials, and in a range of research projects during the year: rural restructuring, sustainable communities, delineating functional territories, cross-border implications of the Review of Public Administration (NI) and learning from planning best practice in the EU and USA.



Universities Ireland, SCoTENS and the ICLRD show how leading professionals can benefit greatly from working together in all-island networks. Tim O'Connor, the founding Southern Joint Secretary of the North/South Ministerial Council, called SCoTENS a "superb example" of what professional associations can do if they work on a cross-border basis. The Centre is ready and able to extend its cross-border and all-island management, networking and ICT expertise to other groups, organisations and institutions in each jurisdiction wishing to work jointly with counterpart bodies across the border, and looking for an 'honest broker' third party to facilitate and administer this. After more than 10 years in the field, our experience is that for such a cross-border network to be sustainable, the role of a body like CCBS, whose only interest is in bringing the partners together and ensuring they function harmoniously, is a crucial prerequisite.

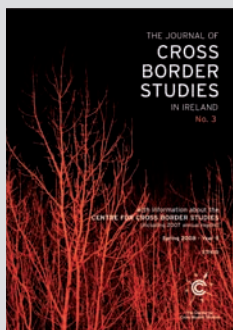
This year saw director Andy Pollak increasing his outreach activities. For example, in a two month period before Christmas he addressed audiences in Brussels (the EU Open Days), Omagh (twice), Cavan, Castleblayney, Dublin (Oireachtas Committee on the Good Friday Agreement), Maynooth (Irish-Scottish Forum for Spatial Planning) and Strasbourg (University of Strasbourg/Euro-Institute, Kehl) on the work of the Centre in general and its EU-funded INICCO projects in particular. Out of the last of these engagements came an invitation to join a new network of cross-border training and research institutes from Germany, France, Denmark, Spain (Catalonia), Italy, Slovenia, the Czech

Republic, Poland, and the French Caribbean in an EU Leonardo funding application to enable a more formal alliance to raise the level of cross-border training in Europe.

Unfortunately, our North/South Public Sector Training programme – which had trained over 140 civil servants from both jurisdictions in cross-border cooperation in 2005-2008 – had to be suspended last year after its EU funding expired and alternative funding sources (particularly from government) failed to step in, despite the strenuous efforts of CCBS and its partners Cooperation Ireland and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. We haven't yet given up on this mould-breaking programme: we still believe in the value of civil servants from North and South learning together, and continue to seek finance for it.

A passionate commitment

This 2010 *Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland* breaks new ground by featuring an article by one of Ireland's contemporary literary 'greats', the novelist Colm Toibin. This is a reflection on cross-border relations in Ireland and Catalonia which he first delivered at the annual British-Irish Association conference in Cambridge in September 2009. The *Journal* also features an interview on North-South cooperation with the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD; an article on community development in areas close to the border by the leading social researcher, Brian Harvey; a re-examination of the cross-border shopping phenomenon using statistics recently released by the Central



Statistics Office (RoI), by Steve McFeely of the CSO and Eoin Magennis and Aidan Gough of InterTradelreland; a call for a Green New Deal for the island of Ireland by Dr John Barry of Queen's University Belfast, a former co-chair of the Green Party in Northern Ireland; an article on collaboration between University of Ulster and Letterkenny Institute of Technology by Dr Pat McCloughan of Indecon Economic Consultants; and a response to Robin Wilson's 2009 article on new forms of Irishness by Eoin Ó Broin, author of *Sinn Féin and the Politics of Left Republicanism* and a member of Sinn Féin's ard comhairle. By publishing these articles, the Centre is trying to provoke new cross-border thinking on issues important to the island – it is not agreeing with or endorsing the opinions expressed.

Overall, the Centre's ethos of partnership and cooperation to bring about increased mutual understanding and respect on this island continues to energise and inspire its board, staff and many supporters. After ten and a half years of successful activity, the board and senior staff are taking a 'day out'

this month (March 2010) to reflect on where we might go in the next 10 years. One key question to be discussed is whether the Centre's core work of practical North-South cooperation in social areas like education and health should be complemented by new work in the areas of science, technology and innovation, which will create the jobs and prosperity that will be vital if peace, stability and a socially just society are going to be embedded in Northern Ireland over the next decade. What will be the continuing role of the government and people of the Republic of Ireland in this? One thing is certain: we remain passionately committed to the tasks of researching and developing practical cooperation for mutual benefit in Ireland as a vital element of the continuing peace and reconciliation process.

Once again, the Centre owes a great debt of gratitude to the Special EU Programmes Body for its continuing faith in the work of the CCBS. Through the SEUPB, the Centre has been granted £1.44 million in EU INTERREG IVA funding to carry out the five INICCO projects listed above in the years



2009-2011. Another significant funder has again been the Irish Department of Education and Science, for whom the Centre is currently beginning a study of North-South cooperation in schools and youth groups (in collaboration with the North/South Exchange Consortium). Over the last decade the Centre has received direct financial assistance from a range of providers including the EU PEACE and INTERREG programmes, the Irish Department of Education and Science, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (NI), the NI Department for Employment and Learning, Atlantic Philanthropies, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, the Nuffield Foundation and the British Council.

The Centre has again been active over the past year in bidding for research projects from government departments and agencies like EURES, the European cross-border employment service. Financial and other support for the Centre's associated organisations – Universities Ireland, the Stranding Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) and the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) – has again come from the Northern Ireland Departments of Education and Employment and Learning, the Irish Department of Education and Science, the Irish Higher Education Authority, InterTradelreland, the Northern Ireland Department for Regional Development, the Irish Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and the International Fund for Ireland.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the various other organisations which have partnered the Centre over the past 12 months: notably the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat, with special and warm thanks to the Joint Secretaries, Tom Hanney and Mary Bunting, for their constant support and encouragement; the Department of the Taoiseach; the nine universities, with particular thanks to current Universities Ireland chairman Professor Richard Barnett, Vice-Chancellor of University of Ulster; the nine colleges of education and 29 other institutional subscribers to SCoTENS; and the institutions which make up the International Centre for Local and Regional Development. A particularly warm 'thank you' to ICLRD director John Driscoll, and assistant directors Caroline Creamer and Neale Blair, for their real spirit of partnership and solidarity over the past year.

Again we have to thank our advertisers, most of them cross-border bodies or companies themselves, which have faithfully supported this *Journal* in recent years, and have advertised again this year despite the very considerable financial constraints imposed on them by the recession. They are Safefood, Tourism Ireland, InterTradelreland, Weber Shandwick, Cooperation Ireland, Armagh City Hotel (Mooney Hotel Group), the Loughs Agency, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, FPM Chartered Accountants, Michael Campbell Photography and Leslie Stannage Design (who design all the Centre's publications and reports).



Making the here and now a better place: Interview on North-South cooperation with the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD

Would you agree that North-South cooperation over the past 12 years since the Good Friday Agreement has been one of the quiet success stories of the Northern Ireland peace process? What do you think are its main achievements over this period?



Brian Cowen

It has been a success story in that the Good Friday Agreement and the St Andrews Agreement have been about resolving sets of relationships that have been fractured by historical events within the North, between Northern Ireland and the Republic, and between Great Britain and Ireland. These agreements have enabled us to rebuild relationships, and the North-South cooperation process is about rebuilding relationships between the two parts of the island on the basis of mutual benefit. Unfortunately, in the past the absence of constructive dialogue and the overwhelmingly negative impact of conflict meant that there was no space for those relationships to be mended, for building trust and normality so that we could achieve good neighbourly relations between people who have a lot more in common than what separates them. So I think North-South cooperation is a manifestation of normalising relationships in Ireland.

In doing this, we have moved on from the paramilitarism of the past to a political culture which is about democratic principles and consensually working together, accommodating each other's differences and seeing strength in diversity, rather than not exchanging because of past differences. If you look over the past 10-12 years at the joint infrastructural projects we have undertaken; at the promotion of the island of Ireland for tourism purposes; at the joint trade missions; at the far greater levels of cooperation between our educational institutions, particularly in research and development – these are all strategic gains from the principle and practice of North-South cooperation. And by emphasizing that commonality of interest and identifying the mutual benefit that comes from cooperation, this is the means by which trust can be built and relationships can be restored to normal, as well as to the natural competition that communities engage in in order



to progress in democratic countries. We have agreed that conflict will never achieve a solution, and we have devised these structures which reflect the need to restore trust and normality to relationships. We have devised ways in which North-South cooperation can give substance to this inter-dependence, which was so obvious but which was lost in the conflicts and divisions of the past.

This is an ongoing and evolving process, not a static one. It continues to require a fostering of good relationships at both human and inter-governmental levels, between communities, in business, in sport – across a whole range of areas outside politics which are very much part of people's lives. That continuing interaction and openness to engage is fundamental. I believe it's that wider communal interaction which is not just as important as the political engagement but at the end of the day is a measure of how successful the whole peace process has been. I think we all agree there's an awful lot more to be done, a lot more potential to be tapped. There are micro-examples of links between towns like Downpatrick and Listowel; exchanges between schools in the border region; all the things that are happening in the north-west. Across a broad spectrum of politics, North and South, everyone now agrees – whatever they thought in the past – that cooperation is the best means of overcoming conflict.

So we have increased cooperation in trade and tourism and agriculture, for example in combatting the problems of BSE and foot and mouth. These

are simple, practical and important examples of cooperation. Another is our continued commitment to the roads in the North, despite the recession. These roads are strategic links, all-important arteries that provide lifeblood both to commerce and to people's engagement on the island.

What are the continuing challenges to North-South cooperation?

One challenge, which is reflected in the review of the North/South bodies being carried out under the terms of the St Andrews Agreement, is to try to be more creative and ambitious. In the initial stages we have ensured that any unnecessary suspicions about surreptitious agendas have been dispelled. North-South cooperation is a transparent, up-front, cooperative model in areas which make a lot of sense to people. The challenge is that we have to move from the agenda that we set 10 or 12 years ago, which has formed the basis for cooperation thus far, and ask which other areas we can now cooperate on, particularly in times of recession. For example, how do we deliver public services that are sustainable? On both sides of the border we need to reorganize our public services so that they are sustainable and affordable, and so we can provide them to the people who need them most. In the interests of taxpayers, both sets of administrations need to examine how we can avoid duplication: for example, how we can cooperate to provide shared services in health, local government, regional planning and development, spatial planning and education. A good example of meeting



The Taoiseach Brian Cowen TD with Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin TD, Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness MP MLA and First Minister Peter Robinson MP MLA

a new challenge was the establishment of a single energy market for the island, which was outside the North/South Ministerial Council structure but had an imperative and logic to it which made it happen.

This shows what can be done if the goodwill is there and if both sides have the self-confidence to realize that this is about serving our respective constituencies and populations in the very best way we can, in the way that we would cooperate with any neighbour, any person who has a common interest to share with us. I think there's a lot more to be done there, and some people still have to grasp that they can do this without feeling that it's problematic for anyone.

With the DUP as one half of the Northern Ireland Executive, are

you satisfied that this further development of cooperation can happen, given that the DUP might want to minimize such cooperation as much as possible?

I think experience of cooperation provides the best antidote to reservations people might have about it. More and more people on all sides, including local council representatives, are seeing what can be achieved through such cooperation. Obviously time and experience and practice help people to see the potential of this kind of work. The key principle here is mutual benefit, and it behoves all of us to move on from where we were in the past 10 or 15 years and see this as an evolving agenda to meet the needs of today and tomorrow. There are a whole range of areas where this can happen to far greater effect.



There are also communities, North and South, which are suffering from social exclusion. In the 1980s we devised ways and means of targeting and overcoming disadvantage here in the South, and if the process we are all engaged in, North and South, is going to be successful, it has to involve everybody. So we should be able to devise common approaches which show disadvantaged communities that we are trying to work together on their behalf. We saw, for example, the outreach to loyalist paramilitaries recently as an example of how people who start from an extreme position can be helped to develop confidence by giving assistance to their communities which they see as a new way forward and not threatening to them.

North-South cooperation is an evolving, flexible mechanism which can target different areas of policy. I believe the people want us to work together. Everyone has anxieties and worries, for example about employment opportunities for young people and to what extent we are equipping them for a more difficult and competitive environment over the next 10 years. For all of us, North and South, what happens outside this island is important, but we can do a lot internally to equip us to meet these external challenges. To come to the North-South agenda with this philosophy will enable us to develop structures and mechanisms in harmony. Obviously we have to do it in ways that people are comfortable with. Obviously the political culture will always be cautious in both administrations, but I think the people on the ground want to see positive, cooperative North-South structures that will help

them and be seen to help them. It's not in any way to be churlish about the tremendous improvements we've seen and the existing examples of very good cooperation, but I often feel that we need to move it on, although I accept that we must move it on at a pace that everyone is happy with so that we reinforce the stability of the process.

How have the economic recession and the government's financial problems affected North-South cooperation?

Obviously the recession has affected it. However, look at cross-border shopping. That's a function of volatile exchange rates, not of volatile differences between us about where people should shop. People go for value, and if the exchange rate favours the sterling area against the euro, people make their moves on that basis. Of course there is an obligation on us as a government to be more cost-competitive, to keep our costs down, and we have been working on doing that. Now, for example, you see the exchange rate going down to 87 cents to a pound sterling, where it was 94 cents a few months ago (*Note: interview date was 21 January*) – so that's a transient, changeable scenario.

However, rather than saying the currency differential determines the trading relationship between North and South, we should concentrate on increasing the volume of trade between North and South. This maintains and safeguards jobs, and we're still seeing a lot of cross-border investments going on, with companies having a presence North and South, and that's good and natural and



Irvine & Jonathon Phair on Devenish Island, Co Fermanagh
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helps to overcome the distortions of the past. We have to recognise that in the market economy there will be ebbs and flows both ways; what we really need to concentrate on is the creation of a zone of stability on the island in which trade can expand according to market demand far more freely and organically than would have been the case in the past. InterTradeIreland have done and are doing excellent work in this area. I often remind myself that when people think politics determines everything, of course it doesn't. At the time of the Iraq war, for example, the level of American investment in France was at its highest when political differences were at their most glaring over that issue. At the end of the day business is determined by its own logic, its own opportunities. I often stress the importance of the more normal political situation we have now, which has helped business on the island to expand and attract more prospective customers worldwide.

Is there a danger of both politicians and people in the South turning in on themselves during this period of recession and forgetting the peace that was so hard won in the North and – more specifically – the North-South strand of that peace process?

That could be a trend. I don't think it will be because these structures are so embedded now and so much part of how we do our business. The last 12 years have shown that. Even since 2008, in a difficult period when we have seen quite severe recession in the Republic – perhaps less so in Northern Ireland – business people have adapted and moved on, consolidating

and moving into new areas, and looking out for market opportunities wherever they can find them. I think difficult times reinforce the logic of the island of Ireland economy, because again we're far better working together than going out to compete in that big bad world separately. We'll all survive in our own way, but we must tap the potential that collaboration would bring rather than closing off those opportunities.

So I don't see that 'turning in' happening. For example, in terms of showing our commitment to the process, I would be very much of the view that when the time for funding the Northern roads network was coming up for decision, that was the time to show that we were definitely committed – it wasn't a question of saying "we'll do certain things in good times but we won't do those things in bad times". Those roads are strategically as important for this jurisdiction as they are for the Northern Ireland jurisdiction – so why wouldn't we proceed, there's no reason not to proceed, and we'll probably get it done far cheaper now and more quickly derive the benefits from it. We need to look at the medium and long-term and doing these projects is all the more important in that longer term; they give confidence that the process is for real, that these are strategic objectives which reinforce the benefits for both jurisdictions. To regard these things as optional extras rather than a basic necessary part of an island infrastructure would be a totally wrong signal to send.

You mention roads, but as money gets tighter you obviously have to



prioritise what you put into North-South cooperation initiatives. Apart from infrastructure, are there any other future North-South priority areas you would see the government investing in?

Higher education and research is one that has to be prioritized, particularly R & D. Once again North-South collaboration is the obvious way forward here. There are natural hinterlands which need to be accommodated: for example, in the north-west between Letterkenny Institute of Technology and University of Ulster. For that collaboration to be developed you need goodwill, determination and people of ability to make it happen – again it's about reinforcing trust and confidence that this is to our mutual benefit. More and more people are looking at this kind of project on the basis that 'if it makes sense, let's do it'. What the peace process is allowing us to do is to see things as they are: to look at potential cooperation on the basis of intrinsic, measurable benefits, and then to say 'Why wouldn't we do this – we'd be mad not to.'

Are the North/South bodies safe in this time of recession – is their funding ring-fenced?

The whole North-South concept and architecture is safe because it works. Can it work better? Of course it can. Should any area of public expenditure be immune from critical analysis? No it shouldn't. Can we see better ways of doing things and thus expand into other areas in the future? Of course we should. Should we insist on the same

measure of efficiency and effectiveness that you would expect in other areas of public sector activity? Of course those criteria should apply. I don't believe in ring-fencing something by saying that's the way it should be because that's the way it has always been. People have to justify what they're doing. We're doing it in every other area of administration here: the McCarthy report has looked at how we're delivering services in the South at the moment, and what amalgamations should take place and which organisations should perhaps be discontinued. But the North/South bodies are an integral part of the agreements we've reached, and it was envisaged in those agreements that this would be an evolving process, that we would begin with these bodies and then look at others on the basis of their potential benefits. The letter and spirit of those agreements means that we should proceed along those lines and the review of the bodies should be approached in that way.

What would you like to see coming out of that review? Are there any other areas where you would like to see us moving into further and wider cooperation?

I'm not prescriptive about that but I do say that public service delivery could be an area of further cooperation. There's no doubt at all in my mind about this when you see what we're doing in cross-border cancer services on the island: Altnagelvin hospital in Derry providing a resource not only for its own immediate jurisdiction but also for people in Donegal; or what Daisy Hill hospital in Newry is doing for



renal services in the Cooley area. That makes obvious sense. These are simple examples of a whole range of areas where we can do more together.

When you consider that in this country health, education and welfare make up 80% of total day-to-day public expenditure, then it seems to me there's a huge argument for North-South cooperation that should be explored here. With a background of very tight budgets, it's incumbent on us to look at these things – not just to look at them, but to devise initiatives to show to the public on both sides of the border that both administrations are mindful of the fact that they must spend taxpayers' money to best effect, and to do that in a way that provides better services on both sides of the border is a no-brainer really.

Would it be fair to summarise your position on future North-South cooperation as more economic cooperation plus cooperation in the delivery of public services in certain areas on a cross-border basis?

Yes, some of which we're already doing. The question of economic cooperation is very important given the challenges we have externally, and given the fact that historically we have never tapped the potential of intra-island trade and economic activity. So we need to overcome that historical legacy. The agreements we have reached provide for that opportunity and the North/South bodies which emanated from those give us the means to do that.

Then on the social side – on health, education, the environment, local

government, waste management, energy (particularly sustainable energy), public services generally – there are so many obvious points of common interest. What we really need to do is to allow these to develop organically. I recognise that the bedrock of that is the establishment of trust and confidence in each other's capacity to cooperate, to identify the problems and to agree that mutual benefit is the sole criteria by which we'll proceed. If that's looked at objectively and in a sensible way – recognizing all the political sensitivities – it seems to me that this is an evolving agenda which can only bring advantages to everybody on the island and should be seen to be the only way forward for 21st century Ireland.

Do you think North-South cooperation has a role to play in getting both jurisdictions out of recession?

Absolutely. Macro-economic policy issues obviously dictate much of that: improving our budgetary position and having sustainable public finances. North/South bodies themselves can't deliver that, but if they're built on a solid foundation of sustainable public finances, and those structures are worked to best effect in the areas of economics, social policy, the environment, energy efficiency, and right across the spectrum of public administration generally, they can play a role. I'm convinced that we need to recognise the potential of the mutually beneficial North-South economic cooperation which can be achieved in the immediate term. This is a positive pathway which can play an obvious contribution to getting us out



of recession if people approach it in the right way.

What would be your vision of the island of Ireland economy in 10-15 years?

My vision of the island economy in 10-15 years is a situation where the jurisdictions on this island are working sensibly, cooperatively and in every area of economic activity for mutual benefit; where we have a highly-trained, well-educated population, quick to meet the challenges of living in a 21st century world where competition is global; where we have cooperation built on the foundations of mutual respect and confidence in our own traditions and political outlooks, which are different but which are not mutually exclusive. Underpinning this, based on our common commitment to pluralism and recognising strength in diversity, we would have political structures and public administrations that are democratic, cooperative, open and serve the community to best effect, given the fact that we would have two administrations on the island. We would be working the agreements we have, recognizing the legitimacy of our respective traditions – one loyal to Britain, the other looking to Irish unity as a legitimate objective, but one that will only be pursued peacefully by common consent. Therefore there would be no threatening, exclusivist political philosophy which would make people defensive or insular or non-cooperative.

The genius of all of these agreements is that we are all on a common journey together where we have not decided on

the destination. The problem with our ideologies in the past was that we had this idea about where we were going but we had no idea how anyone was going to come with us on the journey. We have now all decided: let's go on a journey and forget about the destination – the destination isn't really important in that respect. We can all work for what it is we would like ideally to see, but this is not something that can be forced or imposed upon people on either side of the island. This is about people of different traditions who live on this island who have common interests. We as political leaders must cooperate to best serve the people we represent; we have an obligation to make sure we share this piece of ground in a peaceful and harmonious way which will bring a good quality of life for all our people. And all these North/South structures and policy areas we've been talking about are really us trying to identify the ways in which we can give meaning to that overall political philosophy.

That's the great challenge for this generation and for the next generation, and it's a legacy we can leave that is a far better one for our children than others who have had to lead their respective generations at times of conflict, and great pain, loss and anguish for people. A commitment to democratic principles and open, mutually respectful dialogue that brings real benefits and opportunities for people to work and live together seems to me to be something that would get the unanimous approval of every right-thinking person, North and South.



You've mentioned a number of areas – e.g. energy, higher education and spatial planning – where you could like to see more cross-border cooperation. Would you like to elaborate on the potential of any of these areas?

We're seeing the work of the North West Gateway Initiative, for example. In this region there is work quietly moving along, whether it's in infrastructure, or higher education, or health, or the Kelvin broadband project, or making the whole north-west area more attractive for investment and economic opportunity, or the idea of spatial planning behind these developments. Spatial planning is about maximizing our opportunities; making sure we don't duplicate developments in a way which would undermine rather than sustain the progress everyone is trying to achieve. It's about finding a common vision of how you would develop an area and provide opportunities for the people who live there, and how you would do that cooperatively on both sides of the border, accommodating each other's requirements. This seems to me to be an eminently sensible thing to do, and one that's already reflected in greater interaction taking place at local authority level.

So if we could agree in planning terms how contiguous areas are to develop, that could provide the master plan for the other building blocks of economic and social policy which would maximize taxpayers spend. It would improve the outcomes that we'd expect from our investments, rather than allowing our respective administrations to plan as

if our world ends at the jurisdictional border.

Do you agree with Martin Mansergh that barriers to North-South cooperation have never been lower, and that the Irish government should concentrate on continuing to lower these rather than to press any claims for Irish unity at a time when its overriding priority is to get the Irish economy out of its present crisis?

Yes, I do. The ultimate destination of any political project is a matter of time working itself out. Therefore the destination – where we end up eventually – is not the thing to be talking about. That will be for other people to decide in another time maybe. We have to make the here and now a better place, and we have to do it on the basis that we have devised a political culture that is less suspicious and fearful than ever before, that is more open to recognise the common interests that we have together whilst respecting that we are in separate jurisdictions. We should be concerned about what it is we can do together. I think the people on the ground see the common sense of that approach and expect us as public representatives to lead, so that rather than missing opportunities presented by North-South cooperation, we are fully grasping them.

The interviewer was Andy Pollak and the interview took place on 21 January 2010.



Along the Catalan and Irish borders: **politics of memory and progress through good manners**

Colm Toibin

On St John's Eve, 23rd June, each year in the village of Isil, in the province of Lleida, in the area known as the Pallars high in the Catalan Pyrenees, the same ritual is enacted, which has its roots deep in the rich earth of European rituals, a core aspect of which is always to light a fire to mark the longest day of the year and ward off evil spirits. In Isil, what happens begins slowly. Once it is fully dark, from the small square in front of the church you can look up and see glimmers of burning wood in the wooded hill above as the men of the village carry down logs, or long trunks of trees, which are already burning.



Colm Toibin

You can watch this strange slow procession cork screw its way down the hill, the trunks beginning to burn brighter. The feeling that this ritual has been going on since time began deepens as you realize that no one around you believes that any of the men carrying the logs is in any danger. They know, from time immemorial, how to choose the wood, how much of each trunk to set alight and how many men are needed to carry it down and at what pace. It is easy to feel in these villages which are close to the French border as the crow flies or using half forgotten pathways, that life, with all its traditions and rituals, has had the same rhythm as the seasons. Most people who live in these villages were born in them, as

were their parents, and it is easy to see that the light from the big bonfire on which all the trunks are placed is also the light of regeneration, it is where the young men and women from this village and the other small villages around can meet and stay up late and dance with each other under the tender eye of the older generation.

It is easy to feel that this territory and its people have been undisturbed for centuries, that life has developed as slowly and organically as systems of building using stone, or ways of cooking, or curing meat, or doing the harvest, or speaking Catalan with a rural accent. It is easy to feel that this is an old, untouched, traditional Europe,



and that the proximity to France and even the borderline itself that runs between France and Spain through these mountains belong to easy tradition in the same ways as the rituals of St John's Eve in Isil do, or the idea of birth and marriage and death in these villages. It is easy to see the border in this undisturbed world as something which belongs to nature as much as to culture, which is as fully accepted and understood as the change in the seasons, something not made by history, but made by more elemental forces which have always been in place, or made indeed by God.

But then there is a photograph. And if that photograph had come to us uncaptioned it could be any group of villagers, of the generations, gathered in front of a municipal building some time in the first half of the twentieth century. The fact that they all look so serious need not matter. In those years in formal group photographs people saw no reason to smile. They understood the camera as a serious instrument of record. But the caption gives us the date and the place and the origin of the people. It is 1938, and it is Clermont Ferrand on the French side of the border, and the people, around eighty of them ranging from the very old to the very young, are from the village of Alos d'Isil, about four kilometers from Isil, the village described above. At first glance, they could be the entire population of the village until you notice the presence of very few men aged between eighteen and fifty. Recently, an historian, working with this photograph, has been able to identify most of the people in it, and has been able to interview some who

were in that photograph and who are still alive, and has been thus able to piece together what happened in those months of 1938 to the quiet traditional life in a village in Spain close to the French border that caused most of its population to flee to France using mountain paths.

The new politics of memory

Such historical investigation has only been possible in the past few years, in a time when the silent pact made in 1975 on the death of Franco between both sides not to re open old wounds, or put anyone on trial, or have a truth and reconciliation commission, no longer seems necessary or useful. The silence had done its work, had allowed a democratic society to emerge from the shadows. In the past few years, however, these very shadows and that very silence have come to seem like poison from the past. Not only are the murdered dead of the war being dug up and identified from communal graves all over Spain, but in the border area, in the Pyrenees which belong to both France and Spain, the paths used in these terrible years between 1936 and 1945 have been re-opened in memory of those who were forced to use them.

And in all the villages on the Spanish, or Catalan side, of the border last summer there were lectures and exhibitions, with titles like 'The Path of Freedom', 'The Pallares Exile in France', 'The Catalan Exile of 1939'. The exhibitions have included photographs of the landscape as it is now, and as it was then, actual diaries of those who fled across the border, and mementoes



and found objects from that time. On 11 September, which is not only the anniversary of the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon Building in 2001, and the murder of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973, but also Catalonia's national day, in a village close to Isil called Valencia d'Aneu, there will be a public act of homage to those from the village who were shot by Franco's troops in 1938.

All of this is part of a new politics in Spain, the politics of memory. At the end of last September there was a week long course for tourist guides on these

mountain paths in the Pallars, which have been cleared and signposted for tourists and visitors, as walkways through a beautiful mountain landscape and also walkways into the past, a past that was hidden for so long, first by a dictatorship and then by a fledgling democracy, which now has become a subject for serious investigation and a small tourist industry.

It might seem then that all is settled again: that the events of seventy years ago, when people fleeing from Hitler used this border to get into Spain from France and thence to America, and



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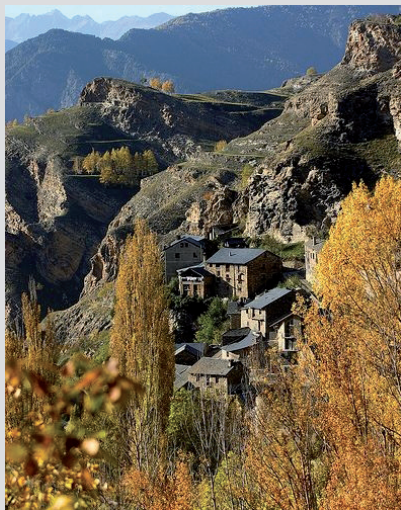
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A Pyrenean mountain village in Catalonia

when large sections of the population of villages which had been loyal to the Republic and many other Spanish refugees used this border to get out of Spain and into France, are now distant and part of history. But nothing is as simple as that. The paths were also used by priests who needed to flee for their lives from Republican Spain in 1936 and 1937. The same mountain guides, working for money, led the priests to safety as they later did those fleeing both Hitler and Franco. Any digging up of the past has to deal with the fact that some of the more affluent refugees coming from France, many of them Jewish, were robbed on the Spanish side of the border. The paths were also used by the maquis between 1944 and 1946 who believed that if they could destabilize Franco's regime by acts of terrorism, then the Allied Forces would see fit to follow their example, as the

war came to an end, and free Spain for democracy.

No border in Europe is simple. No Lisbon Treaty is likely to affect, for example, the position of Andorra, which sits on the border between Catalonia and France as a semi-independent, tax-free principality. Because of the mountain roads and paths best known to the locals which pour out from Andorra, vast quantities of cigarettes, alcohol, electrical goods and much more are smuggled. Since policing in Spain in the years after Franco was as fraught as in Northern Ireland, a Catalan speaking police force was set up in Catalonia, but, since the border with France is a national border, the force used to stop smuggling are the old Guardia Civil, who do not speak the local language or know the territory. Their lack of knowledge plus the mobile phone as the smuggler's secret new weapon mean that they are highly ineffective. This border, like the Irish border, is filled with delicious ways of making easy money involving a local knowledge, a culture of secrecy and watchfulness, and a sense that many people are involved at various levels in a tight web of conspiracy against authority.

Nor does the border here separate two different nations, with two separate identities which are absolute. This is perhaps more obvious in the Basque Pyrenees with the idea that the Basque country straddles the Spanish-French border, but it exists also here in the Pallars. Although less Catalan is spoken on the French side in every generation, there is a still a strong feeling among people on both sides of this border that



the border between France and Spain in the Catalan Pyrenees is a line drawn through their identity for the convenience of others. Last year on Sunday 2nd August there was a meeting in a mountain village, Port de Salau, on the French side between Catalans who have a French passport and Catalans who carry a Spanish passport to emphasize their common identity as Catalans who have been divided against their will by a line on a map. They carried the same flags and spoke the same language. The border between them was, for that day at least, their only problem.

An unsettled landscape

When I walked along the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland in 1986 and retraced the journey with a BBC radio producer to make a documentary ten years later, I was never aware of walking through a landscape which was settled and stable, as the Catalan Pyrenees seems settled and stable. It was not merely in 1986 the broken bridges and the huge ugly roadblocks and the presence of armed police and soldiers; it was not simply the sense of watchfulness on faces, of entire communities on the look-out or waiting for the next ghastly event, or in 1996 the beginnings of the end of this.

It was something in the very landscape, a sense in Leitrim and Fermanagh, in Donegal and Derry, in Monaghan and Armagh of a few miles on either side of the border when the world seemed to have come to a strange end, when it would have been easy to imagine not a border but a vast ocean at the end of a road or a field. There were exceptions to

this, but not many, and it was an abiding feeling, that this was a landscape, in its very poverty, in the half drained fields, or the roads that seemed ready to peter out, or the abandoned houses, or the menacing sky, that made you think of the world's end. I thought sometimes of folding the landscape as you can fold a map at the very point where the border ran for three or four miles on either side and allowing something useful to rise in its place. Because the border itself was not any use, except for smugglers and those intent on killing and escaping.

It was hard not to think in twos, in a series of almost neat binary oppositions. Each town and village in the North had something close to its opposite in the South. Each killing seemed to have a revenge killing. It was as though each person had a doppelganger and that each action or statement or religion or political feeling was not individual, but a dance with another action or statement or religion or political feeling which merely seemed like its opposite but was in fact its match.

It was easier then to write about two actions rather than one. To write about Seamus McElwain and John McVitty, for example, one a Catholic, the other a Protestant, one IRA, one UDR, one living just south of the border, one just north. Both died violently of bullet wounds in the same year 1986 within a few miles of each other, one in April, one in July. One death may even have been a reprisal for the other. Both had large funerals. I attended one and I visited the family of the other. But making the connection between them was too easy, too neat, for every reason, not merely because



McVitty, unarmed, was farming his land with his twelve year old son when he was shot and his assailants fled across the border to the Republic.

There is another duo who seem more interesting now more than twenty years later, who I did not connect in my mind or my book with each other at the time, although I grew to know both of them in the years after I wrote the book and, indeed, I grew to like them and admire them. I will dwell on them now, two men from the border, one from each side, one from each religion, both wounded figures and carrying their wound as a dark charm, they were both the best company you could meet, and they both had learned something about holding your dignity, standing alone and learning to forgive which we might find useful now in our own wounded society south of the border and indeed, in its partner in woundedness, in the north.

One is John McGahern, the other Bob Bain. One lived close to the border in the Republic, the other close to the border in the North. They were both men of independent views, in a country known, at least to me, for its conformity, and men of great charm, which is not something you see much in Ireland anywhere. They had both in different ways been wounded, they had both been in the news, and they would both be pointed out to you or to others all of their lives. But they both carried marks of this within – what they showed besides the charm, or maybe as part of it, was an immense privacy, a deep spirituality, which is not something you see much in Ireland either, or in the Pallars for that matter.

John McGahern: the principle of good manners

McGahern loved the border. It added an interest to life, he felt. He went once a week to Enniskillen and he enjoyed the idea that once he was over the border he was in a foreign country. The two parts of the island, he felt, and I agreed with him about this, would never come together, because they had grown apart in ways that even they themselves did not understand. So there was no point in talking about that, he would suggest, and anyone who did was foolish. What was worth talking about instead, he felt, was how actual life for actual people on both sides of the border might be improved, and he believed that there was great room for improvement. He thought that there was a simple principle that people might apply to the politics of their lives, the principle he called good manners. He believed that if people north and south had good manners, with their families, their friends, their neighbours, then a great deal could be achieved.

His second novel *The Dark* was banned in 1966 by the Censorship Board of the Republic of Ireland. When he returned to Ireland from a year abroad, he was still in his twenties and the author of two books which had been published in London in the knowledge, which proved true, that they were likely to become classics. McGahern liked England as he did France, not only their literature and people, but he was also grateful to both countries for how they had treated him as a young writer, the amount of care and respect he had been offered in both London and Paris. In Ireland,



John McGahern near his home in County Leitrim

on the other hand, on the orders of the Catholic archbishop of Dublin, he was removed from his job as a teacher not only because of his book which had been banned, but because he had married a Finnish woman in a registry office. He did not receive any support from the teachers' trade union. With his book banned and with no job, he left the country and did not return for a number of years.

Because he was a novelist, he thought some of this was funny, especially in its details. But behind the smiling face there was the pain of that time and the sense of having his privacy invaded in a way which had been intolerable for someone who remained even in middle age oddly shy and sensitive and solitary, someone much happier in the shadows than in the light, in the company of one or two people than in a crowd. He liked

the privacy of life in Leitrim, maintained close and good relations with some of his neighbours there. He viewed the rise to the level of minister, or in one case higher, of a number of men in the Fianna Fail party who lived close by, with a sort of amused contempt. He knew too much about them to believe they were merely fools, but he knew they were fools. That much at least he could prove. When one of them tried to build an abattoir close to his house which was by a remote lake, he put a Trojan effort with some neighbours into preventing this. When he won this battle, McGahern reported with great satisfaction that the politician in question, on being asked about the reason for his failure to build the abattoir, shouted out that he failed because 'that writer cunt has them all riz'.

The only time I ever heard McGahern



speak with admiration of a politician was when he was invited to Dublin Castle by John Bruton's government for a dinner in honour of Prince Charles, and he noticed at the very end of the evening Bruton standing casually talking to people while drinking a pint of Guinness with some of his shirt hanging out, no lackies around or sense of pomposity about him. He mentioned this several times with amused approval. He loved the absence of preening self importance in Bruton, something he saw in abundance in other politicians whom he had grown up with.

In 1992 I asked John McGahern for a piece for a book of new writing from Ireland that I was editing. He told me that he had written a piece about Catholicism, that he had finally set down in words his feelings about the church. He had said to me a number of times that what North and South in Ireland had in common was a sort of insecurity in how both states came into being that caused them to vie with each other to become even more sectarian, one an insecure Unionist state, the other an insecure Catholic state. I presumed that his essay would dwell on that. I was surprised by the essay, by how personal it was, and how wise and forgiving.

It began 'I was born into Catholicism as I might have been born in to Buddhism or Protestantism or any of the other isms or sects, and brought up as a Roman Catholic in the infancy of this small state when the Church had almost total power. It was the dominating force in my whole upbringing, education and early working life. I have nothing but gratitude for the spiritual remnants

of that upbringing, the sense of our origins beyond the bounds of sense, an awareness of mystery and wonderment, grace and sacrament, and the absolute equality of all women and men underneath the sun of heaven. That is all that now remains. Belief as such has long gone.'

McGahern was concerned that the Catholic Church in Ireland in the twentieth century would be seen as Proust saw the French Catholic Church in the eighteenth century, when he described it as 'the refuge of ignoramuses'. He himself, despite the damage it had done to him, did not see it like that. In his essay he wrote about the uplifting and exalting nature of Catholic ceremony, but did not ignore the issue of Catholic authority, adding that 'much of the power that the Church had in my youth has now gone in the South. In the North the power and structures have hardly changed at all, held in place by the glue of intertribal hatred and distrust.'

It hardly needs saying that McGahern viewed this intertribal hatred and disgust with horror. The idea for him of attacking your own neighbours was a very shocking idea. He would say that if only people in Northern Ireland could improve their manners, then they might stop shooting each other, or when that stopped, hating each other or disliking each other in ways that caused pain or the slightest form of civil disturbance. McGahern himself was capable of great dislikes, but he saw no reason why anyone should stretch personal dislike into the public realm in any way; he saw no reason why he could not pass people

he disliked on the street with a polite salute, and then go to his own house and mind his own business.

Towards the end of his final novel *That They Might Face the Rising Sun*, John McGahern places an extraordinary encounter, which is clearly an encounter between thinly disguised versions of himself and the IRA leader John Joe McGirl, whom he knew as a neighbour. When I asked him if the encounter had actually taken place, he said no, he had imagined it. It was another example of McGahern's interest in dramatizing opposites, including the opposite to

himself, giving someone whose politics he disliked intensely a life and a charm and a sort of stoical wisdom while refusing to gloss over the cruelty, the fanaticism. In this encounter they talk of everything except their differences, but eventually Jimmy Joe McKiernan, who is McGirl, addresses Rutledge, who is McGahern, directly on the subject. "You don't seem to have any interest in our cause," he says. "No," Rutledge said, "I don't like violence." "You don't believe in freedom, then." "Our country is free." "A part of it is not free." "That is a matter for the other part. I don't think it's any of our business." "I think differently. I believe

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it is all our business.” Rutledge knew that as he was neither a follower nor a leader he must look useless or worse than useless to this man of commitment and action. As far as Jimmy Joe was concerned he might as well be listening to the birds like an eejit on the far side of the lake, and he made no further attempt at speech.’

This business of offering to the other side a full effort at understanding in McGahern’s novel might be a metaphor for how progress will be made in Ireland, not only between the tribes within the North, or between the North and South, but between those who have health insurance and those who don’t in the Republic, or those who live west of the Bann or east of it in the North, or indeed between gay people in the Republic of whom I am one, and those who run our state who would offer our way of loving less respect than they would offer their own way of loving. Hatred, division, such lack of respect arise from a failure of imagination. Quietly and modestly, John McGahern understood that by practicing his art he was offering the society which had wounded him a way out of its own prejudices. It seemed to amuse him, or at least he never complained, that only some of us took him at his word.

Bob Bain: an independent spirit

I wish I had been able to introduce him to Bob Bain. As I walked between Keady and Darkley in south Armagh in 1986 I had trouble finding Pastor Bain’s house. When I did and when his wife appeared, there was something about her, something graceful, almost sweet in her way of watching me, but she



Bob Bain in the new Darkley Gospel Hall

was suspicious as well. And as I found myself asking her if she were born again, her face opened into a pure brightness as she said that she was, and she gave me her husband’s phone number and said that if I wanted to come to the Sunday service I should ask him. The congregation had dwindled, she said, since the shooting, people were afraid. The border was just half a mile down the road. Later, when I phoned Bob Bain he said that he had two questions for me. One, was I member of the INLA and two, what religion was I. For the first I said ‘no’ with as much conviction as I could muster, and for the second I uneasily told him that I was a Catholic. ‘You know you must be born again,’ he said and I thought that he meant that I could not come to the service. But then



he explained that I would have to be born again for my life, but of course I could come to the service.

When I saw him that Sunday conducting the service in what was more a wooden hut than a chapel, I realized that he belonged to one of the oldest traditions we have in Ireland, the tradition of the old fashioned, born again preacher, the sort of man who flourished in the Great Revival of 1859 when a hundred thousand people were born again. It was, I thought that day, terrible that I had never met a man like him before, or even read much about his tradition, even though I had studied history at university. It was one of those moments when the partition of Ireland seemed to me immensely sad: my community in the South had been deprived of the presence of men like Bob Bain as a living, vibrant, fully accepted part of our religious and civic life. We could have been nourished by the sheer difference.

That day at the service he asked his congregation to sing the hymn for me that they were singing three years earlier when gunmen from the INLA came to the outside door and shot the three men who were standing there dead, and then began to shoot through the thin wooden walls of the church. They shot low because they knew the congregation was lying on the floor, and they injured many members of Pastor Bain's congregation before they fled across the border to the South.

Pastor Bain was pure charm. When he preached against other religions in favour of being born again as he was,

or even when I watched him trying to expel the devil from a young girl, he had a way with him that was oddly innocent, likeable, bustling, busy with good intent. When we talked, he made clear that he viewed the South where I came from as a very foreign place indeed, but his main interest was the state of my soul. Ten years later, when I came back, he had a brand new church built and he seemed proud of it and filled with hope. By that time I had learned to drive and some Sundays I would go up to Darkley on my own and attend his service. His face would light up when I appeared, and he would walk past me winking as though we were both conspirators in something.

For a time, he was sure he had me, a new soul, but each time after a talk with him instead I would drive back to Dublin unconverted but utterly inspired by his good manners, the fierce independence of his spirit, his resilience, his charm, the hospitality of his congregation, and his hope. I didn't agree with him, I never even got to argue with him, there were things about myself that I certainly didn't tell him. I didn't share a religious belief with him, but I got something from him that I am grateful for. I wished on some of those visits that everyone in the South of Ireland could have known this man too. Not so they could feel sorry for him. He was not simply a victim of an act of terrorism committed in our name by those who looked for safe havens in our country. He was a man who stood alone, read the Bible on his own, put great thought into issues of civil and supreme authority and out of this had come a shining grace.



Loneliness and dignity

One of the reasons why John McGahern and Bob Bain may be important now is not merely for how they were picked on and how they survived and learned to live with themselves, and how they developed their forgiveness with elegance and style. But it is something else, something more melancholy. There was a loneliness about both of them. Although both of them stayed in Ireland, it was as though they kept one eye on exit routes and had their bags packed, at least metaphorically. It would not have mattered much to either of them, I think, if they had to leave the country. They would have been the same two men anywhere. And maybe this is why I wanted to dwell on them now because I think in the next decade, both South and North, many young people will leave Ireland, and they will do so for all sorts of reasons, and they will become themselves outside the confines or the comforts of home. In their loneliness and their fierce dignity, I wanted to invoke both John McGahern and Pastor Bain as two figures who in one way lived close to the border, a place others might have called home, but in a better way, in an exemplary way, they lived deeply and truthfully within themselves. It is as much as any of us can hope for.

Among Colm Toibin's novels are *The Master*, a fictional account of a period in the life of the author Henry James, which was shortlisted for the 2004 Man Booker Prize and won the 2006 IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, and *Brooklyn*, which won the 2009 Costa Novel Award. This is the text of an address given

to the British Irish Association's annual conference in Clare College Cambridge in September 2009.



Community development along the border: **an instrument for the development of the cross-border region?**

Brian Harvey

Community development began in Ireland in August 1891 with the formation of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland. The board used community development as a tool to improve the economic and social conditions of communities living along the west coast of Ireland and indeed, far inland. But, just as 'the west' was one of the main problematic issues of the island at the end of the 19th century, the depressed conditions of the Irish border became one of the main problematic issues of the island a hundred years later, at the end of the 20th century. Despite being over sixty years old, the border region did not become a distinct area of economic and social attention until the 1980s¹.



Brian Harvey

With the arrival of the reformed EU Structural Funds in 1989, the Irish border began to attract European Union cross-border funding for economic development in the form of the INTERREG programme. With the introduction of the EU PEACE programme in 1994, there was a substantial investment in voluntary and community organisations in the border counties. The originator of the programme, President Jacques Delors, assigned a high priority to the role of voluntary and community organisations in underpinning the peace process and building social inclusion. Indeed, PEACE I saw the allocation of no less than 15,000 grants during 1994-1999,

most to voluntary and community organisations. The border region went from having one of the lowest levels of investment in community development to, over a very short period of time, one of the highest in the island.

These developments prompted the Cross Border Centre for Community Development at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) to investigate, a decade later, the nature of community development along the border (this being defined as 15 kilometres on either side). In particular, it wished to address the following questions: To what extent was community development an instrument for the economic and



social development of the cross-border region? What kind of organisations functioned there, who did they work with and what could we find out about them? Did they work and cooperate across the border? What were the cross-border policy issues arising from their work? Community development had been an instrument of economic and social development in Northern Ireland since the 1960s². In the Republic, the government had introduced the Community Development Programme, subsequently considered a model of good practice across Europe, in 1987. Little, though, was known of the specificities of community development along or across the Irish border.

The Dundalk IT investigation was based on a survey of community development organisations in the study area using databases held by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (for the North) and the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh (for the South); on interviews with stakeholders and experts; and on case studies of 20 community development organisations working across the border.³ This article describes the outcomes and the policy issues arising. Here the terms 'Northern Ireland' and 'the North' are used interchangeably purely to break the narrative, as are 'the South' and 'the Republic'.

Community development organisations in the border region

The Dundalk IT mapping exercise found that there were two main concentrations of community development organisations: Derry (where the largest

single number is to be found) and then Newry. There are three minor concentrations: in descending order, Armagh, Enniskillen and Strabane. There are few community development groups in parts of Fermanagh on the northern side and parts of Cavan-Leitrim on the southern side, but this reflects areas of low population density. Small parish or district-based organisations featured especially strongly on the northern side of the border, but their small number on the southern side was probably more a function of the databases used than an indication of their absence.

Most of the community development organisations in the study area were formed in the late 1980s to late 1990s. None was formed in the Republic before 1981, but two in Northern Ireland before the 1970s. Historically, they are a new phenomenon and the surge of investment represented by the PEACE I programme is evident. Most of the organisations in the Republic dated to the PEACE programme period, but some pre-dated it in the North. All the groups studied were formally constituted as organisations, with management committees or boards.

By size and funding, they comprised a mixture of small, parish-based organisations (more so in Northern Ireland, with incomes of less than £10,000 a year), medium size bodies (mainly with PEACE programme funding) and a small number of larger organisations with revenues over €1 million (more so in the North). Many groups were quite entrepreneurial, attracting not only government funding, as might be expected, but raising

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money through fund-raising, sales and services. The investigation confirmed earlier North-South studies which found the voluntary and community sector to be more mature in Northern Ireland than the Republic, a function of the presence of the welfare state in the North and the need for voluntary organization to deliver its social services.⁴ Community development groups in the North were better linked to 'national' (in the sense of Northern Ireland-wide) networks than those in the South, again indicating a higher level of development (87% in the North compared to 77% in the South).

Typical organisations had an average of 4.2 full-time staff in the Republic of Ireland and 2.7 in Northern Ireland. Many northern organisations were so small as to have no staff at all. The typical group here had 10 to 12 volunteers. In the South, Social Employment Schemes were used by no less than three-quarters of all organisations, with an average of 6.3 employees per organization, indicating a continued, substantial use of these schemes. When asked about their target groups, most described themselves as working generically with local communities, disadvantaged and socially excluded people.

Specifically, the main target groups were, in descending order, young people, older people and unemployed people. Very few organisations were found to be working with people with disabilities or in environmental action. There were few women's organisations, although some groups were affiliated to women's networks. In the North, a number of groups worked in the

social economy, a category absent in the South. In summary, community development organisations along the border may be typologized as a few large organisations, with substantial revenues and large staff numbers; a cluster of medium-size organisations, with staff and volunteers, this being the principal category in the Republic where Social Employment Scheme workers are used extensively; and smaller organisations, without staff, this being an important group in Northern Ireland.

Cross-border cooperation

Turning to the area of cross-border cooperation, 62% of groups in Northern Ireland and 85% of Southern groups worked across the border. The table illustrates the nature of that cooperation:

	NI	RoI
Occasional	62%	33%
Regular but informal	19%	29%
Formal partnership	19%	38%

Again, the Southern figures are higher the more intense the cross-border relationship becomes, a point we return to later. The nature of their work was studied in more detail, with case studies of 20 organisations known to be active in cross-border cooperation covering such diverse fields as ex-prisoners, arts, generic community development, peace-building and reconciliation, mental health, local development, victims of the 'Troubles', second chance education, women, Travellers, and the built environment. Here, the objectives were to see whether there was a 'typical' cross border project and to



try to capture the dynamics of such a project's relationship.

Typically, organisations were ten years old. Many had opened contacts or begun their work during the time of the PEACE I programme in the 1990s. Most projects, though, involved individuals who had longstanding cross-border contacts that went back many years before, even during the worst times of the 'Troubles'. Groups here were typical of organisations that had received start-up money during PEACE I and benefitted from the more substantial programme grants of PEACE II (2000-2006). Typical projects involved two staff (often one full-time and one part-time) with a committee of eight to ten activists. These were often 'serial activists' and involved in other community based organisations, often sporting (e.g. Gaelic Athletic Association) or educational (e.g. local schools).

One of the key findings was the key role played by individual leadership, although such 'leaders' were universally modest people who played down their own significance. It was apparent that many of these projects were initiated and subsequently driven by one person, who had a vision of and passion for cross-border work and cross-border development and was prepared to commit considerable time and energy to such a venture, some a lifetime. These were not misty-eyed visionaries, but people with a hands-on appreciation of the practical difficulties of bridging gaps and differences. Often they appeared to be motivated by a combination of the desire for reconciliation between the nationalist and unionist communities, the

ideal of economic and social integration between North and South, and the aspiration for improved socio-economic conditions for their locality, county or region.

A second, intriguing finding was the different organisational and structural forms which cross-border cooperation took. Several forms were evident:

- **'Twin pairs'**. Two organisations working in cooperation with one another for mutual learning, coming together purely to execute a single time-limited project, but each retaining its organisational structure (e.g. Donegal Travellers Project; Newhaven Trust);
- **'Twin pairs' but with joint committee**. Here two organisations worked together, but had a common working committee, drawn in equal numbers from each parent body (e.g. Riverbrooke, *Mind the Gap*);
- **Transboundary**. Here, an organization based in one jurisdiction expanded into the other (but without setting up another body to work in the other jurisdiction). This was a northern phenomenon, brought about when Northern Ireland-based organisations began to provide either services in the Republic (e.g. STEER in mental health services) or attracted members there (e.g. people who were victims of the 'Troubles');
- **Cluster**. This was an organisational form in which a cluster of organisations came together for a project, but was anchored by one organization, normally in the North (e.g. Derry Well Woman Centre in



- the area of women's health);
- **Single company partnership.** This was probably the purest form of cross-border organization, with a single company and a single management, based in one jurisdiction, operating freely across the border zone. This type of body had probably the strongest commitment to integrated development and organisationally attempted to deny the border as an obstacle. Most were based in Northern Ireland and typically called themselves 'partnerships' (e.g. Sliabh Beagh Cross-Border Partnership, DergFinn Partnership, Tyrone Donegal Partnership).

Traditionally, the history of cross-border cooperation in Europe has been a narrative of progression from 'first contact' between pairs engaged in back-to-back development; to cooperation in projects that traverse borders; and finally to devolved, integrated, single company operations working in such a way as to minimize and eventually eliminate the distorting effects of land borders. The experience of the Irish border shows that these trajectories are more complex and that there was no natural progression from 'first contact' to 'pure partnership'. Moreover, the number of 'pure' cross-border partnerships was limited to single figures and there was little evidence of new ones in formation. Some of these partnerships were inspired by the International Fund for Ireland, but in organisational form they seem to have reached a plateau.

Although cross-border working had

now become routine, this did not mean that it had become easy. Many commented on how slow it still was and that the pace was still set by the slowest partner. Northern organisations were more than prepared to work across the border now, but wanted to take one step cautiously at a time so as to bring all their members along. Courtships leading to regular or formal partnerships generally started from the South, as the above table indicates.

Cross-border working was also more expensive, the two main complaints being the cost of mobile phone calls, which even if they were only a kilometre away attracted high, cross-border rates; and the lack of helpfulness by banks in handling two currencies, with the occasional imposition of double conversion charges. All organisations found funding a big struggle. Many funding schemes provided grants for only a year or two at a time, creating a level of uncertainty that made it difficult to attract or retain staff. An additional complication was that some fields of work which attracted funding in one jurisdiction did not do so in the other, a good example being improvements to the physical environment, where there was no funding scheme for voluntary and community organisations in the Republic. One was left with the impression that these organisations had achieved much with little.

An important finding was that although voluntary and community organisations had now learned to work across the border - indeed, it was no longer 'news' for the local press - governments had not. Implementation of legislation was



different, to the extent that (as one environmental project reported) shooting wildlife illegally on one side of the border would earn a fine or worse on one side, but no penalty on the other; and fire engines could put out a mountain fire up to the borderline on one side, but not douse the flames a metre away on the other. One statutory body might fund a cross-border housing project from the northern side, but this was no good if the southern opposite number was not interested.

Especially absurd were funding restrictions which prohibited participation from people from the one side of the border at a location on the other. Thus one men's health *cross-border* project based in the North was

required to turn away people with southern addresses; an arts project lost its grant for ecumenically but foolishly holding an event 250 metres 'on the other side'; and one playgroup in the North found an official noting down Donegal-registered plates so as to question southern participants what were they doing there! These incidents might be amusing were it not that they identified such an extraordinary level of inflexibility in the bureaucratic mind and the still deadening legacy of back-to-back development.

It would be easy to portray these issues as minor irritants, but they went further than that. Not only were they operational obstacles to voluntary and community activity and contrary to the imperatives

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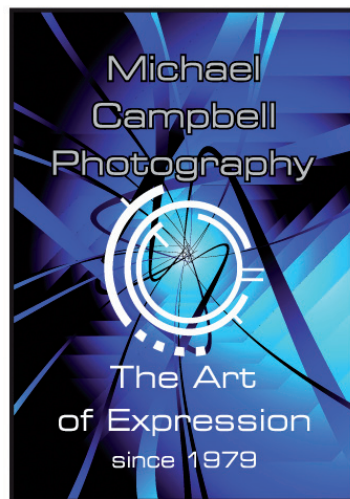
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of European integration, but they negatively affected the quality of life and efforts to turn the region into a desirable place in which to live. What was more frustrating still was that voluntary organisations were rebuffed when they suggested to statutory authorities that they should get their act together and try to sort out these difficulties.

Positively, though, there was evidence that models of good practice in one jurisdiction were successfully applied to the other. Most of the traffic was from the North to the South and was evident in the fields of mental health, volunteering and projects to improve the physical environment. Here, southern organisations began to emulate the activities and approach of organisations in the North which had experience and a track record in these areas. A weakness of the cross-border projects generally, although there were exceptions, was that few had the time to document and disseminate their work comprehensively and develop the policy issues arising. The struggle for funding took precedence, to the extent that the policy focus of projects was limited and the lessons arising were not fed into the political and administrative systems.

Staying with the funding picture, a striking feature was the limited number of funding opportunities for cross-border activity. Apart from the PEACE programmes, which included strands to fund cross-border activities, the only other significant funding opportunity was INTERREG III (2000-2006). The first two INTERREG programmes in the 1990s had been entirely governmental, but INTERREG III included an

imaginative strand to fund cross-border activity for voluntary and community organisations: Priority 3 - Civic and Community Networking. This was a real breakthrough and was, unsurprisingly, oversubscribed fourfold.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of cross-border funding was the absence of a commitment to cross-border cooperation by voluntary and community organisations from the two governments. This might be understandable in the case of Northern Ireland, but granted the iconic significance of the border to the Republic's government, its absence was more difficult to comprehend. While the Irish Department for Foreign Affairs operated a small 'reconciliation fund' for voluntary and community organisations, it was precisely that, a reconciliation fund, not a fund for cross-border cooperation. And it was not that the government's attention had not been drawn to the issue, for Cooperation Ireland had been vocal about the problem ever since it was established. Ninety years after partition, the two governments had still to work out strategies to support cross-border cooperation by civil society organisations. Many voluntary and community organisations voiced the suspicion that so long as European funding was there, they could comfortably postpone facing the issue.

The issue is actually more profound than that, and an extraordinary example of a lost opportunity. In the case of community development, there was and is no institute to support such work in either part of the island. The border



The Sliabh Beagh hills on the Monaghan-Tyrone border: the Sliabh Beagh Cross-border Partnership is one of the very few examples of a 'single company' cross-border partnership

region of the island provided an unusual example in Europe of an intense level of community development in a border region coming out of conflict, one where the Irish experience could be most useful to other countries. In his masterly *Ireland 1912-85*, Lee identified as one of the most serious problems in the island's development experience our inability to develop self-knowledge and build our own intellectual infrastructure, especially in those areas in which we actually excel⁶. The Workers Educational Association in Belfast pressed the idea of a community development institute, one which could support such activity across the island, but the Department of Social Development there was not even prepared to enter a preliminary discussion on the topic.

Policy issues arising

The single most important policy issue was the question of how the issues arising from community development along the border could be channelled into the administrative political system so as to ensure the socio-economic development of the border region. European research has shown how good levels of cross-border cooperation, both at governmental level and at civil society level, can transform border zones from 'problem' regions into areas of prosperity, the best example being the Meuse-Rhine triangle between Germany, Netherlands and Belgium. Indeed, the investment of PEACE I programme funding from the mid-nineties onwards was such that within a few years, the border counties (with the one exception of Donegal) were no longer at the top of the list of the poorest counties of



the Republic: the geographical locus of poverty shifted to the midlands and the south east. A feature of the PEACE I programme was that it included a Consultative Forum of voluntary and community organisations so that their concerns could be channelled back to their respective governments.

Unfortunately, that was as far as it got. When the PEACE II programme was ushered in, there was no Consultative Forum. No explanation was given and the PEACE II programme documents made no reference to it. It was simply airbrushed out of history, as surely as in an official Soviet history of undesirable people and events. Without such a forum, the policy issues arising from the cross-border work of voluntary and community organisations had no home where the issues could be progressed. Instead, they must be pursued separately within the two jurisdictions, whose lack of cooperation was often at the root of these policy problems in the first place. In this situation, problems will continue to be addressed in the traditional, back-to-back way by governments and statutory bodies that seem unable to act or work coherently across borders. They are channelled into the political system by border region deputies, senators and MLAs who continue to be marginal in a political process dominated by the demands of the respective capitals of Dublin and Belfast. They cannot find institutional expression.

Article 19 of the Good Friday Agreement proposed 'an independent Consultative Forum appointed by the two administrations, representative of civic

society, comprising the social partners and other members with expertise in social, cultural, economic and other issues' (not be confused with the Civic Forum established under the Agreement and limited to Northern Ireland). Article 22 of the St Andrews Agreement of October 2006 renewed this commitment by stating that 'the Northern Ireland Executive would support the establishment of an independent north/south Consultative Forum appointed by the two administrations and representative of civil society'.

The continued absence of a formal civil society dimension in cross-border cooperation remains a point of extraordinary weakness in the Irish cross-border relationship. Examples from other parts of Europe show that people-to-people cooperation is given prominence, funding, permanence and institutional expression in successful cross-border relationships⁶. Such cross-border cooperation is strongly focussed on social policy cooperation: health, childcare, older people, education, health and social services and young people⁷. To give an example in the area of health services, several countries have developed cross-border health zones where citizens from one side of the border can use the health services of another, and on the Spanish-French border at Puigcerda in the eastern Pyrenees a cross-border hospital is opening. By contrast, health services along the Irish border remain incompatible - not just a function of the apparently intractable difficulties of integrating two different systems, but, at least as important, the lack of a forum where civil society is present and where



these difficulties could be resolved. Not only that, but a related problem is the perception by both governments that cross-border cooperation should be principally around economic issues, rather than the social concerns that would come to the fore in 'people-to-people' cooperation. At the core of this is the fact that social policy is not at the heart of the North-South relationship. Neither social policy in general nor community development in particular were specified areas of cooperation under the Good Friday Agreement. Examination of the work of the North

South Ministerial Council finds few activities in these areas, the closest being in the health and environmental areas.

When the two governments commissioned their most recent scoping study of North-South cooperation, their focus was on economic cooperation, science, technology, innovation, trade, tourism, investment and enterprise⁸. Although there was a chapter on the €68 billion on infrastructure which the two governments planned to spend by 2017, this did not include a single

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cent for community infrastructure, nor was there any reference to social policy, community development, nor governance structures. The only social policy area where progress has been made was free travel schemes for pensioners. For all the expectation that community development groups would do the legwork of peace and reconciliation, there was remarkably little recognition of their activities in the bigger North-South debate, nor in investment decisions. The Republic's government seemed to have a limited understanding of the need for investment in 'soft' social infrastructure: 'it could find the money for subsidising Derry airport, but not for community development', said one critic. Although there was a strong focus on trade integration, business links and commercial partnerships, 'we still don't even have a common directory of voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises', said another.

Conclusion

For much of the century to the mid-1990s, the experience of the Irish border was one of conflict and ever-deepening social deprivation and isolation. The intervention of EU President Jacques Delors in bringing the PEACE programme to Ireland showed a profound grasp of history, politics and social policy in general, and the dynamic of conflicted cross-border regions in particular. His underlying assumption was that a problematic, conflicted border region would not prosper purely in the absence of violence: indeed throughout the 20th century the economic and social decline of the Irish border region continued

seamlessly, uninterrupted by the earlier ceasefires of 1923 and 1963. Pro-active measures and investment are necessary to re-build conflicted border regions, and here the PEACE programme was the crucial catalyst for the regeneration of the border region generally, and for community development and cross-border cooperation by voluntary and community organisations in particular. It raised the expectations of people like social entrepreneurs who would like to turn the border region into a desirable place in which to live, a model of reconciliation and cross-border integration, one of balanced economic, social and sustainable development.

The Dundalk IT study has enabled us to get a clearer picture of the nature, extent and characteristics of community development along the Irish border. It provided a portrait of how voluntary and community organisations cooperate across the border; the organisational forms and trajectories they follow; a sense of the issues arising; a map of the way forward, and the formidable institutional, political and mindset problems that have yet to be overcome.

Postscript: not a happy ending yet

Sadly, this story does not yet seem to have a happy ending. The idea of a North-South Consultative Forum failed to progress even when the other institutions of the Good Friday Agreement were restored. Although in October 2009 an exasperated Department of the Taoiseach convened a meeting in Dublin of interested parties to progress the idea, it became clear that it could go no further without the



cooperation of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland. It seems that opposition to civil society is not just a historic phenomenon limited to the old régimes of eastern and central Europe in the 1980s. On the funding side, the situation went backward as the INTERREG III programme's promise of *Civic and community networking* turned out to be a false dawn. Both the INTERREG IV programme and the PEACE III programme (both 2007-2013) were governmentalized, with a diminished role for voluntary and community organisations, the bulk of funding being routed through government bodies and especially local government.

Attempts to develop a North-South Voluntary and Community Sector Forum were initiated by the Department for Social Development in Belfast. Although several meetings took place, it fell into disuse because of lack of support from its opposite number in Dublin. Worse was to follow, for in the Republic the government, in implementing drastic funding cutbacks, effectively repudiated community development as an instrument to assist disadvantaged communities, closing in 2009 the internationally acclaimed Community Development Programme and withdrawing funding from the most vocal voluntary and community organisations⁹. The Combat Poverty Agency, which had funded community development groups in the border region and was a delivery body for the PEACE programmes, was abolished. And in a final endnote, the Cross Border Centre for Community Development in Dundalk was closed

at the end of 2008 within weeks of the completion of this study.

Brian Harvey is an independent social researcher who lives in Dublin and works for organisations concerned with community development, social inclusion and equality in both parts of Ireland. He was the author of the 2008 Dundalk Institute of Technology study: *Audit of community development in the cross border region*.

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A sense of proportion in cross-border shopping: **what the most recent statistics show**

Eoin Magennis, Steve MacFeely and Aidan Gough

Since late 2008 the issue of cross-border shopping has been a favourite topic of media interest and speculation. Stories emerged around Christmas 2008 about ASDA in Enniskillen being the sixth top performing store in the global Wal-Mart chain worldwide.¹ Around the same time Irish Minister of Finance, Brian Lenihan, made the comment that ‘people should do their patriotic duty’ and shop locally rather than across the border.² The response from the retail industry lobby groups, North and South, has fed the story. One claim was that every 150 cross-border trips costs one retail job in Ireland. Contestable, headline grabbing statements such as ‘British shops’ war on Irish’, and ‘Shoppers going North are not traitors’ fuelled misguided perceptions.³ Unfortunately, much of what has been written is based on an imprecise extrapolation from small sample-based surveys and anecdotal evidence from shop owners. In the absence of robust statistics, a sense of perspective on cross-border shopping was in danger of being lost.



Eoin Magennis



Steve MacFeely



Aidan Gough

In February 2009 the Office of the Revenue Commissioners and the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in the Republic published a report entitled *The Implications of Cross Border Shopping for the Irish Exchequer*. The report highlighted the ‘significant difficulties associated with quantifying the extent of cross-border shopping and estimating

the implications for the Irish exchequer’ and recommended that the best way to measure the loss in Irish tax revenue would be a survey of cross-border shoppers.

As a result, a module on cross-border shopping was included on the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in



the second quarter (April to June) of 2009.⁴ One member of each household in the Republic answered questions on behalf of the household about travel to Northern Ireland in the previous 12 months and specifically about shopping in Northern Ireland. The questions on shopping in Northern Ireland focussed on how much households spent, the frequency of shopping trips and whether this had changed in the previous year. The survey also asked about intentions for shopping in Northern Ireland in the following year. As a result, we are now in a position to take a more informed view of cross-border shopping from Ireland into Northern Ireland.

Key Findings

How many and how often?

According to the Quarterly National Household Survey, 16% of the Republic of Ireland's households made at least one shopping trip to Northern Ireland in the 12 months before the second quarter of 2009. Looking only at the 16% of households who shopped in Northern Ireland, the average number of trips was 6.7 (equivalent to just over one for every household in the Republic of Ireland).

The highest proportion of households who shopped in Northern Ireland was, as might be expected, recorded in the Border region (41%). There was then a gap to the next nearest regions: the Mid-East (22%), Dublin (21%), the Midlands (18%) and the West (14%).

Unsurprisingly, below a line from Wicklow to Galway the costs of travelling or lack of market knowledge

became an inhibitor, with a significant drop to fewer than 5% going to shop in the North. In individual regions this figure was even lower: 4% in the South East; 3% in the Mid-West and 2% in the South-West. It is noteworthy that results from the Household Travel Survey identify the same pattern, with most tourism traffic into Northern Ireland from counties north of the Wicklow-Galway axis.

In terms of whether or not there has been a sudden upsurge in cross-border shopping activity from the Republic to Northern Ireland, the QNHS tells us that in 2008-2009 only one in ten households did more cross-border shopping than in previous years. In terms of intentions for the year 2009-2010, 78% of respondents did not intend to cross the border to shop, while 14% would occasionally go for 'once-off' purchases and 7% more regularly. Regular cross-border shoppers tended, again not surprisingly, to be from the Border region, with almost one quarter (23%) of households from the Border region intending to shop regularly in Northern Ireland.

There is a similar regional variation in the frequency of trips. Of those households who shopped in Northern Ireland, those in the Border region travelled more than once a month (14.4 trips in the 12 months). None of the other regions recorded frequencies of higher than five trips, with travellers from the far south crossing the border only twice to shop.

How much?

The Quarterly National Household Survey estimates that the total Irish



A Dublin woman loads her car outside a Newry shopping centre.

household expenditure on shopping in Northern Ireland in the year up to April 2009 was €435 million. Estimated expenditure on shopping was based on all trips to Northern Ireland, including €331 million in trips specifically for shopping and €104 million on trips where shopping was not the main purpose but shopping expenditure was incurred. The highest total expenditure on shopping was recorded in the Border region (€181 million) and in the Dublin region (€119 million). The lowest total expenditure on shopping was in the Mid-West (€8 million), South-West (€13 million) and South-East regions (€11 million). Most people (51%) spent between €100 and €299 per trip, with only 4% spending more than €1,000 on their most recent trip.

Again the regional variations hold strongly, with people who travelled furthest (and least number of times)

tending to spend more. Those households from the far south spent more than three times on their most recent trip than their counterparts in the Border region (€492 compared to €150, or a ratio of 3.1). This is also reflected in the expenditure bands, with 88% of those from the Border region spending less than €299 and none above €1,000.

For what?

The Quarterly National Household Survey goes on to provide some details on what Irish households bought in Northern Ireland. On their most recent trip, 79% of households bought groceries, 44% bought alcohol, 42% bought clothing and durables, 26% cosmetics and 19% 'other'.

However, the idea that cheaper alcohol is the key reason for cross-border shopping is not supported by the figures



for what people spent on different categories. Those questioned said that on their most recent trip, groceries accounted for 40% of expenditure, clothing and durables for 27%, 'other' for 18%, alcohol for 11% and cosmetics for 4%.

Again, there are regional and household variations in what people bought on their most recent cross-border shopping trips. The exception to this rule is the alcohol category, with all regions around the 11% average. Significant variations include households in the Border region spending almost two thirds on groceries, while those from Dublin and the far south spent significantly above the average on clothing and durables.

Table 1 uses the overall figure of €435 million in expenditure in the year up to April 2009 to give figures for each of the categories.

In terms of seasonality, or the important 'Christmas effect' on retail, this overall

expenditure estimate is based on the 12 month period from the second quarter of 2008 on and thus includes the 2008 Christmas period.

Some conclusions

The first point about the Quarterly National Household Survey is it shows that cross-border shopping has increased but remains a minority pursuit. Of all households in the South, 84% did not shop in the North in the 12 months before the second quarter of 2009. Of those that did, one in three either did the same amount of shopping or less than in previous years. In the 12 months after the second quarter of 2009 only 7% of households said they intended to cross the border regularly to shop.

Secondly, geography matters, with the attraction of cross-border shopping lessening with distance from the border. Curiosity may take some shoppers from Munster to Northern Ireland, but this appears to be outweighed by the

Table 1: Total cross-border shopping expenditures by category

Type of goods purchased	% of average expenditure on most recent shopping trip	Total amount of expenditure in previous 12 months (€m)
Groceries*	39.8	173.1
Clothing & Durables**	26.8	116.6
Other	18.5	80.5
Alcohol	11.2	48.7
Cosmetics	3.7	16.1

Source: Calculations based on QNHS (December 2009)

Notes: *Includes tobacco **Includes TVs, furniture etc



transport costs and time involved.⁵ Indeed, the slightly higher proportions of cross-border shoppers in eastern counties may reflect the better road and public transport infrastructure serving that corridor into Northern Ireland. Also, given the amounts spent and on what by shoppers from the far south, it is hard to escape the conclusion that people travelled longer distances for 'once-off' purchases rather than for savings on food and drink. This 'mental distance' is also reflected in tourism patterns, where people from Munster rarely travel to the border counties, let alone to Northern Ireland. There is, of course, the more rational cost-benefit issue: to compensate for the time and cost of travelling to the North from Munster, the expenditure must be high. This is comparable to the unusually high level of shopping expenditure evident from tourists travelling to New York in recent years.

Thirdly, the Southern Border counties are critical to cross-border shopping, though even in this region a majority (59%) are 'domestic in-shoppers'. More than one in ten shoppers from this region travel across the border more than once a month, making a cross-border trip a normal part of shopping patterns. However this may have been the case long before the current trend. In the Southern Border region there is almost an equal split among cross-border shoppers between those who have shopped more across the border in the previous 12 months and those who have done the same or less. In every other region, the split is more like two to one between those who have shopped more and those who have

done the same or less. This supports the idea that the Border counties have a more established pattern of shopping and to some degree act as a functional shopping unit.⁶

Fourthly, despite the anecdotal evidence and claims of interest groups, alcohol is not the primary expenditure category for Southern shoppers. Although almost half of households bought some alcohol on their most recent shopping trip, it is only the fourth (out of five) largest spending categories with only 11% of expenditure.

Interestingly, the close alignment of cross-border shopping patterns with the private consumption basket used to compile the Republic's Consumer Price Index (CPI) suggests that the bulk of cross-border shopping is straightforward substitute shopping, with people buying cheaper cross-border items in the same proportion as they normally buy them at home. Comparing the Quarterly National Household Survey spending patterns with the CPI basket is necessarily crude, as the CPI provides detailed expenditure breakdowns whereas QNHS respondents are asked to classify their expenditure into five broad categories⁷. Nevertheless, when the CPI basket is adjusted and rescaled to exclude services, motor fuels and consumption of alcohol on licensed premises, the similarity between the two baskets is striking (see *Table 2 on next page*).

This comparison, crude as it is, suggests a number of things. Firstly, it dispels the myth that purchases of alcohol are the primary motivation for cross-border shopping. It also suggests



Table 2: Comparison between Consumer Price Index and QNHS cross-border shopping baskets

Basket Categories	Cross-Border Shopping %	CPI excl Services etc. %
Groceries	39.8	47.8
Clothing & Durables	26.8	29.1
Other	18.5	8.6
Alcohol	11.2	10.3
Cosmetics	3.7	4.2
	100.0	100.0

that, notwithstanding occasional and often considerable once-off purchases, the basket for a typical cross-border shopping excursion is broadly similar to the average basket purchased by households in Republic of Ireland, i.e. the bulk of cross-border shopping is normal day-to-day shopping.

Again caution should be stressed. This comparison is crude and some uncertainty exists as to what the 'other' category in the QNHS includes. It could include misclassified fuel or durables. There may also be some unexplained variations around the classification of

'meals out'. Finally the Quarterly National Household Survey may also include non-consumer durables that will have no comparator in the CPI basket.

Finally, at the macroeconomic level, the Quarterly National Household Survey estimates the total figure for household expenditure in the 12 months up to the second quarter of 2009 at €435 million. This figure sits close to the range of estimates provided by CSO and the Revenue Commissioners in February 2009 (as detailed in Table 3), albeit at the lower end.

Table 3: Estimates and forecast of the value of cross-border shopping

Year	Estimated value of cross-border shopping
2007*	€210-340 million
2008*	€350-550 million
2008/09**	€435 million
2009* (forecast)	€450-700 million

Notes:

* Figures from 'The Implications of Cross-Border Shopping for the Irish Exchequer' (February 2009)

** Figure from QNHS (December 2009)



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The €435 million figure from the QNHS is likely to provide a more accurate estimate of total household expenditure than the earlier estimate of €450-700 million in the CSO/Revenue Commissioners' report. This larger forecast was based on what Irish shoppers spent in ASDA and Sainsburys (branches of which exist in Northern Ireland only) and on data provided by only some of the supermarket chains that operate in both jurisdictions or in Republic of Ireland only.⁸

Summary

A sense of proportion

The Quarterly National Household Survey results offer the opportunity to bring a sense of proportion into the debate on cross-border shopping that has been missing to date. While the 2009 QNHS (April-June) shows that one in ten households shopped more frequently in Northern Ireland than the previous year, it is also clear that, outside of the Southern Border region, there are only very modest levels of cross-border shopping. For all other regions in Ireland, the average numbers of shopping trips per household was less than or equal to one per year. Indeed, there is almost no cross-border shopping taking place in households in the Mid-West, South-West and South-East regions. Only 7% of households in the Republic said they intended to shop regularly in the North during the 12 months following the second quarter of 2009.

The QNHS estimate of €435 million spent by Southern households in

Northern Ireland in the 12 months up to April 2009 would result in an estimated loss to the Irish exchequer of approximately €45 million in VAT receipts and €25 million in excise duty. This amounts to less than 0.5% of total Irish Government VAT and excise revenue and less than 3% of total VAT receipts accrued from retail expenditure.

It's not new...

Moreover this is not a new phenomenon. Back in 1988 an ESRI report estimated that cross-border shopping amounted to 2% of 'national' retail expenditure.⁹ Using the Quarterly National Household Survey figures and Republic of Ireland's total household retail consumption for 2009 (€30.7bn excluding alcohol)¹⁰, it appears that cross border shopping accounts for less than 1.4% of total retail expenditure.

Flows in the other direction...

The fact that cross-border shopping is not new should be a reminder that a jurisdictional border is always associated with movements of goods, services and people (both legal and illegal), and that the balance often fluctuates depending on economic issues such as tax, cost of living and currency movements, and on social and political developments which can have impacts on different sectors of the economy. Spending by tourists undoubtedly benefits the South more than the North, at least in absolute terms. The purchasing of cars has been sensitive to both price and tax differences and currently favours Northern sellers and Southern buyers. Then there is the issue of fuel, which



can be traded across the border both legally and illegally. The tax differences here have benefited Southern retailers for most of the past decade, with an estimate in 2005 (by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee at Westminster) that up to £20 million per year in UK excise duty was being lost to fuel purchases in the South, a figure that is not far removed from the excise currently being lost to the Irish Exchequer from cross-border shopping.

Longer-term benefits

The level of and interest in cross-border shopping indicates a new level of transparency that will ultimately benefit the sector. Increased availability of information and the removal of barriers (which the improved cross-border road infrastructure has contributed to) stimulate market competition which ultimately leads to cost and price reductions. We have already seen some supermarket giants taking steps to reduce prices on the southern side of the border.

The inclusion by the Central Statistics Office of a module on cross-border shopping in the Quarterly National Household Survey has brought a sense of perspective to the sometimes emotive subject of cross-border shopping. This will allow for a more informed and reasoned debate on the issue, which can only help cross-border cooperation and policy development to further mutual benefit.

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2. This was widely reported at the time and resulted in some sharp responses: see 'Apology sought from Lenihan over "unpatriotic" shopping in Newry', *Irish Times*, 9 December 2008. The charge was laid again last year by the Tánaiste, Mary Coughlan: see 'Minister urges people to shop locally', *Irish Times*, 16 November 2009.
3. See 'One job lost for every 150 trips across the Border', *Irish Independent*, 30 November 2009; 'British shops' war on Irish', *Irish Mail*, 12 November 2009; and 'Shoppers going North are not traitors', *Irish Independent*,



26 November 2009. These headlines capture something of the tone of media coverage. However there has been more nuanced analysis from the economist Jim O'Leary, 'Going North to shop may prevent economy going south', *Irish Times*, 12 December 2008, and in a recent discussion on Irish Economy blog: see <http://www.irisheconomy.ie/index.php/2009/12/11/cso-on-cross-border-shopping/#comments>

4. For full results see http://www.cso.ie/releasespublications/documents/labour_market/current/qnhs_xborder.pdf

5. One interesting point is that 15% of shoppers from the South-West used the plane to travel to Northern Ireland (i.e from Cork to Belfast). The 'time involved' point comes from a survey of 500 cross-border shoppers carried out in June 2009 which found that 87% of these shoppers would only travel for up to one hour to 'save a quarter on their grocery bill'. See Mintel, *The Impact of Cross-border Shopping* (Irish Series, August 2009).

6. A topic for further research is the degree to which a cross-border shopping hinterland on the island of Ireland may be different from other European regions. The 'Reviving the Border Region Economy in a new era of peace and devolved government' research project, being carried out for the Centre for Cross Border Studies by a team led by Professors John Bradley and Michael Best, has a shopping module that will compare the Irish border with the German/Polish one. This will build on previous research: John Fitzgerald, Brendan Whelan and James

Williams, *An analysis of cross-border shopping*, ESRI General Research Papers 137 (1988), and Tanja Dmitrovic and Irena Vida, 'An examination of cross-border shopping behaviour in South-East Europe', *European Journal of Marketing*, 41/3 (2007), 382-395.

7. Alcohol, cosmetics, groceries (including tobacco), clothing and durables, and other.

8. The estimated losses of these latter two, apparently to cross-border shopping, were complicated by lost business to the overall economic downturn. Therefore, comparisons were made in relative performance between stores in border regions against those further south.

9. This figure is taken from Fitzgerald, Whelan and Williams, *An analysis of cross-border shopping*.

10. Calculation based on the authors' estimate – using 2007 figures for retail consumption and the Retail Sales Index since that year.



Dissolving Boundaries in North-South education

Roger Austin

In 1998 the then Irish Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, and the former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, took part in a historic video-conference link between two schools, one in Northern Ireland and the other in the Republic of Ireland. It was the first time that political leaders had used this technology in schools. This 'virtual' meeting between the two heads of state with two classes of students and their teachers led to a programme which has steadily expanded every year and has now reached 370 schools, 740 teachers and 26,600 students. The leaders' meeting was the start of the Dissolving Boundaries project, managed by the Schools of Education at the University of Ulster and National University of Ireland Maynooth.



Roger Austin

After more than a decade of work, it seems like a good time to ask:

- What exactly has the programme achieved?
- What lessons for the future, if any, might be drawn from Dissolving Boundaries' experience?

In considering lessons learned, we would like to consider both the island of Ireland and elsewhere. We have used three illustrative case studies of partner schools to consider these questions. The first case study is from two primary schools.

1. Changing community attitudes through primary school links

Anyone who has tried to open dialogue across the border in Ireland knows

that it is often extremely difficult to persuade the Protestant community in Northern Ireland to get involved. In spite of the achievements of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, there remain large pockets of suspicion on the northern side of the border about a possible united Ireland and whether an organised North-South school link would be supported by parents and governors. Here is the principal of a rural, controlled (i.e. predominantly Protestant) primary school reflecting on how his school became involved in the Dissolving Boundaries programme four years ago:

The parents had sort of indicated that it was ok to do it, but coming from a very difficult area here we needed to tread carefully. This



is a loyalist stronghold. We have people here whose relations, whose husbands or whatever have been shot and murdered. So it's a particularly entrenched area, and with so much accountability in schools now coming from parents' views, we feel a wee bit vulnerable sometimes in terms of taking on new projects.

The class teacher directly involved in the programme commented on how little contact the pupils had with children from 'down South', and how the school had involved parents from the very beginning, including them in the face to face visit that was being planned. In all their contact with parents, it was similarities between the two schools that were stressed - 'similar age group, farming background' – to create what the teacher described as 'non-threatening contact with children in another place'. He added:

Had we been paired with a school in Dublin, it wouldn't have worked. Not at all. And the parents would have been asking a lot more questions. I think once they were from the same sort of area it encouraged them and gave them a little comfort zone.

This is a significant observation in the context of the theoretical framework the Dissolving Boundaries team have used to influence the roll out of the programme. Allport's contact hypothesis suggests that for contact between different groups to be successful, certain conditions have to be met. One of these conditions is that the participants should be of 'equal status'. We have interpreted

this to mean that there should be sufficient similarity in terms of age, ability and aspiration for there to be enough common ground for dialogue to take place.

But to suggest that cross-border educational links are only a problem for schools in Northern Ireland would be a mistake. The principal of the Republic of Ireland school linked to the one described above painted a picture of her rural school that was in its own way isolated and somewhat drawn in upon itself.

We are a very small rural community. We're in a bog and you only come here to come here. You don't go through here to get anywhere else. And that in itself has ensured that there's very a much of sense of we're here and we're us. It's almost like an island in its own.

While noting the value of the local links her children had with others for 'tag rugby, Gaelic football, hurling and meeting them at sacraments', she stressed that 'the outside thing is wonderful'. This level of support from this principal was echoed by her partner colleague in Northern Ireland, who spoke of the potential she saw for 'the engagement, the opening of minds, for making a difference'. This kind of leadership, based on a vision of using technology to open minds and perspectives, is a critical element in the success of Dissolving Boundaries.

In their different ways, these two primary school principals also remind us of the geographical, political and historical



factors that in the past have caused misunderstandings, suspicion and fear. As the two schools began to think about the possibility of working together, the principals and their designated teachers met face to face for a planning session to decide what the focus of the curricular work should be. The principal of the school in the Republic of Ireland said;

We have the canal here and they have Lough Neagh. So the first year we talked a lot about that kind of thing. We have a lot in common. We have wáter, and water had a big impact on the community - it grew up around the building of the canal. There was no community before that. Their community grew up around the necessity of the work in the mill. So they learn a lot about what people can have in common.

For many schools in the programme, particularly in the early stages of a partnership, the fundamental goal is about trust-building. This often means starting work on issues which are not contentious. It led one of the Southern teachers to comment on her pupils' perceptions of the children in Northern Ireland:

They have no concept of interest in those children's lives in terms of their religious backgrounds, their historical background. They want to know: What do they eat? What do they watch on tv? What team do you follow? What music do you like? And when they get together, the friendships form on the basis of "oh

he likes such and such a team so I'm fine with him".

She went on, however, to observe that 'every time we do Irish history, which is historically quite complicated, with partition and everything else, somebody in the class mentions – "Aren't our friends in Northern Ireland...?"' She added that this 'reality' meant that it's real history, living history that they need for now.'

We can see in these comments both the importance of building links around pupils' interests, ensuring that the focus of work is age appropriate, but also the beginnings of changed perceptions about controversial issues in the curriculum.

The place of ICT in sustaining contact

At the start of the Dissolving Boundaries programme we knew that face to face meetings between schools could be important, but in order to make the relationship sustainable and long term, we needed to harness ICT to foster everyday contact. Schools now use three ICT applications to achieve this.

Two of the applications use software called Moodle which enables teachers and pupils to engage in on-line group discussion. We wanted to draw on another aspect of the contact hypothesis by getting away from the individual electronic pen-pal concept to foster group-to-group discussion, enabling children to interact with others in a way that naturally accommodated diversity. As the pupils soon discovered,



not all the children in a linked group were the same: some were white skinned and others not; some were passionate about soccer and others about Gaelic games.

At the annual planning conference, the teachers are shown the importance of splitting their classes into smaller teams in such a way that each team has a matching group in the other school. When they exchange group profiles they write as a group, describing their appearance, their likes and dislikes; so the on-line 'forum' is the place where regular messages are exchanged in a private and secure area. Traditionalists, worried at what might look like children spending time on the exchange of personal data about their lives, would be impressed by the improvement in writing skills that occur when there is a real audience. But beyond this, we concur with Wenger and others who argue that effective learning is often triggered by social interaction and, in this case, by having a real purpose for communicating. Once you have people you call 'friends' across the border, it starts a process of thinking about their perception of the world and how to express things sensitively.

We have a good example of this from the curricular work that these two schools carried out. After their initial study of the place of water in their two communities, the schools chose to study animals in China and Fair Trade. As each team researched an agreed aspect of the topic, they posted their findings into another part of Moodle, called a 'wiki', a shared on-line 'space' for building a sort of website. Often the pupils in one school will choose

one colour for their contributions, so that they can be distinguished from the work of the team members in the other school. One of the teachers described how his pupils reacted to this process:

"I love your picture on so and so", and then they send them one. You know that kind of thing. And when it comes to the next stage of the project, doing this animal stuff, it will be very much creating wiki pages and then maybe sending an email: "I've put in such a thing, will you add in what you think about it and send me an email if you think I should change – what do you think?" You know the way kids are with each other.

We see this as an excellent example of collaborative learning, with children effectively constructing knowledge at a distance, and doing this at the age of nine or ten. It's worth underlining the point that the software is not 'pre-packaged content'; it allows the learner to adapt it, to personalize it and then to show it off to the rest of the class. The key in this is that the two teams on each side of the border are working towards a common goal, namely the presentation of research on a topic that is part of the curriculum.

For this collaboration to happen, teachers use imagination and flexibility to see how work spanning a whole school year can 'fit in' with what they have to do anyway. The annual evaluation reports that the programme team produce (available at www.dissolvingboundaries.org) make clear how this process takes time; there



are no quick fixes here, just a steady accretion of experience. That is why when schools are invited to take part in Dissolving Boundaries, they are given extra help in the first year, but encouraged from Year Two to remain part of the programme 'family'. They get a reduced level of funding, but enough to attend an annual reflection and planning conference in September where they hear of the work that other schools have carried out and have time to plan their own activities for the year. In effect, we have a 'learning community', a steadily expanding network, with 30 new schools on each side of the border joining every year.

The two ICT applications described so far are both asynchronous: i.e. they do not require schools to be on-line at the same time. This has the very decided benefit of giving teachers the scope to fit Dissolving Boundaries work in around other commitments. It also means that the pupils have time to think and to discuss in their own groups what they should communicate to their partner team in the other school. Later in this article we will see how schools are using the third application, real-time video-conferencing, as a further means of sustaining contact.

To conclude this case study of the two primary schools, we focus on a non-technology programme component - the face to face visit - which many regard as the high point of the year.

Meeting face to face

The schools are given a small grant to contribute to a face to face meeting and

this often takes place at a venue half way between the two schools: popular venues include Dublin or Belfast Zoo, or one of the many outdoor or adventure centres. In some cases the venue is directly linked to the curricular work being done, but in others, such as this case study, the focus was more on team building through outdoor pursuits. The meeting was 'a huge motivation', 'the icing on the cake'. As one principal put it, it is the relationships built around the use of ICT that makes the face to face meeting successful:

Through the technology they have built up a good trusting relationship. And when they meet each other, they at least have a starting point to engage in conversation, group work and activities.

The partnering principal described how the two teams were brought together:

So the deal is the A team from our school and the A team from their school have to spend the day together and everything they do as a team. And you know it really makes a difference.

There's a climbing wall and the first thing they do is go round the bottom of it. Then they work with their own partner which is their email partner essentially. And that's all great. Then they are on archery teams, there's an assault course. And everything is team. And they are always - the As, Bs, Cs, Ds, Es and Fs.

For the children there is both excitement and a little anxiety about taking the



step from virtual contact at a distance to being in direct contact. One of the teachers in the Republic of Ireland described an incident involving one of her pupils;

A little girl in the class was typing to her friend saying, see you tomorrow and looking forward to it and all that, when she stopped dead. And this is the third year of the project. Are they Catholic or Protestant? Would she know what confirmation is? Because she'd had a confirmation the previous Monday and I said, "Oh yes, they probably do that". That was it, nothing else. The little one was into horses and so was she. She just didn't want to be telling her something that she mightn't know. That was it. That was the only time a child has mentioned religion in all the years of doing the project.

This growing sensitivity to cultural difference, which we see as one of the most important outcomes of the programme, also extends to the wider communities that the children belong to. In this case study there was direct parental involvement, with some of the northern parents and school governors accompanying the children on the visit, and southern parents actively backing the programme through the Parents' Association, and on one occasion providing a barbeque at the end of the visit. The whole process led the principal of the northern school to say that as a result of this sustained link, 'we've now got an extended family'.

Outcomes

One of the most interesting outcomes in this link is the way that the school in Northern Ireland was able to gradually win the parents over to a new perspective on school policy towards difference and diversity. At first, the attraction of a link 'far away' in the Republic of Ireland was partly that it wasn't too close to home. Research literature (e.g. Sundberg) confirms that geographical distance lessens anxiety about contact with an 'out group', but in this case the positive experience of working with parents on the cross-border link opened up new possibilities. The principal put it as follows:

Dissolving Boundaries was my first toe in the water with this community I have been blessed to work with here. And as a result of that it has enabled other activities: we have a scheme going with P3s every year with our closest neighbouring maintained (Roman Catholic) school where they meet for 12 weeks. They have two hours a week and they put on a fabulous show in the local community hall for parents, teachers and children. To do this we were able to call upon the experiences, the trust, the integrity of our Dissolving Boundaries project.

We should not underestimate the significance of this kind of development in terms of transforming the place of school in the community and doing this through the imaginative use of ICT. It's an excellent example of what has been referred to as 'E-schooling' (Austin and Anderson) where ICT accelerates change in the nature of learning



Children from Portmarnock National School, Co Dublin and St Mary's School, Limavady, Co Londonderry during a Dissolving Boundaries face to face meeting.

both inside the school and within the community it serves; to use Alan November's language, it 'transforms' learning.

In concluding this case study, we might reflect on the ways that this link has developed what we call 'citizenship' qualities in the pupils, not through a study of citizenship content as such, but through a process of working within a cross-border team and starting to understand diversity and respect difference. It is one indicator of success that in the year 2008-9 almost half of the Northern Irish primary schools involved were from the Protestant side of the community and just over half were from the Catholic side.

In the next case study, a link between two Special Schools, we ask about other meanings of the word 'boundaries' and how video-conferencing is opening

up unexpected horizons for teachers and young people.

2. Special School partnership

At the very start of the programme, we wanted the communication technologies to be open to all, and in this spirit of inclusiveness we invited Special Schools to join in. Since 1998 over 30 have taken part, enabling young people with a very wide range of learning needs to work together, often making exceptionally good use of video-conferencing. Technically, we have moved from using the rather expensive ISDN system to one that is now internet-based and therefore free once the school is connected to the internet, a critically important development in terms of extending access to schools while keeping within a tight budget.

In the case study chosen to illuminate



this part of Dissolving Boundaries, the link was between a Special School in Belfast and a Special School across the border. The northern pupils taking part were described as follows:

There's eleven of them. Some of them have Downs Syndrome. There are children with autism and there are children with general global delay. So the top ability children in the class would have quite low mild, moderate learning difficulties, and the lowest ability children would have severe learning difficulties.

The southern partner school had nine students who were a year older but were 'at similar levels in terms of ability'. The principal in this school, asked about why he got involved, talked about the need to open up his school to the wider world:

We used to be in the past sort of hidden away and very few knew about us. But we're trying to encourage more people to come in. The whole stigma with a Special School in the past was children weren't thought of, whereas we've tried to open our doors and encourage people to come and visit; to see that it's just kids that need a little bit of extra help.

So just as the primary school link broke down the geographical isolation of two rural schools, in this case study the technology broke through the formerly closed, forgotten world of children who 'just need a little bit of extra help'. Interestingly, one of these schools had also had a previous link with children

in a mainstream primary school, an experience that would have been unsustainable without the use of video-conferencing.

Video-conferencing

Although all schools in the programme now have software called Marratech to make 'real time' live visual contact with their partner school, this bit of technology, using a simple webcam attached to a PC, has made a huge difference in both Special and primary schools. The fact that the children are in the same classroom all day, generally with the same teacher, makes the scheduling of live video-conferencing sessions much easier than in secondary schools.

And as one of the teachers reflected on how different technologies had been used in their work, it was clear that video-conferencing had a very special place:

We would have emailed and we would have exchanged pictures, videos too. We would have made Power Points. There's all that in Dissolving Boundaries. We've got a Power Point underway following through our work here. We've got the pictures of exchange meetings and all that. But on top of all that you have the video-conferencing, which on the one hand seems like a small enough thing, the cherry on the icing. But it seems to me it's rather more than that because it is kind of so special.

For the children there was the motivation



of a medium that didn't require highly developed literacy skills:

From the word go, when they realised that they could see themselves and others on video and see them responding on the screen, I don't think there's too much doubt that that in itself was exciting and they wanted to be involved in that.

As many other studies have shown, however, (for example, Martin) it's not enough to assume that once the technology is in place it will be used effectively. In this case study we can see a number of reasons why the video-links had such an impact. First, the teachers themselves had to become proficient users of what was a completely new ICT application, and they began with reservations about whether it would work and be reliable. One said:

I didn't know what video-conferencing was. So it was a bit scary.... there are few things worse than the business of trying to use the technology and it letting you down.

His partner teacher, interviewed the following day, said:

The video conferencing was brilliant. I had a lot of reservations about it, I'd never done it before. But actually it went quite smoothly.

It took several attempts to get both good quality sound and image, testing the best place to put the microphone and to position the camera. It would have been understandable for teachers

with a modest level of ICT competence to give up, but the reality of another school counting on the link being made elicited a level of persistence that we have observed right across the programme. The presence of a distant audience, and the fact that the teachers had met and planned a series of activities, contributed to the determination of teachers to find ways to solve the inevitable technical problems. The fact that there was a real purpose behind using ICT meant that teachers acquired and consolidated high levels of skill, adapting the technology to suit their specific classroom needs.

In this partnership the teachers also realised that the students needed to be carefully prepared for the video-conferences after initial experiments with the technology:

We quickly realised that it would be helpful for them to make their own notes and to have them in front of them. To be comfortable about the things they were planning to say, and remembering to say them, and not just be tongue tied with one another.

In effect, the pupils were learning not just about the communication skills of turn-taking, listening to different accents and articulating ideas, but also picking up literacy skills in the process, a considerable achievement for these particular students.

There were two final factors in explaining the success of video-conferencing in this partnership: one was the way that this medium was integrated into



other elements of the programme. In this case, a face to face meeting had taken place early on in the school year in the northern school and, as one of the teachers commented, this provided a strong focus for the use of video-conferencing:

The video-conferencing is a great way to get it started because they can talk to these people, and the meeting that we had at the beginning of the year was fabulous. That really led to a big motivation and the children then knew the kids by the time they came to video-conference.

Once this Pandora's box of communication technology was opened, the pupils wanted to use it every day:

It brought in the world around us in the sense that the children talked about all the different activities that they'd done. So when they went on the bus tour of Belfast, they relayed that and they talked about what they had done. They talked about what they had seen. So really anything we did in school kind of a wee bit out of the ordinary, they brought it up and were like 'we want to tell our partner school about it'.

The second reason why the video-conferencing worked was that it was strongly tied into the curriculum project the schools were working on. This focussed partly on the development of gardens, with the southern school developing a sensory garden and the northern school developing thinking skills through the cultivation of herbs for

cookery. This proved to be a good focus for real time discussion:

In one of our video-conferences we were just exchanging notes about how the plants were getting on... we saw in the background in one of their pictures that they had a wee mini greenhouse where they put their plants when they were transferring them to outside. So we were keeping tabs on each other's successes.

In both schools teachers commented on how the use of technology and the link with the other school had raised the self-esteem of the pupils and improved communication skills. In some cases it gave pupils a sense of ownership of their learning and the confidence to be 'leaders' in the school. These are important outcomes, and a useful reminder that when we evaluate the impact of ICT, we need to look at more than just improvements in academic performance. What this case study shows is the power of ICT to help young people feel part of wider society, not just locally but on a wider stage. Social cohesion should be at least one of the strategic goals for the use of ICT.

3. French without tears: an enterprising secondary school link

In our final case study we examine the highly unlikely notion of a French link across the border in Ireland, and the surprising effects this has had on pupils' language acquisition. Unexpected partnerships are formed at planning conferences when teachers often meet



for the first time: in this case a teacher of French from County Dublin met a Science teacher from Northern Ireland who had one French class. In spite of their initial concerns about whether a modern language link would work, they soon realised that both sets of students were at the same level of learning the language, both had a similar curriculum and needed to communicate orally and in writing. The French specialist, who had previous experience of links to France, had found that the differences in pupils' proficiency levels in English and French in such links had presented problems.

In the Dissolving Boundaries link, the evenness of language proficiency meant that both sets of pupils, regarded in one of the schools as fairly challenging, wanted to impress their partners, checking written work to make sure it was free of mistakes. The teachers were astonished at the readiness of the pupils, particularly the boys, to want to write. They also noted greater collaboration within their respective classrooms and, as one principal said, 'it improved their self-confidence and has certainly broadened their horizons'. The class teacher noted improvements in speaking, listening and written work, and to their sense of enjoyment. It is

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quite clear that these outcomes were caused by a combination of the use of ICT and the presence of a distant, but not too distant, audience.

While we don't have hard data on the extent of the pupils' improved academic performance, the evidence from the teachers in this case study and in other schools is strongly suggestive of a link between the effective use of ICT and pupils' engagement with and performance in learning.

Here too, a face to face meeting consolidated the friendships, not only between the pupils but between the two staff involved. The professional and personal partnership between the staff was certainly one of the factors in this successful link. It led one of them to comment explicitly on the way that participation in the programme had widened his professional network:

It's something that I've found this year, that I have broadened my network of people who I now have contact with. Which is something maybe I was guilty of not doing before, staying within my own little area and within the school - not branching out. I think branching out has helped.

4. Lessons learned

Taking these case studies into account and reflecting on our research findings from the last decade of the Dissolving Boundaries programme, we can pinpoint three critical factors in its success, all of which could be replicated elsewhere, as has already been shown in the Middle East (for example, Hoter et al).

Alignment of policy

The partnership between the University of Ulster and NUI Maynooth in delivering the programme has been a central plank in the entire enterprise. The decision to locate the programme delivery in two university schools of education has meant that successive cohorts of trainee teachers and experienced teachers doing masters programmes have benefitted from the research and practice emerging from the programme. It has also underlined the theoretical framework that has informed the development of practice.

But this strong relationship would not have had the resources to undertake an initiative on this scale without the financial backing of the two Departments of Education in Dublin and Belfast. Furthermore, the small programme team (essentially two staff on each side of the border) could not have carried out the work without the active support of the ICT advisors who nominated schools in each of the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland or their counterparts in the Education Centres in the Republic of Ireland. On the technical side, the Dissolving Boundaries team have worked very closely with Classroom 2000 (C2K) and the National Council for Technology Education (NCTE), the two agencies, North and South, tasked with the business of providing the ICT infrastructure for every school in their respective jurisdictions.

In effect, we can say that there has been some alignment of policy between the programme, the strategic ICT goals in each jurisdiction and the agencies



charged with policy implementation. What is still needed is a more explicit policy statement from government in both jurisdictions about the role of ICT in promoting both social cohesion and inter-cultural education.

Sustainability

One of the biggest problems facing any programme that starts life as an innovative pilot is how to expand and disseminate good practice in cost-effective ways. As the number of schools has expanded year on year from 52 initially to 180 in 2008-9, the team have had to devise an increasingly sophisticated way of supporting and monitoring each partnership. A database of all participating schools is used to add weekly notes on the use of Moodle and video-conferencing, so that where there has been a lack of activity, the programme team can intervene. In our view, this external support is one of the reasons why so many schools have stayed with the programme, and it underlines the point that sustaining links has to be actively managed by an external agency.

An inclusive, whole school perspective

These case studies show that just about any child, of any age, studying any area of the curriculum, can benefit from the use of communication technologies for this kind of inter-cultural learning. The ICT applications chosen have the great advantage of being so flexible that they can be adapted for use with Special Needs students just as easily as they can for nine year olds or those aged 16-18. Our emphasis on the process of

learning, whatever the subject matter, has meant that the programme has helped teachers embed ICT skills in their own teaching and transfer this experience to other parts of their work. This is particularly significant given the reservations expressed by both academics (e.g. Cuban) and school inspectors in both jurisdictions on the impact of ICT. The cumulative effect of this has been that the Dissolving Boundaries programme is not stuck in a ghetto in schools. It reaches out and connects, especially when principals give it their wholehearted backing. Their leadership is a critical component.

Future challenges

With the transfer of policy implementation from the Department of Education to the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) in Northern Ireland, and in a climate of cutting back on public expenditure on both sides of the border, the Dissolving Boundaries programme is vulnerable, in spite of its high impact and low costs. The recently formed partnership between Dissolving Boundaries and the Joint Business Council of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) in Northern Ireland and the Irish Business and Employers' Confederation (IBEC) in the Republic to develop an 'enterprise' focus for 20 schools in the programme from 2009 is a significant step in winning private sector support for the work being done.

The continuing community tensions in Northern Ireland and difficulties in accepting new immigrants suggest that, far from cutting back on the programme, its lessons need to be applied both in terms of broader North-South links and



within Northern Ireland. The impressive work being done in the Middle East linking different Arab and Jewish teacher trainees shows that there is now international recognition that this model works. What is needed is the continued political will to sustain it.

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Towards a Green New Deal on the island of Ireland: **from economic crisis to a new political economy of sustainability**

John Barry

“This is pre-eminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today... So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigour has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days”. *Franklin D. Roosevelt, inaugural Presidential address (1933)*



John Barry

Introduction: the future is inevitably green

This article begins from the assumption (which may seem controversial to many) that anyone who thinks that our current economic crisis is a temporary blip until normal service (i.e. a return to ‘business as usual’) is resumed, profoundly misunderstands the severity and significance of what’s happening to the global economy and its impacts on the future prosperity of the island of Ireland. The economic recession represents nothing short of a re-structuring of the global economy and the creation of a new dispensation between governments, markets and citizens.

The full implications of the re-regulation of the market, with the state bailing out and part-nationalising the financial sector in both jurisdictions on the island (as in other parts of the world) have yet to be seen, but what we are witnessing is the emergence of a new economic model. Those who think we can, or even ought to, return to the pre-2008 economic model, are gravely mistaken. The current economic downturn marks the end of the neo-liberal model and the beginnings of the transition (an inevitable transition, this article will argue) towards a new low-carbon, renewable, green and sustainable economy and society. What we are witnessing is the re-politicisation of the economy, the



re-emergence of 'political economy', and the partial and uneven re-collectivisation of the economy: witness, for example, the recent socialisation of financial risk in state bail-outs for the banking sector. Compared to previous and similar responses to economic crises of the past – most notably the Roosevelt New Deal in the US in the 1930s depression and the evolution of the welfare state in Europe after the Second World War – this one has some new and extremely significant additional factors. These include the issue of 'peak oil', finally acknowledged by the International Energy Agency (IEA)'s 2008 World Energy Outlook; related concerns around resource scarcity and competition; energy security; the decarbonisation of our energy system and the better known interlocking set of issues around climate change.

Despite the failure of the Copenhagen climate change conference in December 2009, it is clear that one cannot separate tackling climate change from the emergence of a new energy economy: the search for paths towards a decarbonised economy is the only game in town. As Fatih Birol, chief economist of the IEA put it: "We need to leave oil before oil leaves us."¹

This new economic model has been given a number of names: including the 'new industrial revolution' (UK Green Party, 2009), the 'smart economy' (Department of the Taoiseach, 2008) and 'ecological civilisation' (Chinese Communist Party, 2007). The Green New Deal, originated by the group of the same name in the UK, will be

used in this article. Paraphrasing Colin Hines, one of the main authors of the original 2008 Green New Deal report, our dominant economic model based on 'buildings, banks and boutiques' (i.e. property speculation, financial services and consumerism) has spectacularly imploded. In short, business as usual is not an option; we need to find another economic model.

What is the Green New Deal?

Drawing our inspiration from Franklin D. Roosevelt's courageous programme launched in the wake of the Great Crash of 1929, we believe that a positive course of action can pull the world back from economic and environmental meltdown. The Green New Deal that we are proposing consists of two main strands: first, it outlines a structural transformation of the regulation of national and international financial systems, and major changes to taxation systems; second, it calls for a sustained programme to invest in and deploy energy conservation and renewable energies, coupled with effective demand management.²

In the context of the present crisis there is a palpable sense of the need for new thinking, and therefore talk of a Green New Deal has gained considerable ground. Since the publication of the UK Green New Deal Group's original New Economics Foundation report in May 2008, there have been numerous further studies and reports ranging from the UN Environment Programme³ to studies by major financial institutions such as HSBC⁴.



An increasingly common sight in the Irish landscape: windmills putting renewable wind energy into the increasingly all-island electricity grid

The Green New Deal contract between government, markets and citizens is one where the market (especially finance) is much more tightly and transparently regulated and there is a significant role for the state in 'steering,' if not 'rowing' the economy. Around the world governments are putting together billion dollar Keynesian stimulus packages to protect their national economies and kick-start the global one. Some, such as South Korea, China, Germany and of course the Obama administration in the US, are devoting a significant proportion of this major government spending to investments in renewable energy, clean technology and the environmental goods and services sector.

President Obama's \$900 billion stimulus package, recently agreed by Congress, is in part motivated by the

aim of reducing America's dependence on unstable foreign fossil fuel energy supplies by investing massively in green energy infrastructure and in the process creating an estimated two million 'green collar' jobs. These countries have grasped the opportunity of the current downturn to move in the direction of a Green New Deal, at the centre of which is decarbonisation of the economy, the promotion of 'green collar' jobs and investment in the green technology sector. This Green New Deal tackles the 'triple crunch': the economic recession and job losses, energy insecurity and price/supply instability, and tackling climate change.

Some of the main tenets of the Green New Deal include a return to Keynesian demand-side management, tighter re-regulation of finance, and government



counter-cyclical investment to boost job creation. This very much follows Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s: first impose strict regulations on the cause of the problem – a greedy, feckless and inadequately regulated finance sector; second, get people back to work and generate new business opportunities; third, fund this in part by an increase in taxes on big business and the rich – a measure which also has the positive effect of decreasing inequality.

The specifically 'green' element relates to the opportunities to, in the words of the Nobel-prize winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz, "not let a good crisis go to waste" by doing things in response to the current crisis that were not possible beforehand. Specifically, the Green New Deal proposes that governments should shift to a low-carbon energy economy through massive investment in renewable energy. In Ireland this would include the upgrading of the all-island electricity grid to enable this to happen; and creating a 'carbon army' to retrofit insulation to our energy-leaky housing stock, thus creating thousands of jobs and business opportunities, as well as tackling fuel poverty.

Measures to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, stimulate alternative technologies and save energy can create a substantial number of jobs during the years it will take to tackle the current economic downturn. The potential increase in the demand for labour reflects not only the labour intensity of many of the tasks that need to be undertaken in the short run, but also the backlog of tasks to be done when a new policy framework is brought

in (e.g. retrofitting the existing housing stock with insulation or a comprehensive programme to replace domestic boilers). The labour-intensive nature of the greening of the energy economy represents a golden opportunity for those losing their jobs. This is particularly the case when one thinks of the construction sector, badly damaged in the recession, which could gain greatly from any Green New Deal economic strategy.

As a Green New Deal would require 'buy in' from all major stakeholders – government, business, trade unions and wider civil society – it is much more than an economic innovation strategy, though understandably that is how it is being portrayed and discussed in media and policy circles. Such is the scale of the 'triple crunch' – economic, climate and energy – we are facing, I believe that such a coalition could be created if there is the right leadership from government and the social partners. In Ireland, North and South, a Green New Deal could offer a way to harness the abundant renewable energy sources we have; link universities and energy companies, and provide skills and training for the growing 'green collar' job sector.

To reduce carbon dramatically will require skills ranging from energy analysis, design and production of hi-tech renewable alternatives; large-scale engineering projects such as combined heat and power plants and offshore wind farms; through to work in making every building 'energy tight'; and fitting more efficient energy systems in homes, offices and factories. To fulfill this labour demand would require a targeted and



structured skills and training strategy, which itself would provide more jobs. The scale of the challenges we face cannot be underestimated, but then neither can the potential benefits. The most timely and targeted measures would include those that promote smart energy-efficient public buildings and homes, and switching to cleaner types of transport, such as extending light rail systems within Dublin and to cities such as Belfast. The number of jobs that could be created in Northern Ireland and the Republic to upgrade the all-island electricity grid so that it is ready for renewable connection could run into thousands, according to the All Island Grid Study.⁵

It is important that fiscal measures that are not explicitly 'green' do not make achieving climate change goals more difficult by subsidising greenhouse gas emissions or 'locking in' high-carbon infrastructure for decades to come. Hence a Green New Deal should also include removing subsidies and other fiscal or financial incentives from forms of near-term infrastructural investment or technological innovation which maintain the unsustainable, and therefore ultimately uneconomic, 'business as usual' high-carbon energy economy. Lest such a Green New Deal be viewed simply as an unreconstructed Keynesian 'tax, borrow and spend' strategy, it is important to stress that the removal of government subsidies, and therefore the cutting of state spending, is a key and defining element of a Green New Deal which seeks to move the economy onto a low-carbon, sustainable path.

For example, removing the market-

distorting effects of fossil fuel subsidies – estimated to be in the tens of billions of dollars – would reduce CO2 emissions in the OECD by over 20%. The creation of a level playing field by transferring the subsidies to large, centralised, capital intensive carbon energy and transportation investments would provide a re-balancing of the market for more renewable, labour intensive energy and transportation activities. As the OECD's Ministerial Environment Policy Committee noted: 'Removing subsidies to carbon-intensive technologies, pricing pollution and creating a "level playing field" is also important to enable low-carbon alternatives to compete fairly in the market, and to find ways of helping these technologies to move quickly into the market-place'.⁶ Removing these perverse subsidies could provide the necessary funding, along with other options – such as taxing 'windfall' oil profits, adopting carbon taxes, and auctioning pollution and carbon allowances, as well as innovative financial mechanisms such as raising green bonds – to provide the necessary investment for this Green New Deal strategy.

Island of Ireland uniquely placed

The Green New Deal proposes that some of the stimulus packages that are now being developed should be targeted away from maintaining the old 20th century economy towards investing in the new economy of the 21st century. The island of Ireland is uniquely placed, not least in terms of its abundant renewable wind and marine energy resources and its small scale, so that with the right political, business,



union and environmental leadership and partnership it could become a 'green economy' world leader. For example, in the Republic of Ireland, the Green Party Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Eamon Ryan, has announced a €100 million insulation package that will create an estimated 4,000 jobs in the hard-pressed construction industry and benefit over 50,000 homes⁷. Or consider the 80,000 jobs that the High Level Action Group on Green Enterprise noted could be created in the Irish green economy⁸. Jobs, reducing fuel poverty and reducing carbon emissions – this is the type of 'triple win' policy that is the hallmark of a Green New Deal and a decarbonising economy.

In Northern Ireland, given its large energy-inefficient social housing stock, high levels of fuel poverty and the fact that housing accounts for roughly 25-30% of CO₂ emissions, a similar programme would address multiple policy objectives at the same time. It would reduce our CO₂ emissions and make a significant contribution to the Northern Ireland element of the UK Climate Change Bill targets; create thousands of jobs and opportunities for retraining; reduce fuel poverty and thus unnecessary illness and deaths; and, if given the leadership this would require, overnight create a secure, sustainable market for retrofitting insulation to the publicly owned housing stock. One of the other great advantages of creating this 'green collar carbon army' is that these jobs are not 'offshorable': this work cannot be outsourced to India or China and would therefore provide local jobs for local people.

According to a UK Department of Trade and Industry/Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs report, world markets for environmental goods and services sector are set to be worth \$688 billion by 2010, just under \$800 billion by 2015 and will reach a trillion dollars by 2020⁹. Just as the Stern report called climate change the 'greatest market failure in history'¹⁰, so combating climate change and decarbonising the economy could be seen as a unique commercial opportunity for wealth and job creation. In a speech outlining his view of a Green New Deal in March 2009, Gordon Brown said a total of 1.3 million people would be employed in the environmental sector by 2017 - representing an annual growth rate of 5% and about 400,000 new jobs. UK Business Secretary John Hutton noted: "By the end of the decade, global green industries will be worth as much as the global aerospace industry – in the order of £350 billion a year – and with the potential to create thousands of new green collar jobs in Britain. So there is a clear business case for maximising the opportunities presented by climate change and making sure that Britain unlocks these business opportunities"¹¹. Are the administrations in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland ready to unlock those opportunities? Are ministers ambitious and innovative enough to set in place the policies and provide the political leadership and cooperatively develop and implement a Green New Deal for the island?

If nothing else, a Green New Deal represents perhaps the best option we have at the moment, since the old business model of fossil-fuelled,



globalised and deregulated capitalism has so spectacularly come off the wheels. A Green New Deal would bring the economy 'back down to earth', reminding us that unlike governments, nature does not do bail-outs, and there is an urgent need for new thinking and action to re-embed the human economy within the wider ecological system upon which it depends.

The Northern Ireland Green New Deal Initiative

In early 2008 Friends of the Earth Northern Ireland together with other organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action, the Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Commission, the Ulster Farmers Union, individual entrepreneurs, policy-makers and academics from the two universities came together to produce their version of a Green New Deal for Northern Ireland. This was published in summer 2009.

The Northern Ireland Green New Deal strategy is based on the realisation that 'around 10% of Northern Ireland's income is spent on importing fossil fuels on which we are 99% dependent for our energy. Facing a future of rising energy prices we risk serious economic and social failure unless we act swiftly to reduce that dependence'.¹² Its vision of a Green New Deal for Northern Ireland includes: the refurbishment of tens of thousands of existing homes each year with full insulation and renewable energy, thus making significant inroads into fuel poverty; transforming the energy performance of public and



commercial buildings through energy efficiency measures and making 'every building a power station'; regionalising and localising the supplies of both electricity and heat through large-scale renewables, micro-generation and using fossil fuels more efficiently; and employing a 'carbon army' of high-lower-skilled workers to implement this systematic reconstruction programme; transforming our transport system to be fit for purpose in the coming era of high oil and carbon prices by providing a real public transport choice for everyone; creating thousands of 'green collar' jobs in the £3,000 billion world market for low carbon environmental goods and services; and developing a package of financial innovations and incentives to leverage the very large sums needed to implement such a programme, based on partnership between the public sector, the private sector, and the public.

The Green New Deal in the Republic of Ireland

Some of the thinking in official policy-making circles around the Green New Deal idea in the South can be found in the work of Forfás, the Irish Government's advisory body for enterprise and science, and Comhar,



the Sustainable Development Council. In 2006 Forfás produced a report assessing the vulnerability of the Republic of Ireland to variations in supply or price of imported oil. That report noted:

*The high probability that a supply of cheap oil will peak over the next 10-15 years poses a serious challenge for the global economy. We in Ireland are more dependent on imported oil for our energy requirements than almost every other European country and it will take up to 10 years to significantly reduce this dependence. Therefore, it is essential that we now begin to prepare for such a challenge.*¹³

It concluded: 'While it is often difficult for policymakers and businesses to take a long-term view of the issues that they face, that is the requirement in regard to the peak oil challenge'.¹⁴ In October 2008 Forfás produced the *Environmental Goods and Services Sector on the Island of Ireland* report, which estimated that the size of the EGS sector in Ireland is €2.8 billion, with Northern Ireland accounting for an additional €790 million approximately¹⁵. The numbers directly employed in the sector totals more than 6,500. The Irish Government, responding to the demands of the Green Party, the junior coalition party, has established a High Level Action Group on Green Enterprise to take forward a number of the recommendations from this report.

This was followed in December 2008 by the publication of the *Building Ireland's Smart Economy* report from

the Department of the Taoiseach which specifically mentioned the Green New Deal idea. As that document puts it, there needs to be 'a 'green new deal'' to move us away from fossil fuel-based energy production through investment in renewable energy and to promote the green enterprise sector and the creation of 'green collar' jobs, the greening of the economy and the development of green enterprise.'¹⁶

Referring to an earlier Forfás report on oil vulnerability, this report also noted in a section of threats to the Irish economy: 'Ireland consumes more energy per capita than the EU average and is heavily reliant on fossil fuels (coal and gas) while the costs of energy are relatively high.'¹⁷

In 2009 Comhar: Sustainable Development Council, in close cooperation with the Northern Ireland Green New Deal group, held a series of meetings leading to the launch of its Green New Deal document in October 2009¹⁸. The reaction to the Comhar report has been mixed, to say the least, especially its proposal that the Government commit two per cent of GDP to green stimulus measures for the next few years. The strongly green *Irish Times* columnist John Gibbons commented:

Comhar has synthesised a cogent, lucid plan that could set Ireland on a path to independence in the true meaning of the word. With half-a-million jobless, a key element in the Green New Deal is the labour-intensive process of retrofitting our national housing stock, transforming

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the national grid and building a new green infrastructure, including massive investment in renewable energy.¹⁹

However more orthodox economists rejected the report, including influential figures such as Colm McCarthy who chaired An Bord Snip Nua²⁰, who focussed on the dangers of over-investment in either wind generation or grid capacity; ‘mission creep’ in relation to Comhar’s recommendation that the National Treasury Management Agency (already tasked with running the National Assets Management Agency ‘bad bank’) should administer the revenue from carbon tax; and the uncosted character of Comhar’s recommendations. This led to a rebuttal from Professor Frank Convery, chair of Comhar. He stressed that a carbon tax is necessary but not sufficient for reducing Ireland’s CO₂ emissions, so the other policies recommended by the Comhar report are required; that upgrading the grid is about decentralising electricity production; that other research underlines the need for more not less wind energy production for the island of Ireland; and he strongly rejected McCarthy’s criticism that the report ignored the state of public finances²¹. There has also been a lively debate on the topic online, for example on the TASC (Taskforce and Action on Social Change) ‘Progressive Economy’ blog.

It is clear that while a debate has (belatedly) begun on the policies underlying a transition to a low-carbon, green, sustainable economy in the Republic (sadly this debate is less advanced in Northern Ireland), there is

a long way to go in terms of creating a common vision based on the ecological, ‘peak oil’, and climate change realities driving that transition. The tensions between those wedded to a more orthodox economic vision and a desire to return to business as usual (which created the Celtic Tiger economy) as quickly as possible, and those proposing a new green economic model, have been revealed, and these divisions will become starker in 2010 when this author predicts the economic recession will deepen.

As climate change and energy security issues come to shape the political and economic imperatives of the state, civil society and business (not to mention biodiversity, water, waste, food and transport issues), we may expect new coalitions of social and economic forces to coalesce around acceptance, modification or resistance to the inevitable transition to a low-carbon economy. Which side will the trade unions take? Or anti-poverty groups and other civil society organisations? These are the new and emerging political fault lines which need to be considered in the years ahead as we begin the transition to a new economy, devising new policies in the context of a climate-changed and carbon-constrained world.

Towards a ‘sustainability war economy’?

One possible version of a Green New Deal is what one may term a ‘sustainability war economy’, where unlike the planned transition outlined by the Green New Deal, governments are forced to move quickly and belatedly



to deal with and adapt to peak oil, insecurity of energy supply and climate change impacts. Over the last couple of years the argument has been made that the transition away from unsustainable development towards a more sustainable future may have to be based on a difficult political and cultural experience similar to the one many countries went through during and after the Second World War. Consider the following statement from Andrew Simms, head of research at the well-respected London-based green think tank, the New Economics Foundation:

The situation in the global environmental war economy is not so different from the dilemma that faced individuals in Britain's war economy. As Hugh Dalton, President of the Board of Trade, put it in 1943: 'There can be no equality of sacrifice in this war. Some must lose their lives and limbs, others only the turn-ups on their trousers.' Impacts may differ, in other words, but the acknowledgement of a shared need remains and unifies. Faced with a crisis in which individuals are asked to subordinate personal goals to a common good, they can, and do, respond. This is the lesson of the British and other war economies and it may also prove the rallying cry of a new environmental war economy.²²

The same argument can be heard in the European Commission. Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for the Environment, said in a speech in January 2007:

Damaged economies, refugees, political instability, and the loss of



life are typically the results of war. But they will also be the results of unchecked climate change. It is like a war because to reduce emissions something very like a war economy is needed. All sectors – transport, energy, agriculture and foreign policy – must work closely together to meet a common objective. And it is a world war because every country in the world will be affected by the results of climate change – although it will be the poorest who are hit hardest.²³

The UK Green New Deal report also echoes this “war economy” theme in pointing out: ‘There is a growing consensus that climate change demands an economic mobilisation of clean energy technology, and other anti-greenhouse measures, on a scale to rival war time’²⁴. The stress on mobilisation and sense of urgency which permeates this report echo the wartime call for citizens to enlist and support the war effort within an explicitly ‘green Keynesianism’ context. According to the Green New Deal report:

In our living memory, the scale of economic re-engineering needed to prevent catastrophic climate change



has only been witnessed in a wide range of countries during war time. No other approach looks remotely capable of delivering the necessary volume of emissions reductions in the time needed. In that light, we can learn from war-time experiences, positively and negatively. The best of those lessons can then be translated into our contemporary circumstances.²⁵

Local Responses: The Transition Towns Movement

A more local level instance of an urgent response to the need for a Green New Deal can be found in the rapidly growing 'Transition Towns' movement in the UK and Ireland.²⁶ The Transition Towns movement is an interesting innovation in that while it explicitly begins from the twin challenges of 'peak oil' and climate change, it is also resolutely practical and pragmatic in orientation. It cannot be described as overtly ideologically focused in terms, for example, of challenging globalisation or articulating an oppositional form of green political activism. The UK Green New Deal Group makes an explicit link from their macro-level analysis to the local level of the Transition Town. Their report states:

There is a sense already in British society that there is a 'gathering storm'. Over one hundred Transition Town organisations have arisen from the grass roots in towns, villages and cities across Britain. These are essentially self-help organisations seeking to assist their communities to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and increase their economic

resilience. They are preparing in practical ways for the 'power down' entailed in the coming energy crunch and the low-carbon living needed to fight climate change. Anyone who has attended a Transition Town meeting can report on the spirit that exists to face up to the triple crunch.²⁷

Kinsale, Co. Cork set up the first Transition Town group in Ireland and there are now around 20 (mainly small) Transition Town groups in Northern Ireland and the Republic²⁸ (as well as a recently established all island Transition Initiative Network).²⁹ In some respects the Transition Towns perspective makes a virtue of necessity (not just that 'small is beautiful', but 'small is inevitable') as local communities prepare for 'power down' in a post-oil, low-carbon energy future. Other centres of green discourse and practice in Ireland include the Green Party (in and outside government), green economic think tanks such as Feasta and sustainability organisations like Cultivate, and environmental NGOs such as Friends of the Earth in both jurisdictions, as well as institutes of sustainability and sustainable living in the universities.

The positive post-oil future promoted by the Transition Town movement is characterised as 'an abundant future, energy lean, time rich, less stressful, healthier and happier'.³⁰ The Transition Town movement seeks to inspire and empower local communities to reskill and educate themselves so that community resilience is enhanced to deal with the shocks of declining oil and climate change. Transition Town is first



and foremost about enhancing personal, family and community resilience by changing individual and group social, ecological and economic behaviour and relationships in relation to a particular place. Also significant is the Transition Town movement's stress on community self-reliance and resilience, its (relative) independence from the state and business, its awareness of the land (and by extension wider ecological relations) and, most importantly, the strong sense of community solidarity and shared work towards providing the material and energy wherewithal to sustain that community in a low-carbon future.

Conclusion

There are also good reasons to view the inevitable transition towards a green, sustainable economy as desirable from an all-island perspective. Facing the challenges and opportunities of finding a new way of 'making our way in the world' in the 21st century could (I stress 'could' lest I be accused of naivety) become an important element of a new post-conflict political narrative for the island. With the creation of a power-sharing Executive within Northern Ireland and the slow but steady growth of pragmatic North-South cooperation, especially on infrastructure, public services and economic issues – not least the creation of an all-island wholesale electricity market in 2007 – there is the potential for a Green New Deal to become part of an all-island post-conflict dispensation. As the 2008 *Smart Economy* report in the Republic of Ireland put it:

Uniquely in history, and by contrast



with previous periods of economic difficulties since independence, Ireland faces the current economic situation as an island at peace. The institutions established by the Good Friday Agreement and the transformation in relationships between the two traditions on the island, between North and South, and between Britain and Ireland, provide an entirely new and positive basis for tackling the current economic challenges together. There is now an important all-island dimension to all aspects of Government policy. To the extent that it is appropriate, and by agreement with the Northern Ireland Executive, all of the policies, programmes and initiatives in this Action Plan will take full account of the mutual benefits available through North/South co-operation.³¹

Given the necessary connection (not fully explored in this article) between the transition to a sustainable economy and issues of greater democratisation, citizen empowerment, human rights, good governance and lowering socio-economic inequalities³², an all-island Green New Deal could provide a pragmatic yet inspired approach to



integrating economic and social as well as sustainability and post-conflict objectives in Ireland. Such a Green New Deal could, with the right political, economic and cultural leadership (the latter cannot be discounted given the scale and magnitude of the transition envisaged), together with more grassroots initiatives such as Transition Towns, become a way for the jurisdictions on the island to deal with the problems and legacies of the past while at the same time facing the problems and opportunities of a sustainable future together.

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University of Ulster and Letterkenny IT: a unique opportunity for higher education collaboration in the north-west

Pat McCloughan

Enhanced collaboration between Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the University of Ulster has the potential to contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of the north-west, provided such collaboration occurs in a relatively open environment in which the differences in the higher education operating systems between North and South currently constraining cross-border student flows are addressed. An ambitious approach is warranted given the journey the region needs to travel to catch up with the rest of the island economically and in terms of higher education attainment and delivery.



Pat McCloughan

The benefits from enhanced collaboration between the University of Ulster and Letterkenny Institute of Technology should not be underestimated. Leveraging the skills and expertise of both institutions and catering for a larger demographic area will facilitate greater impact and utilisation of talent over a wider geographical space. In particular, in combination with other developments under the inter-governmental North West Gateway Initiative (including the Project Kelvin transatlantic broadband link), closer higher education collaboration will ensure that enterprise in the region has greater access to growth opportunities. Indecon International Economic

Consultants, in association with London Economics, were commissioned in 2008 to examine the potential for enhanced strategic cooperation between Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster aimed at furthering the delivery of higher education in the North West Gateway Strategic Alliance Region (NWGSA Region), which for the purposes of this article we will call the 'north-west region'.

The north-west region was defined by both institutions to include County Donegal and the Northern Ireland local authority areas corresponding to Derry City Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Fermanagh District Council, Limavady



Students at the Magee (Derry/Londonderry) campus of University of Ulster

Borough Council, Omagh District Council and Strabane District Council.

The region represents a cohesive region in socio-economic and cultural terms, notwithstanding the border and perceptions regarding religious differences. For example, the eastern part of Donegal known as the 'Laggan', which includes the corridor between Letterkenny and Derry, and the Finn Valley area between the border town of Lifford and the twin towns of Stranorlar and Ballybofey further west, is one of the main repositories of the Ulster-Scots tradition on the island of Ireland. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that a Donegal person has more in common culturally, and certainly accent-wise, with his or her neighbours in west Tyrone or Fermanagh than with people from Sligo

or Leitrim. At the same time, there is also a rich diversity among the people of the north-west region, reflecting the variety of its topography.

The Indecon report was launched in Letterkenny on 14 May 2009 by the Taoiseach Brian Cowen TD together with senior management from both institutions. The study found a very high level of support for greater collaboration between Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster among both external and internal stakeholders in the north-west, including employers and post-primary schools, as well as staff and students at each institution.¹

Despite some gains made in recent years, the north-west region remains behind other parts of the island



of Ireland in terms of economic performance, and may be at risk of becoming more seriously affected by the current recession than elsewhere on the island. Further, educational attainment in the region has remained low compared with other regions in Ireland, and the level of higher education course provision (on a *per capita* basis at undergraduate and postgraduate levels) is also relatively low.

As an area of low population density, the north-west region cannot expect to rival the likes of Dublin or Belfast in terms of higher education infrastructure or delivery. That would not make economic sense. Nevertheless, while the region is home to the Irish National Spatial Strategy's only cross-border 'gateway' (the Letterkenny-Derry corridor), it continues to lag behind other parts of the island in terms of both the number of undergraduate and postgraduate places on offer and in regard to the range of third- and fourth-level study opportunities available.

What is clear from the new primary research presented in the Indecon report is that there is a very strong degree of support (on both sides of the border) for expanding the provision of higher education activities in the north-west region. The most effective means of achieving this is through enhanced collaboration between the University of Ulster and Letterkenny IT as the largest third-level institutions in the north-west.

An ambitious yet realistic approach to enhanced cooperation between the two institutions is required. Within and between the two institutions, this

will necessitate innovative thinking on how best to build on their existing collaboration in both full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, in academic research and in technology exchange with business and industry.

At a national and regional policy level, in order to help realise the potential arising from enhanced collaboration between the University of Ulster and Letterkenny IT, a re-think of higher education policy and practice on both sides of the border is needed. This will necessarily involve challenging the traditional demarcations between the institutes of technology and the universities (in the South), and overcoming the structural differences in the higher education operating systems between North and South that may be presently impeding the flow of students on a cross-border basis.

The prize to which enhanced collaboration between the two institutions can contribute includes greater retention of graduates and the maintenance of more skills within the north-west region. These goals will serve to make the region more attractive for inward investment and help overcome what the Taoiseach Brian Cowen referred to in his launch of the Indecon report as the 'tyranny of distance'.

Strategic context

The strategic context for the proposed enhanced collaboration between the two higher education institutions includes increasing recognition of the importance of cross-border cooperation, which may be cast in sharper focus in



the context of the present economic downturn afflicting both parts of the island. Other things being equal, one might expect cross-border collaboration in areas such as higher education to gain more momentum in the coming years, as institutions like the University of Ulster - and particularly its Magee (Derry) and Coleraine campuses - and Letterkenny IT seek to take advantage of their geographical proximity to expand growth opportunities.

Recently published studies highlight the socio-economic benefits from greater cross-border alliances in higher education, notably the *Comprehensive Study on the All-Island Economy* (2006)² and the *All-Island Skills Study* (2008),³ itself the fruit of cross-border collaboration between the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs in Ireland and the Northern Ireland Skills Expert Group.

Various employment and enterprise development initiatives currently underway in the region recognise the importance of improving educational attainment and facilitating further cooperation between the two north-western higher education institutions. Examples of two such initiatives are the NWWDF (North-West Workplace Development Forum), aimed at improving training in the region on a cross-border basis, and the development of a technology 'highway' between Letterkenny and Derry, which seeks to improve access to high-speed broadband.

An important educational cross-cutting theme is the emphasis now placed on developing qualifications in science, technology, engineering and maths

(the so-called 'STEM' disciplines). Skills acquisition in STEM is assuming greater relevance in the development of activities in science, engineering, technology, business, finance and healthcare, especially in relation to internationally-traded and domestically-traded services, which are set to account for a growing proportion of economic activity and employment in the island economy in the coming years. There is great scope for the two institutions to jointly lead the process of improving attainment in STEM skills in the north-west region, making it both more attractive and more competitive.

Comparative higher education systems in the two jurisdictions

Certain differences in the higher education operating systems between North and South may limit the potential for enhanced collaboration between higher educational institutions based on each side of the border like Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster. The most significant differences are the 'MaSN Cap' in Northern Ireland and differences in tuition fees between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The MaSN (Maximum Student Number) Cap is an annual limit set by the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in respect of all home and EU full-time students entering undergraduate higher education courses in Northern Ireland. It therefore applies to all universities and higher and further education colleges in Northern Ireland offering full-time undergraduate higher education courses.⁴

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However, the MaSN Cap does not apply to full-time undergraduate higher education students from outside the EU or to part-time undergraduates or postgraduates on higher education courses in Northern Ireland (regardless of their origin). It should also be noted that the MaSN Cap applies to publicly-funded student places financed through DEL, and thus third-level institutions in Northern Ireland are permitted to develop additional capacity in non-publicly-funded places, although the demand for these is clearly limited at present.

A further complexity of the higher education operating system in Northern Ireland is that separate caps on student numbers also apply in the case of undergraduate higher education courses funded through other public sources, for example nursing. Arrangements are also in place for the division of courses in certain subject areas (e.g. agriculture-related) among institutions in Northern Ireland. These characteristics reflect legacies of the higher education operating system in the North and it may be the case that they could be (unintentionally) limiting institutions' ability to respond to new course opportunities.⁵

Currently tuition fees do not apply in the case of full-time undergraduate courses undertaken by EU students in the South (although registration fees are levied). In Northern Ireland, institutions charge fees up to a maximum level (£3,145 in 2008-09) to all British, Irish and other EU students.

If the cross-border constraints identified

in the Indecon report are overcome, there could be significant potential for Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster to jointly develop full-time undergraduate higher education courses in the north-west. Even if the MaSN Cap were to remain a feature of the Northern higher education system, it might be possible to relax its application for STEM subjects, and/or the MaSN Cap could be differentiated on a regional basis to support higher education growth in the north-west. These possibilities in full-time undergraduate courses – the bedrock of higher education – are in addition to the potential that exists for Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster to jointly develop part-time undergraduate and postgraduate courses where the MaSN Cap does not apply.

However, the MaSN Cap should not be used as an excuse to focus enhanced Letterkenny IT-University of Ulster collaboration only on part-time undergraduate and postgraduate provision. Enhanced cooperation between the two largest higher education institutions in the region should be ambitious to the extent of also providing additional full-time undergraduate courses, which would permit further and subsequent development at both institutions, especially in Donegal.

According to the survey evidence presented in the Indecon report, a significant majority of local businesses and employers, and of post-primary schools in the north-west region, would like to see a greater number and range of both undergraduate and



Media students on graduation day at University of Ulster Coleraine campus

postgraduate courses on offer on both sides of the border in the north-west. These should include general arts and humanities courses, as well as more vocationally-oriented courses such as engineering and business studies.

It appears that the existing joint initiatives between Letterkenny IT and the University of Ulster have been designed to 'skirt' around the differences in the higher education operating systems between North and South, understandably enough. However, this has limited the nature and extent of cooperation between the two institutions. While together the two institutions have been able to design some innovative new joint ventures (see *Existing Collaboration below*), the take-up for which has been consistently steady, the situation in which such cooperation has had to navigate around the differences in the higher education operating systems needs to be

addressed as a matter of priority if both institutions and the wider north-west region are to benefit from enhanced collaboration (provided any new joint ventures are designed to meet identified demands).

Profile of the University of Ulster

The University of Ulster is the largest provider of higher education in Northern Ireland – in fact in the island of Ireland – with approximately 25,000 full-time and part-time students. It is a significant contributor to the north-west region: in 2007-08, the university's Magee and Coleraine campuses together accounted for over 9,000 full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students, and together they employ approximately 2,000 staff.

Magee and Coleraine together had over 7,600 undergraduate enrolments in 2007-08, making up almost 40% of



the university's overall undergraduate population in that year. The largest faculties in terms of undergraduate numbers at Magee and Coleraine are Life and Health Sciences, the Ulster Business School, and Arts. Also important at Magee are the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Computing and Engineering – each of which accounted for well over 500 undergraduate enrolments in 2007-08.

Over 2,000 postgraduate students are currently enrolled on taught and research programmes at Coleraine and Magee. The largest postgraduate enrolments in Coleraine are in the Faculties of Life and Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Arts; the largest such enrolments at Magee are in Social Sciences, the Ulster Business School, Arts, and Life and Health Sciences.

The University of Ulster has a strong record of achievement in research. In the most recent UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) (December 2008), the university achieved strong performances in nursing and Celtic studies (with 100% of research in these areas classified as international quality). The RAE results also confirm the University of Ulster's research strengths in biomedical sciences, law, architecture and the built environment, media studies and art and design. Significant improvement in the quality of research in areas such as computing and nanotechnology were also recorded in the 2008 RAE.

The Coleraine and Magee campuses play an important role in the university's research strengths. Coleraine is home to the Centre for Molecular Biosciences,

which is active in international research into molecular and nutritional aspects of degenerative diseases and microbial and pharmaceutical biotechnology, and comprises approximately 200 research staff and doctoral students. The Centre for Functional Genomics, established in October 2003 at the Coleraine campus with £2 million in funding from the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, aims to develop the existing biotechnology and biomedical facilities there by focussing on functional genomics research with the potential to have a commercial impact on biotechnology, biomedicine and high-added-value food production. The Coleraine campus is also the location of the Centre for Coastal and Marine Research, which is active in research into coastal environments and coastal geology, archaeology and management. The presence of the latter research centre is noteworthy given that the north-west region boasts one of the longest and geologically most diverse coastlines on the island.

As well as Celtic studies, other research strengths at the University of Ulster's Magee campus include IT and electronics, multi-media, design, international business, psychology, nursing, history and social policy. Designated research centres include the Intelligent Systems Research Centre (ISRC), the Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages, the Institute of Ulster Scots Studies, the Transitional Justice Institute and INCORE (International Conflict Research). New initiatives underway on the Derry campus include the Creative Technologies (Industries) Research Centre, the Centre for Postgraduate Professional Legal Education, the



Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Clinical Translational Research and Innovation Centre (CTRIC) at Altnagelvin Hospital, as well as developments in financial services, construction, quantity surveying and spatial planning, and psychology.

Knowledge and technology exchange is promoted by the Office of Innovation at the University of Ulster through a range of initiatives and ongoing collaboration with business and industry. The university's participation in such activities includes collaboration with local enterprises through the FUSION Programme (an all-island initiative managed by InterTradelreland) and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.

The Magee Science Park focusses on software development and advanced IT while the Coleraine Science Park concentrates on life, health and environmental technologies. Both have been active in incubating a range of entrepreneurial ventures and in generating significant new high quality employment locally.

Profile of Letterkenny Institute of Technology

Established in 1971, Letterkenny IT

has approximately 3,000 students, comprising about 2,500 full-time and 500 part-time students over two campuses, the main campus being located in Letterkenny (the largest urban centre in Donegal) and the tourism and hospitality campus in Killybegs in south-west Donegal.

The built environment at Letterkenny IT has undergone significant transformation in recent years. This includes the Business Development Centre, launched in 2000, which provides 1,100 square metres of specialist incubation space and associated supports for high-tech start-ups. Under the Irish National Development Plan, it is planned that more than 2,000 square metres of space dedicated to specialist research and enterprise development facilities will be available at Letterkenny IT.

Most courses at Letterkenny IT are at bachelor degree level or higher. Of the 66 courses offered in 2007-08, over three-quarters were at these levels, including 20 bachelor degrees at honours level and six masters degree courses. The latter include the MSc in Innovation Management in the Public Service, a unique, specialist course offered jointly by Letterkenny IT and



the University of Ulster on a part-time basis throughout the island of Ireland. This course offers graduates joint accreditation in both Ireland and the UK (by HETAC and the University of Ulster respectively).

Like the University of Ulster, Letterkenny IT has a tradition of catering for mature students. These students account for approximately one-fifth of all undergraduates at the institute, illustrating its commitment to lifelong learning in the north-west region. Notwithstanding its relatively small size, Letterkenny IT has some clear research strengths. These include the Centre of Applied Marine Biotechnology (CAMBio) and electronics, production and innovation in the EpiCentre. The latter brings together the University of Ulster, Letterkenny IT and North West Regional College in Derry. In December 2008 it was announced that the EpiCentre project at Letterkenny IT would benefit from Enterprise Ireland funding of over €1m (£1.1m) to aid the construction of the WiSAR Lab (Wireless Sensor Applied Research). This is a significant development for cross-border research in the north-west.

Existing collaboration

Initiatives in joint course development between the two institutions include:

- The aforementioned MSc in Innovation Management in the Public Service – the only course of its type in the island of Ireland. This had 61 students enrolled in 2007-08 and produced 25 graduates in 2006: 11 from Northern Ireland and 14 from the Republic.

- The Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice (PgCHEP) – this course is delivered by the University of Ulster to lecturing staff at Letterkenny IT as a means of ensuring high quality standards in teaching, learning and research. It offers graduates the possibility of proceeding to obtain diploma and masters qualifications in higher education practice.

The University of Ulster's Diploma in Nursing at Letterkenny IT provided the foundation for the subsequent development of the institute's own suite of nursing degrees from 2002, namely the BSc in General Nursing, the BSc in Intellectual Disability Nursing and the BSc in Psychiatric Nursing. These honours level degree courses are funded by the Irish Department of Health and Children.

The growth of nursing studies has been one of the main developments at Letterkenny IT in recent years. Coupled with the fact that the University of Ulster pioneered nursing degree courses at Coleraine and Magee, it would appear that the north-west region may have a comparative advantage in the provision of nursing education. Also noteworthy in this regard is the presence of two major hospitals in the region in Derry (Altnagelvin) and Letterkenny.

Joint initiatives between the two institutions in research and technology exchange include the aforementioned EpiCentre and the North West Science and Technology Partnership. Both initiatives also involve North West Regional College in Derry (a large further education college that is growing



its provision of higher education courses).

Conclusion

There is considerable scope and local support, and need, to develop the provision of higher education in the north-west region. The most effective way of achieving this is through enhanced collaboration between the two largest third-level education providers in the region, the University of Ulster and Letterkenny IT. It is important that an appropriately ambitious approach is taken – one that is not unduly encumbered by differences in the higher education operating systems between the two jurisdictions.

This ambitious approach should include the requirement that any further collaboration between the two institutions should not be confined to part-time and lifelong learning courses (which are, of course, important), but should also aim at developing the following aspects of higher education delivery, as a means of retaining a greater proportion of the brightest school-leavers, who otherwise are at risk of leaving the region for most if not all of their working lives:

- Full-time undergraduate courses (in the arts, humanities and social sciences as well as in the more technical and vocationally-oriented courses traditionally associated with the colleges in the region);
- Full-time postgraduate programmes (aimed at attracting graduates from outside the region as well as building on the graduates coming through

from the region, including from North West Regional College);

- Collaboration with local business and industry regarding information and technology transfer, R&D and innovation, and business development.

With regard to full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate initiatives, there should be a particular focus on developing STEM subjects vital for the economic development of the region (in science, technology, business, finance and health).

Enhanced collaboration should also seek to develop PhD qualifications in the region, including doctoral study among Letterkenny IT staff. Increasing the stock of PhDs would have the double benefit of helping to enhance the quality of the region's teaching and research, and of acting as a signal of high quality skills for potential inward investors. Consideration should also be given to the development of professional PhDs in the region, for example the Doctor of Nursing Studies (DNSc) qualification, aimed at further development of specialised nursing practice in the region.

Fundamental to maximising the potential of lifelong learning in the region will be to recognise previous learning (for example, acquired in the workplace) and provide flexible delivery modes (including e-learning). It is important that a consistent approach to lifelong learning is taken by both institutions in any future joint course development.

Specific areas of potential collaboration in research activity



between the two institutions may include (but not necessarily be limited to) marine, biomedicine, biotechnology, electronics, computing (including games), business and creative technologies – reflecting existing or emerging research strengths in the two institutions. Consideration should also be given to the extension of the Creative Technologies (Industries) Research Centre at Magee to include Letterkenny IT and North West Regional College.

Finally, there is also potential to further develop collaboration between the two institutions in the area of knowledge and technology exchange with business and industry. Enhanced cooperation through pooling of expertise would see greater availability of experts; wider geographical coverage across the region; greater opportunities for student placements, and support for business development and innovation. In such initiatives, it would be important to ensure appropriate publicity and signposting of business support functions available at both institutions because the provision of such support may be currently characterised by lack of information.

At time of writing, the University of Ulster and Letterkenny IT are finalising a 'blueprint' for closer collaboration which will be published later this year. This initiative is understood to have the support of both the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning and the Irish Department of Education and Science.

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4. Analysis of official figures by Indecon reveals that the further education colleges in Northern Ireland are growing their provision of *higher* education courses, which is an important development in enhancing educational attainment across NI.
5. For example, reflecting initiatives to build on the island's comparative strengths in agri-food, despite the current difficulties facing the sector, opportunities are likely to arise in the coming years in specific niches within the sector, including agronomy and food innovation, as the agri-food value chain from farm to fork becomes more business-like and market-oriented.

Nationalism in the service of a better chance for a bigger life: a response to Robin Wilson

Eoin Ó Broin

Nationalism, as ideology and political practice, has been blamed for many things. Two world wars, the Holocaust, ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, and even the collapse of the recent Copenhagen climate change negotiations have all been laid at nationalism's door. That the justification for such arguments is usually without empirical foundation and based on questionable theoretical foundations matters little to its proponents. Increasingly, and particularly among liberal and social democratic writers and activists, nationalism is seen as divisive, dangerous and undemocratic: to be consigned to the ideological dustbin of history.



Eoin Ó Broin

Of course it wasn't always so. There was a long moment in European intellectual history when nationalism was broadly understood in positive terms. From its emergence during the revolutions of the 1840s through to de-colonisation in the 1960s, nationalism was viewed as an essential ingredient in the formation of democratic states.

From the end of the 19th century, in theory, if not always in practice, the nation-state became the norm for peoples in search of democracy, equality and self-determination. Cultural, linguistic and historic communities formed themselves into political

subjects, demarcated territorial claims defining the limits of their imagined state, and demanded sovereignty.

By the mid point of the 20th century nationalism and the nation-state formed the ideological and architectural underpinning for democratic regimes across the globe. Again in theory, if not always in practice, the sovereign citizen was the basic unit of the nation-state, the linchpin of its democracy. At the global level the nation was the subject of international relations and law.

Of course in practice there were democratic regimes that failed to project and promote the rights of either their



own citizens and those resident within the boundaries of the state. There were others which, while normatively democratic at a domestic level, paid scant regard to individual or state rights at the international level. And there were those which sought to advocate, and in many cases succeeded in advancing, individual and collective rights at the domestic and international level.

But everyone was a nationalist. Ideological contests were not between nationalists and anti-nationalists but between left and right. Liberalism, capitalism and socialism vied for position, and each sought to situate their claims to political legitimacy within the language and collective experience of national communities and nation-states.

Of course contrary to the claims of many nationalists themselves, these national communities were always heterogenous, always contested and perpetually in the process of being constructed and re-constructed. When was the nation? What was the nation? Where was the nation? And crucially, who was the nation? These were the questions that framed the ideological space in which claims for political, economic and cultural power were fought out. However, rarely if ever was the nation itself, whether political, cultural or geographical, called into question.

But then something happened. The almost invisible omnipresence of nationalism and the nation-state was brought into question, and its legitimacy, as the organising unit of modern political life, was challenged. For some it was

the failure of the newly independent post-colonial states to live up to the social and economic promise of their respective independence movements. For others it was an increasing unwillingness to take sides in what were seen as territorial disputes between competing nationalisms.

For sections of the left it was the failure of the 1981 Mitterrand government to adequately respond to the collapse of Keynesian social democracy. For others it was the apparent triumph of ethno-nationalism emerging from the ruins of the USSR, and with it the spectre of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. Most recently the deregulating logic of neo-liberal globalisation and a post-nationalist cosmopolitan desire to re-regulate at the level of the global, has brought into being a contradictory yet complementary constituency that seeks to move beyond the nation state.

And yet, in the broad ranging debate that has followed this problematising of nationalism and the nation-state something seems to have gotten lost; namely the very function of nationalism and the nation-state.

The function of nationalism

Our modern conversation on nationalism and the nation-state began in 1983 with the publication of two books, Ernst Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.¹ Together these writers have done much to frame the subsequent debate.



The date is also important as it marks the end of the European left-liberal infatuation with anti-imperial struggles around the globe, and the collapse of the post-war European social democratic settlements, which together have provided much of the unconscious rationale for what was to become the post-national turn in European liberal-left political discourse.

Gellner and Anderson introduced two key questions into academic understandings of nationalism and the nation-state: namely whether the nation was a product of modern or pre-modern historical and sociological forces, and whether nations were natural phenomena or brought into being by political and economic actors and forces.

The debate sparked by Gellner between modernists and perennialists overlapped with and reinforced that initiated by Anderson between constructivists and naturalists. After Gellner scholars asked themselves to what extent nationalism and nation-states were a product of industrialisation and modernisation, or rooted further back in pre-modern history. After Anderson scholars debated the extent to which it was the nationalists themselves who brought nations and nation-states into being, or whether nations required nationalism to secure their rights and place in the world.

A further division in the debate emerged with the distinction drawn by Miroslav Hroch² between Western European civic nationalism and Eastern European ethnic-nationalism. Mapped onto

this distinction one could also read oppositions including: political versus cultural; French versus German; universal versus parochial; democratic versus undemocratic; peaceful versus violent; and benign versus belligerent.

For this writer, and notwithstanding an earlier adherence to the civic versus ethnic opposition, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the now rich literature on nationalism and the nation-state. The first conclusion is that nationalism and nation-states, while built out of older cultural material, are definitively modern phenomena. To consider oneself as a national of a particular nation-state is something distinct to the modern world, unimaginable before the 17th or 18th centuries.

The second conclusion is that it was indeed nationalists who brought national movements into being in order to create territorially defined nation states inhabited by culturally and linguistically defined national communities. National communities are imagined, or more accurately constructed, from pre-national cultural and political material during periods of democratisation, whether in the 19th or 20th centuries.

The third conclusion is that the distinction between civic and cultural nationalism, no matter how politically attractive, is a nonsense. All nationalisms are, in part or whole, cultural phenomena. The nationalism of the French revolution, despite its grounding in Enlightenment values of universal rights, was culturally specific to a French nation then in the process



of construction. It mobilised opposition to the allegedly parochial, backward regional cultural and linguistic identities of the Basques and Bretons, among others, as part of its construction of a modern, centralised, civic yet crucially French nation-state. This third point is important, as it reveals a confusion that lies at the heart of so much of the contemporary debate on nationalism: namely what it is that is distinct about nationalism as an ideology and the nation-state as an organising principle of modern politics.

By way of explanation, it may be useful to think of modern political ideologies as providing three distinct sets of logics: constitutive, procedural and substantive. Nationalism is a constitutive ideology. Its function is to constitute a political subject, namely The People, out of an existing but reconfigured articulation of cultural and linguistic identities. These identities are authentic, in the sense of having real lived material presence, and invented, in the sense of having been materially produced and reproduced by human beings in specific sets of social and economic circumstances.

An example of a procedural ideology, on the other hand, would be republicanism, which has little to say about how to constitute its political subject and everything to say about how that subject, The People, should govern itself, once constituted. Republicanism is an ideology that, by providing rules for decision-making, enables an already constituted political subject to make decisions about its own affairs.

Of course, neither constitutive nor procedural ideologies can, in and of themselves, direct a political subject towards the outcome of its procedural deliberations. For this, The People, however defined, and utilising whatever set of rules, must decide on the kind of society they want to live in. They need a set of substantive norms to determine how best to produce and distribute economic, political, cultural and spiritual rights, responsibility and resources. Capitalism, socialism and liberalism are all substantive ideologies in this sense.

Although this distinction is neither rigid nor without elements of overlap and bleed, it does help explain why, for example, nationalism can never, in and of itself, be civic. For that it requires republicanism. Equally it helps explain why, and not withstanding the claims of liberals or socialists, subjectivities based on social class or individual rights must always be anchored in national cultural traditions, British liberalism and French communism being cases in point.

Herein lies the power of nationalism and the nation-state, explaining its almost universal purchase and persistence in the modern world – namely its unrivalled strength as a subject-constituting ideology.

The limits of nationalism

If the strength of nationalism and the nation-state lies in their ability to constitute and situate the political subject of the nation as a people and geographic and historic place, it is also here that nationalism's limits are to be found, and it is on these limits



that nationalism's strongest critics have focused their attentions in recent times.

At a theoretical level there are at least three obvious limits to nationalism in this regard. The first limit is that national political subjectivities, like all identities, are constructed through the interplay of essence and difference. Nationalists, working with already existing cultural material, articulate a sense of identity that is simultaneously essential to itself and distinct from its other. While language, and linguistic difference, is the most obvious material to achieve this objective, it is not always available, and broader cultural or historical elements may be brought into play.

Nationalism's critics argue that this manoeuvre is inherently divisive, as it demands that the identity of the nation is defined in opposition to, and therefore in conflict with, its other. A conflation of *in-opposition-to* and *in-conflict-with* allows critics to locate what they believe to be the belligerent logic of nationalism, which provides a powerful though wholly inadequate explanatory framework for conflicts in the North of Ireland, the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

The second limit is that in addition to defining itself against external others, nationalism seeks to homogenise its interior, categorising its own citizens against a continuum of national authenticity. That this homogenising drive is a function of the will to power of specific groups within the nation rather than nationalism itself does not weaken the attraction of the argument for nationalism's critics. The Catholic exclusivism of the early years of the Irish

Free State or the anti-communist witch hunts in McCarthy's United States of America are cases in point.

The third limit, and determined directly by the first two, is that rights and resources in any given nation-state are distributed to citizens and non-citizen residents according to the exclusionary logic of nationalism's own sense of self. This logic determines who can enter the state, on what terms and with what rights; and within the state who is accorded what rights, and what punishments are due when normative responsibilities are infringed. Unlike the first two limits, the third presents nationalism with a serious challenge that it ignores at its own peril.

Put simply, these three limits, argue nationalism's critics, produce xenophobia, discrimination and inequality. And the critics are partially right. But crucially these limits are not inherent to the successful functioning of nationalism as a subject-constituting ideology. Nor must we abandon the positive strengths of nationalism in order to resolve them.

Indeed throughout nationalism's history, and within any given national movement, there have been counter-nationalisms, struggling to resolve and resist attempts by dominant-nationalisms to constitute the nation according to these xenophobic, discriminatory and unequal logics.

In an Irish context, there is a long tradition of counter-nationalisms to the dominant nationalist/unionist discourse that became hegemonic across the



island in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War and Anglo-Irish settlement. These alternative traditions have sought to articulate an infusion of cultural nationalism, civic republicanism, democratic socialism and radical feminism. Intuitively, if not consciously, they have sought to construct a nationalism and a nation-state that is cosmopolitan, heterodox and egalitarian. One can think of James Connolly, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Sean O'Faolain, Peadar O'Donnell and George Gilmore as just some of the figures whose political and literary practice intuitively and self-consciously sought to constitute a national subject that was outward looking, plural and inclusive.

Nationalism's critics can only conclude that nationalism and the nation-state is unable to escape its xenophobic, discriminatory and unequalitarian limits by blinding themselves to those nationalists who have or are continuing to seek effective solutions to these problems. For this writer, the issue is not whether nationalism continues to have a future, but what kind of nationalism best suits the future we want to build? And in answering this question, those of us who believe that we need nationalism now more than ever must demonstrate that our intellectual and organisational project has found an effective response to its own limits and to the challenges of nationalism's critics.

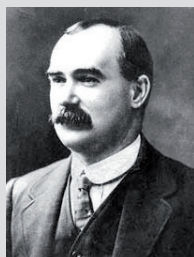
Misreading nationalism

Writing in the 2009 edition of *Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland*, Robin Wilson argued that Irish nationalist parties, in commemorating Wolfe Tone,

betray a belief that "however unsettlingly Ireland may have changed over the centuries, 'Irishness' remains a rock of certainty to which to cling."³ Wilson went on to mobilise a series of critics of nationalism, and cultural or ethno-nationalism in particular, to support his principle conclusion that 'republicanism is running out of steam' and should be replaced by a cosmopolitan politics.

I will return to the issue of cosmopolitanism below, but firstly I want to engage with Wilson's initial claim: that Irish nationalism is exclusive, isolationist and unable to respond effectively to difference and the demands of an ever globalising world. While Wilson does not name any nationalist political party, I'm sure he would apply his critique of nationalism to Sinn Féin, and so I will use Sinn Féin's nationalism to test his case.

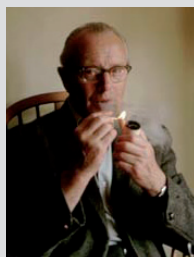
At a theoretical level Wilson, like many Irish writers, conflates republicanism and nationalism. He ignores the fact that Irish republicanism predates Irish nationalism by almost half a century; that their ideological and organisational functions and forms are distinct; and that neither can be viewed as a single homogenous entity. In his essay, republicanism appears at times as a civic alternative to cultural nationalism, while at others as a form of cultural nationalism disguised as Enlightenment universalism. As a consequence, Wilson's theoretical understanding of what constitutes Irish republicanism or nationalism at any specific moment in almost 200 hundred years of history is collapsed into a crude caricature.



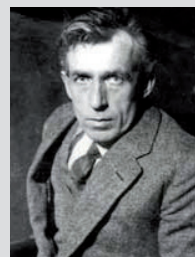
James Connolly



Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington



Sean O Faolain



Peadar O'Donnell

In turn, he misreads the interrelationship between civic republicanism and the conservative cultural nationalism that underwrote the early decades of the Southern State, and erases from history the counter-nationalisms that challenged the exclusions and inequalities that lay at the heart of the post-partition settlements North and South. The consequence is that he refuses both the existence of and the difference between the conservative Catholic nationalism of De Valera, for example, and the radical socialist-feminist nationalism of Sheehy-Skeffington.

Nationalism, for Wilson, is at all times culturally exclusive and politically isolationist. Indeed it is only when nationalism calls on itself to abandon that which makes it national – in the writing of Conor Cruise O'Brien or politics of Garret FitzGerald – that Wilson appears to concede the possibility of 'reconstruction'. However in reality these figures are simply the progenitors of Wilson's own post-nationalism, rather than sources of any counter-nationalism.

Moreover his claim that their politics were 'more conducive...to fostering

reconciliation across the island as a whole' is hard to square with the impact on Northern Unionists of FitzGerald's negotiation of the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement or the impact on Northern Nationalists of Cruise O'Brien's introduction of Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act.

In support of his argument, and in addition to his theoretical confusion, Wilson attempts to impose his own readings onto events such as the annual Wolfe Tone commemorations and the outcome of EU referenda, contrary to the available empirical evidence.

Republican commemorations, particularly those celebrating the founding moment of our political tradition, are not about constructing a sense of cultural continuity to compensate for the reality of social and cultural change. Rather they are mobilisations aimed at re-legitimising a civic republican political project, while simultaneously rearticulating the republican principles of liberty, equality and solidarity in new and ever changing contexts.

Speaking at the 2009 Wolfe Tone



Commemoration in Bodinstown, Sinn Féin's Martin McGuinness concluded by saying:

Sinn Féin will continue to stand up for ordinary people and to speak out for those who this government would seek to ignore – not the bankers and property speculators being bailed out with the people's money but those who Wolfe Tone referred to as 'the people of no property'. Our work in continuing to build national reconciliation, in seeking to bring about harmony between Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter on this island, will also continue. And we will continue to pursue the unity and freedom of our country. These were the aims of Wolfe Tone. They are our aims.

With these words, McGuinness was drawing on three important strands of republican discourse, the aim of which is not to construct continuity with the past, but to motivate and mobilize for change in the present and future. The first of these strands is a politics of social and economic equality; the second a politics of cultural and religious pluralism; and the third national political and territorial reunification. Wilson does a disservice both to republicans and to the quality of his own argument by crudely misrepresenting such commemorative political mobilisations in this way.

His arguments with regard to the Lisbon Treaty operate similarly. His assertion that the rejection of the Lisbon Treaty in 2008 represented a 'dip into isolationist discourse' is directly contradicted not only by the political discourse of



Martin McGuinness speaking at the Wolfe Tone Commemoration in Bodinstown, Co Kildare

the principle 'No' campaigns, but by detailed opinion polls conducted both by Millward Brown IMS for the Department of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission's Eurobarometer poll.

In both opinion polls a clear majority of 'No' voters believed that Ireland should remain in the European Union and that its interests were best served by that membership. Both opinion polls also list a detailed series of reasons why people rejected the Treaty, including insufficient knowledge of the Treaty; opposition to the policy direction of the EU in relation to workers rights and defence policy; and opposition to the perceived negative consequences for smaller member states of the proposed redistribution of power contained in the Treaty.



Wilson offers no substantive evidence to support his view that the 2008 'No' to Lisbon vote was a consequence of some selfish knee-jerk unreconstructed isolationist nationalism.

A more grounded explanation would suggest that, as with voters in France and the Netherlands who rejected the EU Constitution in 2005, a left-led campaign convinced a majority of the electorate to oppose both the current policy consensus and proposed future direction offered by a neo-liberal centre-right coalition in both the European Commission and Council.

Indeed Sinn Féin, as one of the lead voices in the 'No' to Lisbon campaign, emphasised time and again that Ireland's place was at the heart of Europe, and that opposition to the Lisbon Treaty did not constitute opposition to the EU itself. The party provided a detailed critique of the contents of the Treaty, and argued that it would affect both the architecture and policy agenda of the Union in ways that would be bad for Ireland, the EU as a whole and the developing world.

Indeed Sinn Féin has been Ireland's most vocal critic of the ongoing refusal of the majority of older EU member states, and Irish political parties, to grant full freedom of movement to all citizens of EU accession states, and of the increasingly draconian 'Fortress Europe' agenda emerging on issues of asylum and immigration at an EU level.

Contrary to Wilson's portrayal of Irish nationalism as exclusive, isolationist and unable to respond effectively to difference and the demands of an

ever globalising world, Sinn Féin's nationalism, complemented as it is with civic republicanism, democratic socialism, feminism and internationalism, is outward-looking, plural and inclusive.

Cosmopolitanism equals liberalism

In place of this allegedly exclusive, isolationist and unresponsive nationalism, Wilson proposes a political cosmopolitanism, that 'makes a fundamental break with homogenous conceptions of national identity.' Of course he ignores the fact that almost all forms of nationalism allow for local and regional identities to coexist above and below that of the national; and that since the Enlightenment, cultural particularism and civic universalism have been combined together to provide the foundations of variants of conservatism, liberalism and socialism.

Indeed his misreadings of nationalism are less a serious attempt to critique any actually existing ideological or organisational nationalist project, but rather a pretext for a more basic proposition: namely a return to good old-fashioned liberalism. As has been the case with liberalism since the 18th century, the real object of Wilson's critique is not nationalism or the nation-state, but any form of 'collectivised "imagined community"'. He argues for an 'individualistic concept of society' in which an 'egalitarian individualism... treats individuals, not states or "communities" as the unit of moral concern.'

In concrete terms, Wilson proposes



that the British government's 2005 community relations policy for the North of Ireland, *A Shared Future*, embodies a 'political philosophy of cosmopolitanism' and laments Sinn Féin's shelving of the proposals post 2007. For Sinn Féin, however, *A Shared Future*, rather than embodying some egalitarian cosmopolitan ideal, avoids key issues of inequality at a structural and collective level, which Wilson's 'individualised concept of society' is simply unable to understand or address. Discrimination and exclusion more often than not occur at a collective or community level on grounds of class, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation and so on.

Creating a shared future, in Ireland or elsewhere, will require the dismantling of structural architectures of inequality and exclusion, and the protection of both individual and collective rights, something which the British government's community relations policy is neither intended for nor capable of doing.

It is important to stress that Sinn Féin's argument is not the opposite of Wilson's, as the party is strongly in favour of a Bill of Rights that provides for the social, economic, political and cultural rights of the individual. Rather the party believes that a more profoundly egalitarian rights-based approach to policy-making must include collective and community rights, including national rights alongside more traditional claims to individual rights.

Indeed, rather than see Wilson's cosmopolitan individualism as a more egalitarian and tolerant approach to

political life, it could be argued that its privileging of the individual, and intolerance to any form of collective identity, replicates the exclusions and discriminations which he finds so abhorrent in those 'collectivised "imagined communities"'. It also ignores the extent to which individual identities are as imagined and as problematic as collectivised identities, and contain within them the same potential for xenophobia, discrimination and exclusion as their community counterparts.

More fundamentally, Wilson's cosmopolitan liberalism ignores the fact that any ideology that seeks to constitute its subjectivity exclusively through the individual, cannot hope to be sustainable and/or durable. Identities are unavoidably collective, requiring imagined communities of one sort or another to give them meaning and substance.

To put it another way, Wilson's cosmopolitan individualism is simply a retreat into an unreconstructed liberalism. Like other former left intellectuals of his generation, the disappointments and challenges of earlier political alignments and associations have led him to abandon the collective foundations of political identity and action, and substitute for them a bland individualism, which seeks to situate the liberal intellectual above the competing claims of so many collectivities.

The irony is that, understood in this way, Wilson's cosmopolitanism, rather than offering some new ideological



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and organisational project to confront the challenges of our times, actually represents the final retreat of an embattled and defeated social democracy into the embrace of social liberalism. In doing so, Wilson, like other social democratic supporters of the current right-wing direction of the European Union, provides political cover to the neo-liberal impulses of corporate-led globalisation as enshrined, for example, in the EU's Lisbon Strategy and the Lisbon Treaty's agenda for international trade.

Nationalism now more than ever

So where does this leave nationalism as we enter the second decade of the 21st century? Has the era of the nation-state come to an end? Has nationalism exhausted its political repertoire?

This writer thinks not. The fact that there are more national movements and more nation-states than at any other time in history should give pause for thought. Today, more than ever, we need nationalism, but a nationalism that can overcome its own limits, and avoid the xenophobias, discriminations and exclusions that have been a feature of many of its conservative, liberal and socialist variants since the 19th century.

Rather than abandon nationalism and the nation-state, this writer believes that the best form of democracy can be achieved in Ireland today through the ending of partition, the withdrawal of the British state from the North of Ireland and the building of a political system in which all the people who inhabit the island of Ireland are sovereign. My

conception of sovereignty is neither insular nor anachronistic, but a genuinely radical democratic one, in which self-determination is vested in people in a plurality of ways - individual, communal, local, national, international - while recognising the complexity of life in today's internationalised world.

The challenge today is to articulate forms of sovereignty and self-determination and to build institutions of governance that are open, democratic, plural and just, in meaningful and materially effective ways. Central to this articulation has to be a socio-political and economic critique of contemporary society that recognises the structural inequalities embedded in the very fabric of our lives. These structural inequalities – along lines of class, gender, race, religion and sexual orientation to name a few – form the architecture in which we live our lives and which prevent us from realising the meaning of equality. From such a critique we can build strategies for removing these inequalities and continue the long and uncharted process of building new architectures – social, political, economic – based not on inequality and discrimination, but on empowerment and solidarity. This process of critique, strategy and struggle is what I understand to be socialism, albeit heavily indebted to the parallel movements of feminism, anti-imperialism, anti-racism and ecologism which have motivated progressive movements across the globe throughout the 20th century.

This articulation is left republicanism: a commitment to radical participatory democracy, popular pluralist sovereignty,



social and economic justice, and political and cultural equality, coupled with a commitment to confronting and challenging the loci of power and inequality which constitute the architecture of modern society. In the process we will radically alter the way in which we as human beings organise our lives.

In what must be the most potent and powerful call to action in recent times, the Brazilian politician and social theorist Roberto Mangabeira Unger, in his 2009 manifesto, *The Left Alternative*,⁴ called on progressives across the globe to 'build a world of democracies in which the individual is empowered to participate and dissent.' He argues that 'nationalism was one of the most unexpected and powerful transforming forces in modern history.' And though recognising that today nationalism 'has become a dangerous diversion', Unger does not call for its abandonment, but rather for it to be 'reinterpreted and redirected' in order to 'become an opportunity for the advancement of progressive alternatives.'

Unger advocates a programme of 'revolutionary reform' that seeks to 'turn democratic politics, market economies and free civil societies into machines for developing distinct and novel forms of life.' As part of this process he calls for 'successful national heresy within the global economy, democratising markets, deepening democracies and empowering individuals'. For Unger, as for this writer, the nation and national difference is not privileged above other subjectivities, whether individual or collective, but an element, and an

integral element, of a broader, deeper radicalism mobilised 'in the service of an attempt to give ordinary men and women a better chance for a bigger life.'

2016 marks the centenary of the 1916 rising. This event was not an isolated Irish affair, but part of a much greater global process of modernisation and democratisation, of which the Mexican revolution of 1910, the World War of 1914-1918 and the Russian revolution of 1917 were a part.

As we approach the centenary of this foundational moment of modern Irish republicanism, those of us who remain committed to the emancipatory promise of nationalism, republicanism, socialism and feminism need to critically assess our century of struggle in order to learn the mistakes made by our predecessors, to strengthen our political capacity in the present and future. In doing so, those of us who believe that a better Ireland, Europe and world is possible must continue to build a progressive politics, with ambitious strategies aimed at implementing more radical policies in order to achieve our objectives, namely an independent democratic socialist Ireland, playing a central part in the ongoing struggles for a more democratic Europe and a more socially and economically just world.

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book, *Sinn Féin and the Politics of Left Republicanism*, was published by Pluto Press in 2009. His next book, *A Better Ireland? - New Policies, Strategies and Alliances*, will be published by Pluto Press later this year. He writes a weekly column for *An Phoblacht* and is a regular contributor to www.politico.ie.

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President McAleese with board members, staff and friends of the Centre for Cross Border Studies at a reception to mark the Centre's 10th birthday in Áras an Uachtaráin on 14 September 2009.

THE CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES

March 2010

The Centre for Cross Border Studies, founded in September 1999 and based in Armagh and Dublin, researches and develops cooperation across the Irish border in education, training, health, ICT, the economy, public administration, agriculture, planning, the environment and other practical areas. It also provides management, training and ICT support services to North-South and cross-border organisations and networks, and develops and manages cross-border information websites.

The Centre is an independent company limited by guarantee (UK charity no. XR 31047) and is owned jointly by Queen's University Belfast, Dublin City University and the Workers' Educational Association (Northern Ireland). Its

principal financial contributors in the past year have been the EU INTERREG IVA programme and the Irish Department of Education and Science. The Centre has also raised a significant proportion of its income through sponsorship and selling its research and consultancy services to government and other agencies.

Controversy about constitutional relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland now obscures less than ever before the broad consensus that exists in both jurisdictions about the value of cross-border cooperation on practical issues. This holds that a low level of contact and communication across the Irish border damages the well-being of both parts of the island, and there is a clear need to identify and overcome the present barriers to cooperation and mutual understanding.



PURPOSE

The pragmatic view, that cooperation should take place where it brings real benefits to both parts of the island, is weakened by an additional factor: there has been too little research to date on how this practical cooperation is to be achieved, and how the outcomes of such research should be developed. The Centre for Cross Border Studies – itself a unique expression of cross-border cooperation – provides an objective, university-based setting for policy research into and development of such cooperation.

The Centre is a policy research and development institute, whose purpose is to:

- Identify gaps in cross-border information, research and mutual learning in Ireland;
- Commission and publish research on issues related to opportunities for and obstacles to cross-border cooperation in all fields of society and the economy;
- Host events at which research findings can be discussed and disseminated, and at which policy formation in the area of cross-border cooperation can be developed;
- Present the findings of such research and development projects to the European Commission, the two governments, the Northern Ireland Executive, employer, trade union and social partnership bodies, and the wider public;
- Provide management support for North-South and cross-border organisations and programmes

which have a strong education, research and development dimension;

- Provide training programmes for public officials and others in North-South cooperation in Ireland;
- Provide sources of comprehensive and accurate information about North-South and cross-border cooperation in Ireland.

WEBSITES

CCBS HOUSE WEBSITE

www.crossborder.ie



The number of page views and hits on the Centre's home website continued to rise (although the number of people accessing it decreased slightly) in 2009. On the other hand the number of people visiting one of the Centre's other two major websites, to access Border Ireland's (www.borderireland.info) Media Centre, which carries press articles about cross-border matters on a weekly basis, rose sharply to the point where it now has more users than **www.crossborder.ie** (see table on next page).

www.crossborder.ie

Year (monthly average)	Unique visitors	Visits	Page views	Hits
2003	1619	2161	4802	14373
2004	1453	2084	9178	18981
2005	2566	3603	8127	24747
2006	3481	4915	10149	30534
2007	3969	5432	12041	32207
2008	4340	6060	15930	37045
2009	3621	5156	19338	43007

Border Ireland Media Centre (www.borderireland.ie)

2009	3801	7043	24840	82984
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BORDER IRELAND

www.borderireland.info



Border Ireland is the first ever online searchable database to provide access to the full range of information on North-South and cross-border issues in Ireland, covering education, health, agriculture, transport, the environment, tourism, culture, mobility issues, business and community development.

Formally launching it in March 2006, the then Irish Minister for Finance, Mr Brian Cowen TD, said: "This website will be the keystone for information provision that will enable us all to meet future challenges, be they economic, social or educational. I would encourage everyone who wishes to benefit from a cross-border approach to their activities to make use of this invaluable website."

By February 2010 Border Ireland had documented (online) the details of 3,782 North-South and cross-border activities, 1,790 organisations, 2,048 publications, 1,812 newspaper articles and 2,343 individual contacts (people).

With funding from the EU Peace II programme, the Centre developed Border Ireland to centralise the very large amount of uncoordinated and fragmented information about North-South cooperation and the Irish border region. This has involved



the creation of an information capture strategy and strong working relationships with a network of over 200 information providers from all government departments, North and South; the managing authorities for all EU programmes; relevant charitable foundations on the island; research coordinators in all higher education institutions, and key community and voluntary, and business leaders.

Border Ireland is available online at **www.borderireland.info** where people can search through the information by year, sector and location, and view an organisation's history of involvement in cross-border cooperation.

A second 2006-2008 phase of the project was implemented through support provided under the EU Peace II Extension Programme. The key objective for this second phase was to develop Border Ireland as the recognised portal for information on and communication about cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland.

In 2008 Border Ireland received a facelift, modifying its presentation to place the **Media Centre**, featuring regularly updated media reports on North-South and cross-border issues, at the centre of the information provided. The Media Centre is now the most popular and visited page on the site.

Also during this phase, an interactive discussion forum was developed to disseminate *Border Ireland Briefings*, to provide responses to 'A Note from the Next Door Neighbours' (see *below*), and to communicate progress in

collecting data for and maintaining this very large database. The *Border Ireland Briefings* now on the site are: a guide to cross-border cooperation in the health services; cooperation between public libraries; a guide to the geographical location of cross-border cooperation activities; an overview of North-South and cross-border cooperation in the Common Chapter of the two jurisdictions' development plans; 'Who's Who' in North-South and cross-border cooperation; and overviews of North-South and cross-border cooperation in agriculture, economic development, tourism and transport.

During 2009 Border Ireland reached a limit on its current platform and we are now in the process of moving it onto a dedicated webserver with almost unlimited space to expand in the future.

BORDER PEOPLE

www.borderpeople.info



The Border People online information portal, providing useful citizens' information for people crossing the border to live, work, study or retire, is now three years old.

It was developed in response to a commission from the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat in early 2007 with technical assistance from DID, the web and design team of the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and Personnel, and funded by the EU Peace Two programme. Its second 2009-2011 phase is funded by the EU INTERREG IVA programme.

Usage in 2009	Pages	Hits
January	61,526	191,443
February	29,829	167,379
March	15,184	123,112
April	40,459	394,800
May	68,905	418,682
June	38,796	318,614
July	38,114	335,098
August	36,551	340,695
September	37,157	364,987
October	43,713	384,903
November	45,902	390,429
December	33,385	275,599

The prototype website was officially launched (initially as www.crossbordermobility.info) in October 2007 at a meeting of the North/South Ministerial Council in Ballymascanlon, Co. Louth by the First Minister of Northern Ireland, Dr Ian Paisley MP MLA, the Deputy First Minister, Mr Martin McGuinness MP MLA and the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dermot Ahern TD. Work continued on the site, and it was launched to the public as **www.borderpeople.info** in Dublin in April 2008 (by television presenter Clare Byrne) and in Derry/Londonderry in May 2008 (by Northern Ireland Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness MP

MLA). It received widespread publicity throughout Northern Ireland and the Southern border region, including a full page in the *Belfast Telegraph*.

An all-Ireland and international marketing company, Weber Shandwick, was retained to publicise the initiative. In the summer-autumn of 2008 and 2009 there were poster campaigns on billboards, adshells, buses and college and university notice boards in Newry, Armagh, Enniskillen, Coleraine, Derry/Londonderry, Dundalk, Letterkenny, Bundoran and Monaghan, and leaflets and pens were distributed at targeted events.

The Border People public information website – the first of its kind on the island of Ireland – is structured around the four themes of Commute, Work, Live, Study. It includes in-depth information on a range of subjects in both Irish jurisdictions, including taxation, social security, job seeking, qualifications, health, education, housing, banking and telecommunications. The website content has been continuously updated in consultation with Borderwise, the cross-border advice and information service provided by Citizens Advice Northern Ireland and the Citizens Information Board in the Republic of Ireland. At time of writing there are no staff employed in Borderwise, but Citizens Advice NI have submitted an application to the EU INTERREG IVA programme for funding to continue this service.

There appears to be an untapped market for information and advice



on cross-border mobility issues. The number of 'hits' on the Border People website rose sharply to nearly 420,000 in May 2009 and achieved a continuing high level of 275,000-390,000 per month thereafter. Pages accessed also reached a peak in May 2009 at nearly 69,000 and settled to a level of 33,000-46,000 after that. This sharp increase in the website's usage can be largely explained by the offline marketing campaign outlined above. This marketing campaign will be continued up to the end of 2011.

The second phase of the Border People website (2009-2011) is currently being developed by the Centre in partnership with the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat and funded by the EU's INTERREG IVA programme as part of the INICCO group of projects (see pages 120-121). New features allow a much higher level of public feedback, and for the systematic analysis of that feedback.

A User Group of cross-border mobility information providers and users – including citizens advice bureaux, government agencies, health organisations, cross-border local authority networks, the EURES cross-border employment service, community groups, business groups and individual firms – met twice in 2009. The first of these, on 2 June in Armagh discussed the accuracy and usability of cross-border statistics, and was addressed by Steve McFeely of the Central Statistics Office (RoI) and Fiona Johnston of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The feedback report commented:

We still do not have any better statistics

on the exact numbers of people moving across the Irish border. The currently cited statistics of approximately 18,000 workers (9,000 in each direction), 5,200 students and 4,000 migrants crossing the border to work or study each year are estimates developed in 2001 during the preparation of the North South Ministerial Council 'Obstacles to Mobility' Study. This lack of an accurate, in-depth understanding of cross-border mobility within the island is considered by the User Group to be the 'major missing element in the overall picture'.

The second User Group meeting on 14 December in Dundalk discussed cross-border consumer issues. The speakers were the Chief Executive of the NI Consumer Council, Antoinette McKeown, the PR and Marketing Manager of the European Consumer Centre (Dublin), Caroline Curneen, and Dundalk Town Centre Commercial Manager, Andrew Mawhinney.

Among the issues raised were the unfair deal border region users are getting in public service provision, notably in health services and public transport (including the lack of integrated ticketing); the poor service cross-border workers get from banks (particularly the lack of mortgage packages) and the exorbitant fees frequently charged for simple cross-border transactions; the rising trend of cross-border online shopping and the lack of awareness of consumer rights in this area; and the hold large UK shops have on local shopping centres and the particular stranglehold of UK wholesalers.

The Border People website and its user groups are a clear example of



cross-border cooperation at its most pragmatic and sensible: a means of making government departments, information and advice providers and the general public in both jurisdictions more knowledgeable about and thus effective in dealing with practical obstacles to cross-border mobility. Common difficulties faced by people moving across the border to live, work, study or retire include knowing where to start when inquiring about specific cross-border issues; the absence of advisors in public offices who know the two jurisdictions well; the need for information leaflets in 'plain English' for cross-border workers; the unfamiliar requirements of having to complete self-assessment tax forms in the other jurisdiction; a lack of knowledge about how educational qualifications translate across the border; the absence of portable pensions, and the difficulties of accessing information about social welfare and health care entitlements.

A NOTE FROM THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS



Since September 2006 the Centre has been sending an opinionated monthly e-column, *A Note from the Next Door Neighbours*, to a growing audience of subscribers: nearly 7,000 at the last count. These Notes have provoked enthusiastic feedback and debate.

The 41 'Notes' so far have covered the following issues: whether North-South cooperation actually works to bring about reconciliation between people in the two jurisdictions; the inaccurate reporting of North-South cooperation in the media; the possible re-opening of the Ulster Canal; the importance of EU funding to cross-border cooperation in Ireland; the need for Northern Ireland to attract back its highly educated and skilled emigrants; how Ireland, North and South, could play a distinctive role in combating world hunger; hopes after the March 2007 Northern Ireland election; the cross-border role of teacher education; Rev Ian Paisley as a champion of North-South cooperation; the contribution of Norwegian human rights lawyer, Torkel Opsahl, to the peace process; the need for civil society groups in both Irish jurisdictions to talk to one another; a possible high-speed rail bridge between Northern Ireland and Scotland; the row over families in Donegal sending their children to Derry schools; why higher education students don't cross the border to study any more; more about barriers to cross-border higher education; the resurrection of Clones; whether the Irish border region could become the best border region in Europe; how the Centre for Cross Border Studies is becoming involved in work in Africa; an upbeat message from the chairman of the Centre; reconciliation initiatives in Monaghan and Armagh; anti-racism and anti-sectarianism work in primary schools in County Antrim and the Southern border region; cross-border cooperators saying 'Yes' to the Lisbon Treaty; cross-community gaelic games; the value of having both a united Ireland and a United Kingdom at the same time;

statistics which show the commonalities between North and South; North-South cooperation during the recession; why the concept of an 'island of Ireland' economy is still a valid one; the 'patriotism' of cross-border shopping; the work of a Monaghan priest in cross-border reconciliation; cross-border phone, insurance and banking services; the Belfast-Dublin Enterprise train (twice); the cross-border activities of an East Belfast Protestant community worker; an appeal for an idealistic person to become the Centre's deputy director; the Centre's work in knitting the island's relationships back together; the Orange marching season; the need for less emphasis on Irish unity and more on cross-border cooperation; the Fermanagh man with the cross-border knowledge in his head; the role of civil servants and EU officials in cross-border peacebuilding; some unsung heroes of cross-border cooperation in 2009, and the Armagh Rhymers group.

These columns have been reported in the *Irish Times*, *Irish News*, *Derry Journal*, *Northern Standard* (Monaghan), *Scotsman*, *Glasgow Herald*, *Sunday Post* (Scotland) and on RTE, BBC Scotland, Border Television and local radio stations in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and northern England. They also appear on the celebrated website of British-Irish and Northern Irish issues Slugger O'Toole (<http://sluggerotoole.com>)

The columns can also be accessed at www.crossborder.ie/home/ndn/index.php

THE INICCO PROJECTS

Between 2009 and the end of 2011 the Centre is undertaking five major new research projects funded by the EU cross-border programme INTERREG IVA and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. These have been packaged under the collective title: the Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory (INICCO). The five constituent projects are as follows:



Speakers at the June 2009 Border People User Group. From left to right: Pat Donaghy (North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat), Fiona Johnston (NISRA), Steve MacFeely (CSO), Joe Shiels (CCBS).

1. BORDER PEOPLE CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY INFORMATION WEBSITE (PHASE TWO)

This is the second phase of the Border People (www.borderpeople.info) information website, being developed in a continuing partnership with the



North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat. This project is led by the Centre for Cross Border Studies' IT manager, Joe Shiels, assisted by a new information officer, Annmarie O'Kane, who started work in February 2009. (*For more information see the longer item on Border People on pages 116-119.*)

Phase Two will allow for a much more systematic dissemination and marketing of information and public feedback on cross-border mobility issues, assisted by an active and enlarged User Group drawn from a wide range of citizens advice, employment advice, local authority, business and community organisations. Performance will be reviewed against agreed targets for information content, along with regular statistical website reports to evaluate demand and usage. An annual survey will test whether the interests of users are being matched and how well the various website features are working.

The Steering Group for this project is drawn from the North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat, the Centre for Cross Border Studies, the Department of Finance and Personnel (NI), the Department of Social and Family Affairs (RoI), Citizens Advice Northern Ireland, Citizens Information Board (RoI), and the EURES Cross-border Partnership.

2. THE CROSS-BORDER SPATIAL PLANNING AND TRAINING NETWORK (CroSPlaN)

This network was formally launched at the Blackwater Learning Centre at Knockconan in north Monaghan on 25 September 2009. Led by the Centre's

sister organisation, the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD), it brings together an alliance of planners, economic development officers, local authority officials, councillors, and community and business interests on both sides of the border to promote more systematic learning and exchange in planning. (*For more information on CroSPlaN and ICLRd see pages 137-144.*)

CroSPlaN's three year programme consists of the following:

- Two applied research projects per year
- One training programme per year for cross-border region local councillors, council officials and business leaders (the first course, in Dundalk and Newry, runs from November 2009 to May 2010).
- One technical workshop per year
- One annual conference (in 2010 held on 21-22 January in Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, with the title 'Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of Recession.')

The two 2009-10 research projects are:

- The Implications of the Northern Ireland Review of Public Administration and new planning legislation in the Republic of Ireland for inter-jurisdictional spatial planning;
- Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development in the EU and USA.



The 2010-11 CroSPlaN research projects will address the cross-border environmental implications of EU directives (on Habitat, Water Framework and Groundwater) for cross-border planning in Northern Ireland and the Irish border region. It is intended that future training programmes will also cover these topics and their implications for local and regional planning.

The Steering Group for this project brings together planners, planning academics, cross-border cooperation specialists and cross-border local authority network representatives from the Planning Service (NI), the Border Region Authority (RoI), Leitrim County Council, the National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at NUI Maynooth, University of Ulster, the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), the Centre for Cross Border Studies and the ICLRD.

3. EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL FOR CROSS-BORDER HOSPITAL SERVICES IN THE BORDER REGION

The overall aim of this project is to 'identify how cross-border hospital services can provide mutual benefits for the people of the border region'. Building on two recent CCBS reports – *Removing the Barriers: an Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Co-operation in Hospital Services in Ireland* (2007) and *Surveying the Sickbeds: initial steps towards modelling all-island hospital accessibility* (2008) – this more in-depth study concentrates specifically on the Irish border region, but is also drawing on comparable practice

elsewhere in the EU and trying to identify possible new areas for developing all-island health co-operation with a particular focus on hospital planning. There are many complex political and policy barriers– such as payment for treatment and the contrasting role of health insurance in the two jurisdictions – that the report will also take into account.

The project has two complementary strands:

- **Development of a prototype modelling tool for hospital planning on a border region and all-island basis (the Modelling Strand)**
- **The role of community involvement in planning hospital services in the border region (the Participation Strand).**

The primary output of this study, which will be completed in mid 2011, will be a robust prototype modelling tool for hospital planning based on patient need, and disregarding, for research purposes, the jurisdictional boundaries. This tool will take into account a range of variables such as clinical factors in selected specialisms; the distribution of patients (potential need and demand); the configuration of hospitals in the cross-border region (potential supply based on bed numbers and specialisms), and the transport network (modelling of accessibility based on travel time).

After a tendering process in autumn 2009, the Centre selected the London and Dublin-based consultancy firm



Speakers at the January 2010 ICLRD/CroSPaN conference: from left to right: (back) Hubert Kearns, Professor Rob Kitchin, Wesley Shannon, Professor John FitzGerald; (front) Holly St Clair, Charlotte Kahn and John Driscoll.

Horwath Bastow Charleton (HBC), which has extensive experience of health service policy and planning, to carry out the Modelling Strand of this project. HBC will identify a series of options to look at the core ingredients for the modelling tool, and how it might be applied in practice in a selected number of clinical areas. The draft modelling tool will be tested with real data from the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland hospital systems. Specifically, the research will examine the number, size, composition and possible locations of the hospitals that would be required in the future if the planning of acute services in the border region was on the basis of population needs rather than jurisdictional frontiers. The intention would not be to present a prescriptive

model or one which covers every service area, but rather to provide an indication of how the pilot methodology developed might be applied to selected services.

The Participation Strand of the project will be undertaken 'in house' by CCBS deputy director (research), Ruth Taillon, who carried out a series of focus groups and interviews with hospital service users and health service professionals in winter-early spring 2010. Focus groups of local stakeholders were held in Enniskillen, Omagh, Dundalk, Derry/Londonderry, Letterkenney, Cavan, Monaghan, Castleblayney, Newry and Dungannon. This study, which will be completed in May 2010, will explore the role (of lack of it) of local communities in the planning of hospital services in



the Irish border region and factor these findings into recommendations for developing a more patient-centred focus to this planning. It will also consider how local communities might have an input into cross-border health planning in the future. Recent campaigns in Monaghan and Omagh against the removal or relocation of hospital services have brought these issues into particular focus.

The Steering Group for this project brings health and cross-border cooperation specialists together from the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, the Health Research Board (RoI), the Health Service Executive (RoI)(observer), Cooperation and Working Together (CAWT), the Irish Patients Association, the Patient Client Council (NI), the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (observer), the Centre for Cross Border Studies and the University of Warwick.

4. REVIVING THE BORDER REGION ECONOMY IN A NEW ERA OF PEACE AND DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT

The aim of this package of four closely inter-related research projects is to find ways of understanding and increasing the accessibility, size, transparency, competitiveness and profitability of Irish border region markets in a context where peace and normality have finally arrived in Northern Ireland and the Southern Border Region, but have been followed by an international economic recession. This overall project – in which the Centre is partnered by *InterTradelreland* – is being carried

out by a high-level team comprising Dr John Bradley, formerly of the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin; Professor Michael Best of the Universities of Cambridge and Massachusetts; Ms Joanne McLaughlin; and two economists from the Wroclaw Regional Development Agency in Poland (the research is ‘twinning’ for comparative purposes with the Lower Silesia region of Poland and its common border with the German *länder* of Saxony and Brandenburg). This project was initiated in December 2009 and will be formally launched in spring 2010.

The four constituent elements of this research project are:

- a. **The specific challenges the region faces due to its peripheral location**, with an exploration of how it might become less peripheral through new business communication technologies, optimal use of supporting institutions (including higher education institutions) and the experience of more advanced border regions elsewhere in Europe. This is the ‘framing’ piece of research for the overall research project.
- b. **How border region retail and wholesale markets might be made more efficient drivers of regional growth** (and more robust in the face of currency changes) after the present temporary imbalance caused by currency distortions.
- c. **How the micro-enterprises (with under 10 employees) which are the mainstay of so much economic activity in the region**



might be enabled to expand by exploiting increased access to larger cross-border markets on their doorstep (and to learn from the experience of successful 'niche' producers in other parts of Ireland and Europe).

- d. **How the region's tourism product (including 'green' tourism) might dovetail with strategic plans for tourism in Ireland** as a whole and how border towns might learn from 'good performers' elsewhere on the island to bring more visitors to the region.

The Steering Group for this project brings together economists, industrial promotion practitioners and cross-border cooperation specialists from InterTradelreland, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (NI), Invest Northern Ireland, Forfás (RoI), Centre for Cross Border Studies and the University of Ulster.

5. PILOT IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION IN IRELAND

As part of the integrative work of a cross-border observatory, the Centre will research the development of a pilot Impact Assessment Toolkit for practical, mutually beneficial cross-border cooperation in Ireland. Impact assessment is a continuous process to help the policy-maker fully think through and understand the consequences of possible and actual interventions. It has been used particularly in the health and environmental sectors in Ireland, North and South, but not until now in cross-border cooperation.

The Centre will develop this 'toolkit' to guide policy-makers through the process of planning and implementing a major cross-border project. This would consist of a number of stages: the early stages of identifying and defining the policy challenge; the identification of options; the consultation stage; the final proposal, focussing on costs and benefits; the implementation stage; and the review stage, when actual costs and benefits indicate whether the project is achieving its desired aims. This project will start in May 2010, and will be assisted, on a consultancy basis, by Dr Joachim Beck, director of the Euro-Institut in Kehl, Germany, and a leading European expert on cross-border cooperation and impact assessment.

CURRENT EXCHANGE PROJECTS

North-South Student Teacher Exchange Project (Year Six)

In March 2010 the North-South Student Teacher Exchange project will enter its sixth year with the latest exchange of 19 students to do a key part of their assessed teaching practice in schools in the other Irish jurisdiction. The partners with the Centre in this project are the seven colleges of primary education on the island: Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College in Belfast; St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Marino Institute of Education, Froebel College of Education and Church of Ireland College of Education in Dublin (Mary Immaculate College in Limerick is not taking part in the 2010 exchange). 142



student teachers have taken part in this exchange project since it was initiated in 2003. The first four exchanges were funded by the EU Peace Programme, while the 2009 and 2010 exchanges were funded by the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)(see also pages 135-137).

In October 2008 a study by Dr Maeve Martin of NUI Maynooth on the impact of the exchange on the personal attitudes and professional practice of the student teachers who had taken part in it between 2003 and 2007 was completed. Dr Martin concluded:

This project has been a great success in terms of the enduring positive

dispositions it has helped to develop among the beneficiaries, the young teachers. These have included: greater interest in peace and reconciliation issues; greater consciousness of the demands of multicultural classrooms; greater knowledge of the other jurisdiction's education system and curriculum; the invaluable experience gained from learning from skilled teachers in the other jurisdiction; and a greatly increased sense of personal worth and confidence gained through participation in the exchange.

She called the project 'a courageous, inclusive and groundbreaking exchange' and "an experience that has been transformational" for the student teachers involved.



Student teachers at the North-South Student Teacher Exchange Project's Orientation Day in Church of Ireland College, Rathmines, Dublin on 27 January 2010.



Winners of the 2009-2010 Universities Ireland-IBEC/CBI Joint Business Council postgraduate scholarships at the awards ceremony in Belfast on 7 December 2009. From left to right (front): Bryan Mukandi, Deirdre McKenna, Anna Magee and Mairead Cantwell. From left to right (back): Reg McCabe, Chief Executive IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council; Professor Richard Barnett, Chairman, Universities Ireland; Andrew Hamilton, Deputy Secretary, NI Department for Employment and Learning; Brian Ambrose, Chairman, CBI Northern Ireland.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATION PROJECTS

The Centre has filled an important niche by providing administrative support to North-South and cross-border initiatives, particularly in the field of education. Many cross-border projects are sustained largely through EU funding and the commitment of enthusiastic individuals, and when the money and enthusiasm runs out their absence of a proper administrative structure often dooms them to early closure. The Centre offers this cross-border administrative structure, and a detailed knowledge of support mechanisms in both Irish jurisdictions, which can ensure such projects' longer-term sustainability.

UNIVERSITIES IRELAND

**universities
ireland**

Promoting Irish Universities

The Centre acts as the secretariat for Universities Ireland (UI), set up in 2003 to promote co-operation and collaboration between the two universities in Northern Ireland and the seven universities in the Republic of Ireland. Its chairman for the 2008-2010 period is Professor Richard Barnett, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ulster. The members of the governing Council



of Universities Ireland are the nine university presidents and vice-chancellors plus representatives of the three external funders: Department of Education and Science (RoI), Department for Employment and Learning (NI) and InterTradeIreland.

The North/South Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme and the Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building, launched by Universities Ireland in 2006 and 2007 respectively, have seen further progress this year. The Department for Employment and Learning Deputy Secretary, Andrew Hamilton (standing in for the Minister, Sir Reg Empey) presented four masters and PhD funding awards to students – two from the North and two from the South – at a ceremony in Belfast in December 2009.

The Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (now called IAP for short) held successful workshops at Maputo in Mozambique (May 2009) and Dublin City University (October 2009), and is planning a summer school devoted to research training at Zomba in Malawi at the end of March 2010 for senior academics and research office personnel from the 13 IAP partner universities in Ireland, North and South, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique and Malawi. Other UI activities have included becoming the Ireland Section of the international Scholars at Risk

network, meetings with Universities UK and addresses by international higher education specialists.

NORTH/SOUTH POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

In the academic year 2009-2010 four scholarships were awarded under this scheme, which is a collaboration between Universities Ireland and the Joint Business



Council of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) and the Confederation of British Industry (Northern Ireland). The scholarships went to Mairead Cantwell, a graduate of Trinity College Dublin doing an MSc in Spatial Regeneration at Queen's University Belfast; Anna Magee, a graduate of University of Ulster doing an MSc in Energy Management at Dublin Institute of Technology; Bryan Mukandi, a graduate of University of Zimbabwe and NUI Galway, doing a Masters in Political Philosophy at Queen's University Belfast; and Deirdre McKenna, a graduate of Queen's University Belfast doing a PhD in Architecture at University College Dublin. The first two of these scholarships were funded by RPS Group and Dublin Port respectively, while the latter two were funded by Universities Ireland alone.

The fundamental requirement for eligibility for this scheme is a willingness by students to relocate to the other Irish



Participants at the third Irish-African Partnership workshop in Maputo, Mozambique, 11-14 May 2009.

jurisdiction for a whole year or the major part of a year in order to undertake a course of postgraduate study.

Last year the smaller number of North/South scholarships on offer reflected the sharp reduction in private sector sponsorship caused by the economic recession. In 2010 Universities Ireland and the Joint Business Council are hoping to make up to six awards, which will again be worth €15,000 (approx. £13,500) each. Up to four of these will be in areas of interest to business (mainly the sciences – including environmental sciences – engineering, ICT and business administration) and will be co-sponsored by individual firms. Two will be in the humanities and the social sciences and will be funded by Universities Ireland alone. The deadline for applications is 17 May 2010.

A new element this year will be the

incorporation of a three-month job placement opportunity in sponsoring companies, to be taken at the end of the funded postgraduate year. This will be coordinated by IBEC's Export Orientation Programme (EOP), the Republic of Ireland's longest-running and most successful graduate placement programme.

THE IRISH-AFRICAN PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING (IAP)

**THE IRISH-AFRICAN PARTNERSHIP
FOR RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING**



The Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (2008-2011) was put together by a small group of



people working out of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, Trinity College Dublin and Dublin City University in 2007. It is largely funded by the Irish Government under the Programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes (2007-2011) – which has provided €1.5 million – with €110,000 in matching funding from Universities Ireland. The Irish Aid funding is managed by the Higher Education Authority in Dublin.

The Irish-African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (IAP) brings together the nine universities on the island of Ireland along with Makerere University in Uganda, University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Mozambique, and the University of Malawi in a unique, high-level partnership to develop a coordinated approach to Research Capacity Building in higher education institutions in order to make an effective contribution to the reduction of poverty in those countries. The IAP's **aims** are:

- to build the capacity for development research in Irish and Northern Irish universities;
- to build capacity in health and education research – with gender and ICT as cross-cutting themes – in the four participating African universities;
- in the longer term, to develop an Irish-African network of excellence in development research.

The co-chairs of the IAP's steering committee are Professor Ronnie Munk

of Dublin City University, Professor Sean Farren of University of Ulster and Professor Eli Katunguka-Rwakishaya of Makerere University. The project manager, Peter McEvoy (replacing Dr Niamh Gaynor, who resigned to take up an academic position in September 2009) is based at Dublin City University. Other IAP staff are Dr Eimear Barrett, a postdoctoral fellow in health based at Queen's University Belfast; Dr Mary Goretti Nakabugo, a postdoctoral fellow in education based at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick; Yaoxue Lin, a web portal manager based at TCD; and Caitriona Fitzgerald, a part-time administrative officer based at DCU.

The Irish-African Partnership was launched by President Mary McAleese on the opening day of the first IAP workshop at Dublin City University on 8-11 April 2008. The keynote speaker was Professor Akilalagpa Sawyerr from Ghana, Secretary General of the Association of African Universities, and an international authority on Research Capacity Building in African higher education institutions. Among those who also addressed the workshop were the President of Dublin City University, Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski; the Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, Professor Livingston Luboobi; the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dar es Salaam, Professor Rwekaza Mukandala; the Vice Chancellor of University of Malawi, Professor Zimani Kadzamira, and the Vice-Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University, Professor Orlando Quilambo.

A second four-day workshop was



held in Entebbe in Uganda on 10-13 November 2008. Once again more than 70 senior academics participated from the participating universities. It was addressed by, among others, the Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, Professor Livingston Luboobi; the Director of Research of the University of Dar es Salaam, Professor Saida Yahya-Othman; the Dean of Medicine of Eduardo Mondlane University, Professor Mamudo Ismail; the Dean of Science at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, Professor John Saka; the Provost of Trinity College Dublin, Professor John Hegarty; and the former Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dick Spring, chair of the IAP's international advisory board.

A third four-day workshop was held in Maputo in Mozambique on 11-14 May 2009, again with more than 70 participants. It was addressed by, among others, the Rector of Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Dr Filipe José Couto; the President of University College Cork, Dr Michael Murphy; and the Irish ambassador and British High Commissioner to Mozambique, Frank Sheridan and Andrew Soper.

An extra, fourth workshop was held in Dublin City University on 8-9 October 2009 for Vice Presidents and Directors of Research in IAP partner universities. The main purpose of this event was to generate themes for a

summer school to focus on research training which will be held on 22-25 March 2010 in Chancellor College of the University of Malawi in Zomba, Malawi. This will concentrate on six areas: research management, research training, research infrastructure, research funding, human resources and research bid writing.

The final, fifth IAP workshop will take place in Queen's University Belfast on 29 September-1 October 2010. Reports on the IAP's five work packages – stakeholder consultation, foresight, metrics, web portal and conclusions and recommendations – will be presented at this culminating workshop. The final report of the whole IAP project will be published in early 2011.

The project's revised **objectives** are:

- to promote research within the partner universities in Ireland and Africa;
- To develop understanding of the complex issues involved in Research Capacity Building within the partner universities;
- To identify priority research needs in the two core thematic areas of health and education, highlighting those which the IAP partners have the capacity to meet;
- To make recommendations for practical strategies within the universities to tackle these issues;
- To develop a set of metrics by which research capacity building may be measured;
- To develop a web portal which links Irish and African partners in a virtual community and which provides a

vehicle for showcasing development research and information through a digital repository.

The project's **activities and outputs** are as follows:

1. **A stakeholder consultation** among the 13 participating institutions (and external agencies such as relevant government ministries and donor organisations) using workshops, focus groups, structured interviews and e-consultation. The first phase of this exercise took place in summer-autumn 2008 and involved over 300 academics and researchers in the institutions. This was the first ever joint baseline study of development research capacity in the Irish and participating African universities.

Further research was carried out, involving interviews with education and health specialists beyond the universities, and aid agencies and regional health and higher education bodies, between November 2008 and May 2009. In the latter month, health and education research priorities identified by the consultation were discussed at the Maputo workshop, and formed the basis for two inter-university 'clusters' of researchers in education and health. The final report of the stakeholder consultation is due to be completed by March 2010.

2. **Five workshops** (in Dublin, Entebbe, Maputo, Dublin and Belfast) to develop the network and specific partnerships, to plan the Malawi summer school and to identify priority areas in health,



The President of University College Cork, Dr Michael Murphy (centre), Professor Frank Kee of Queen's University Belfast and Patricia McAllister of CCBS outside the Hotel Cardoso in Maputo, where the third workshop took place.



- education, gender and ICT research through a 'foresight' exercise.
3. **Foresight report** identifying the priority themes in health and education research, with gender and ICT as cross-cutting themes, over the next 10 years. The final draft report – *Looking to the Future: the Irish-African Partnership Foresight Report* - is available on the IAP web portal (see below).
 4. **Summer School**, to take place in Zomba, Malawi in March 2010 to provide training in selected areas of Research Capacity Building identified through the stakeholder consultation, the fourth workshop and the foresight exercise.
 5. **Network development** through online discussion forums, monthly meetings of the Executive Committee (on which representatives of the 13 universities and the Centre for Cross Border Studies/Universities Ireland sit), annual meetings of the International Advisory Board (chaired by former Tánaiste and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dick Spring) and presentations at conferences and seminars by staff and Steering Committee members.
 6. **Metrics:** developing a set of metrics to measure the building of research capacity against a baseline assessment of research capacity in the 13 partner universities.
 7. **Web Portal.** There are two parts to the IAP web portal (**www.irishafricanpartnership.ie**); the 'front end' which is the project website, which is managed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies and the 'back end' which is the portal's major element, and is the

responsibility of Trinity College Dublin. This consists of: 1. A Research Register to enable individual researchers in the participating Irish and African universities to post their own details, interests and publications; 2. An 'open access' Digital Repository for publications, reports, grey literature, data and theses.

The Centre for Cross Border Studies/Universities Ireland provides a number of services to the IAP. Director Andy Pollak is the reporting officer to the Higher Education Authority and Irish Aid. Events Manager Patricia McAllister is the workshop organiser, and Finance Manager Mairead Hughes handles the IAP's finances.

OTHER INITIATIVES

Scholars at Risk: Ireland Section.

The Ireland Section of the New York University-based Scholars at Risk international network, which defends and provides refuge and support for university scholars and academics under threat of persecution in their own countries, was launched at a crowded meeting in Trinity College Dublin on 22 September 2009. Universities Ireland manages the Ireland Section of SAR. The meeting's keynote speaker was the Iranian lawyer, academic, human rights activist and 2003 Nobel Peace laureate, Dr Shirin Ebadi. Taking advantage of two €10,000 bursaries provided for this purpose by Universities Ireland, at time of writing University of Limerick was finalising arrangements to host a professor of psychology from Iran, while Trinity College Dublin and



University College Dublin were jointly applying to host another academic at risk.

A series of meetings with Universities UK, the representative body of British universities, was initiated in September 2004 in Dublin, with a follow-up meeting in London in January 2006, and a third meeting in Dublin in March 2008. At this latter meeting the presidents and vice-chancellors discussed matters of mutual interest in the areas of business-university collaboration, university funding and research, and European developments. A fourth meeting is planned for autumn 2010.

Addresses by key international higher education specialists. At the autumn 2009 UI Council meeting,

the presidents decided to invite top international specialists on higher education to address their meetings on a regular basis. The first of these was at the spring UI Council meeting on 12 February 2010 in Dublin, which was addressed by the President of the University of Virginia and former chair of the Association of American Universities, Professor John T. Casteen III.

Universities Ireland is funded by an annual levy paid by the nine universities, and by grants from the Department of Education and Science in Dublin, the Department for Employment and Learning in Belfast and InterTradeIreland in Newry.

Website: www.universitiesireland.ie

Speakers at the 2009 SCoTENS conference – ‘Reflective Practice: Challenges for Teacher Education’. From left to right: Dr Tom Hesketh, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Sean Haughey TD, Professor Andrew Pollard and Professor Teresa O’Doherty.

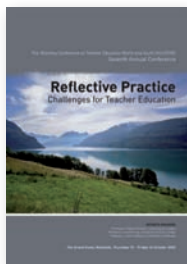




STANDING CONFERENCE ON TEACHER EDUCATION, NORTH AND SOUTH (SCoTENS)

The Centre also acts as the secretariat for the Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS). This was set up in 2003 by a group of senior teacher education specialists from universities, colleges of education and other teacher education providers in both jurisdictions. The 2009-2010 joint chairs of SCoTENS are Professor Teresa O'Doherty, Dean of Education at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, and Dr Tom Hesketh, Director of the Regional Training Unit in Belfast.

SCoTENS now has 38 institutional members including all the Colleges of Education and university education departments on the island; the Teaching Councils and curriculum councils (CCEA and NCAA) in both jurisdictions; four teacher trade unions; nine education centres in the Republic; the Regional Training Unit (Belfast); the Open University and the National College of Art and Design.



SCoTENS' seventh annual conference, on 'Reflective Practice: Challenges for Teacher Education', was held in October 2008 in Malahide, Co Dublin. It was opened by the

Minister of State for Lifelong Learning,

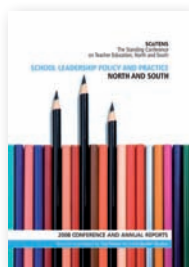
Mr Sean Haughey TD. The speaker on the first evening was the NI Minister for Education, Ms Caitriona Ruane MLA. The keynote speakers were Professor Andrew Pollard, Director of the Economic and Social Research Council's Teacher and Learning Research Programme at the Institute of Education in London (the UK's largest ever research investment in education, involving over 700 researchers); Professor Jean Murray, Professor of Education at University of East London; and Professor Juhani Hytönen, Head of the Department of Applied Sciences of Education, University of Helsinki.

Three reports were launched at the conference: ***School Leadership Policy and Practice, North and South***, the 2008 SCoTENS conference and annual report; ***Becoming a Teacher: Primary Student Teachers as Learners and Teachers of History, Geography and Science: an all-Ireland study***, by a team of researchers from St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Stranmillis University College and other colleges of education (led by Fionnuala Waldron, Susan Pike, Richard Greenwood, Cliona M. Murphy, Geraldine O'Connor, Anne Dolan and Karen Kerr); and ***Professional Development for Post-Primary SEN Teachers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland***, by a team of researchers from University College Dublin and Queen's University Belfast (led by Elizabeth O'Gorman, Sheelagh Drudy, Eileen Winter, Ron Smith and Mairin Barry).

Previous SCoTENS annual conferences were on 'School Leadership Policy and Practice, North and South' in 2008;



'Teaching in the Knowledge Society' in 2007; 'Teacher Education and Schools: Together Towards Improvement' in 2006; 'Teacher Education for Citizenship in Diverse Societies' in 2005; 'The Changing Contexts of Teacher Education, North and South' (with a particular emphasis on Teaching Councils) in 2004; and 'Challenges to Teacher Education and Research, North and South' in 2003.



SCoTENS has also provided seed funding for North-South and all-island conferences on social, scientific and environmental education (six); initial teacher education, citizenship and diversity education

(two); educational research; special educational needs (two); social justice education in initial teacher education (two); language teacher education; doctoral research in education (two); autism; dyslexia, literacy and inclusion; and the competences approach to teacher professional development.

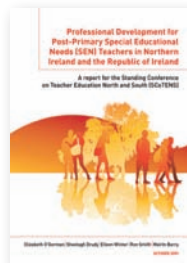


It has also provided seed funding for North-South research projects on the social/national identity of young children in the border region; ICT in teacher education; children with profound and

multiple learning difficulties; student

teacher exchanges; student perceptions of history, geography and science; school-based work in colleges of education; the professional development of teachers working with students with special educational needs; examining assessment procedures for trainee teachers; universities' role in continuing teacher professional development; work-placed learning models in post-compulsory teacher education; measuring the value of education technologies; primary student teachers' mathematical identities; consulting pupils on remediation of their specific literacy difficulties; student teachers and the needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder; English as an additional language in undergraduate teacher education; inclusion and diversity in post-primary education; the experiences of primary teachers in teaching healthy eating guidelines; building North-South links in global justice education; primary school physical education; arts-based educational research; the digitisation of Irish historical education documents; sixth year religion; peer mentoring in teacher education; spoken Irish in Irish-medium schools; the 'lift off' literacy programme for Irish medium schools; and good practice in the teaching of pupils from ethnic minorities.

A total of 51 North-South research, conference and exchange projects have received financial support from SCoTENS in the period 2003-2009. In February 2010 another 11



were seed funded: a conference on post-primary religious education; an investigation into bullying of children with learning disabilities; mentoring in PE teacher education; realistic mathematics education (RME) in primary schools; an expanded conference on doctoral research in education; collaborative art and design in citizenship education; a Colleges of Education directors of teaching practice CPD network; exploring Japanese research lessons for peer-to-peer professional learning; a comparative study of further education teaching North and South; a baseline study of research capacity building in initial teacher education, North and South; and helping student teachers understand the problems of children subject to domestic abuse.

SCoTENS also sponsors the groundbreaking North-South Student Teacher Exchange, now in its sixth year, which brings student teachers from the island's seven colleges of primary education to do a key part of their assessed teacher practice in the other jurisdiction (*also see pages 125-126*).

The SCoTENS website (<http://scotens.org>) has been updated over the past 18 months and highlights, in particular, resources on special education, citizenship education and teaching and learning with digital video. Assistance with inputting content on special needs education has been provided by Dr Noel Purdy (Stranmillis University College).

SCoTENS is funded by annual grants from the Irish Department of Education and Science, and the Department for Employment and Learning and the

Department of Education (Northern Ireland). A significant proportion of its funding comes from institutional subscriptions from its member universities, colleges of education, other higher education institutions, teaching councils, education trade unions, education centres, curriculum councils and other bodies involved with teacher education. In 2006-2008 it also received grant aid from the Nuffield Foundation.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



The Centre administers the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). The ICLRD is a North-South-US partnership which set up offices in Armagh in 2006 (after a founding conference in Athlone in 2004) to explore and expand the contribution that planning and the development of physical, social and economic infrastructures can make to improve the lives of people on the island of Ireland and elsewhere. The partner institutions are: the **National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA)** at the **National University of Ireland, Maynooth**; the **School of the Built Environment** at the **University of Ulster**; the **Institute for International Urban Development** in Cambridge, Massachusetts; **Athlone Institute of Technology**; and the **Centre for Cross**



Border Studies. Each partner brings complementary expertise and networks on both a North-South and East-West basis – creating a unique, all-island and international centre.

The ICLRD continues to expand its collaboration with other institutions and has built close working relationships with individual faculty and researchers from Harvard University, Queen's University Belfast and Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. It is open to involving other academic and research institutions in its activities. The director of the ICLRD is John Driscoll, who is also a vice-president of the Institute for International Urban Development; its assistant directors are Caroline Creamer of NUI Maynooth and Dr Neale Blair of University of Ulster.

The ICLRD

- Provides independent joined-up research and policy advice on cross-border and all-island spatial planning and local and regional development issues;
- Offers training and capacity building programmes for communities and local, regional and national government representatives and officials;
- Assists local authorities and communities in translating policy into 'on the ground' action;
- Acts as a catalyst to bring relevant public and private actors, North and South, together to work on common goals;
- Promotes international cooperation and exchanges.

Each year the ICLRD undertakes applied

research projects which contribute to an understanding of the complex all-island and cross-border dynamics and drivers of change in cities, towns and rural areas in Ireland. Since its inception, the ICLRD has organised its work around three spatial scales: EU and all-island; regional and cross-border; and local.

Much of the ICLRD's work over the past year has been undertaken as part of the **Cross-Border Spatial Planning and Training Network (CroSPaN)**, an EU INTERREG IVA-funded programme administered by the Special EU Programmes Body. Operated in association with the Centre for Cross Border Studies as part of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-border Cooperation Observatory (INICCO), CroSPaN is a three-year programme of research, training and workshops in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties (*see pages 121-122 and below for further details*).

Other key funders and supporters of the ICLRD's programme of activities are the Irish Government through the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Northern Ireland Administration, and the International Fund for Ireland. In addition, InterTradeIreland works closely with the ICLRD in linking spatial planning to the process of strengthening economic competitiveness in cross-border cooperation.

ICLRD conferences and workshops

On 21-22 January 2010 the ICLRD/ CroSPaN held a fifth annual conference in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh under the title 'Preparing for Economic



Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of Recession'. Over 130 people attended this two-day event which was sponsored as part of the CroSPlaN initiative

by the EU INTERREG IVA programme through the Special EU Programmes Body. The conference was opened by SEUPB Chief Executive Pat Colgan, with the keynote addresses being given by Professor John FitzGerald of the Economic and Social Research Institute and Declan Kelly, the US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland. Conference presentations are available for download at <http://iclrld.org/web/2010-conference/>

Other speakers included Charlotte Kahn, Director of the Boston Indicators Project at the Boston Foundation; Holly St. Clair, Director of Data Services at the Boston-region Metropolitan Area Planning Council; Pat McArdle, former Ulster Bank Chief Economist and *Irish Times* economic commentator; Conor Skehan, Head of Environment and Planning at Dublin Institute of Technology; Wesley Shannon, Director, Local Government Policy Division, Department of the Environment (NI); Hubert Kearns, Sligo County Manager; Denis Rooney CBE, Chair of the International Fund for Ireland; Patricia Potter, Director of the Dublin Regional Authority; Celine McHugh, Senior Policy Advisor with Forfás; Martin Spollen, Strategic Advisor with the Strategic Investment Board (NI); Brian Murray, Chief Executive

of the Workspace Group; Professor Greg Lloyd, head of the Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of Ulster; Professor Rob Kitchin, head of the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis at NUI Maynooth, and Professor Francois Vigier, President of the Institute for International Urban Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In association with this conference, the ICLRD hosted a half-day technical workshop on the theme 'Evidence-Informed Planning: Making Information Accessible to build Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation'. Attended by 40 people from both the public and private sectors in both jurisdictions with an interest in evidence-based policy and practice, this event was also organised under the auspices of CroSPlaN. Best practices from Boston, Massachusetts were presented to demonstrate how the Boston Foundation and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council use data and outreach events to drive regional change. The workshop considered the role of spatial data and of various technologies in (a) broadening participation in planning and public policy, and (b) improving understanding of the impacts and trade-offs of development decisions.

Rural Restructuring

On 8 May 2009 the ICLRD organised a one-day conference on rural restructuring and development in the Blackwater Learning Centre in Knockconan, Emyvale, Co. Monaghan. This event was organised as part of an ICLRD research project on



rural restructuring, North and South. The conference brought together 115 participants and speakers from government departments, local development agencies, local authorities, businesses and business networks, community development groups, higher education institutions, and planners. The keynote speakers included Roger Turner of the Commission for Rural Communities (UK); Geoff Brown of the Carnegie UK Trust; Peter Quinn of Peter Quinn Consultancy Services; Dr. Kevin Heanue of Teagasc; and Maura Walsh of IRD Duhallow, Co Cork. Conference presentations are available for download at <http://iclrld.org/web/2009/04/11/rural-restructuring-local-sustainable-solutions-to-a-rural-challenge/>

The following month, on 19 June 2009, the ICLRd report ***Rural Restructuring: Local Sustainable Solutions to the Rural Challenge***, was launched in Draperstown, Co. Derry/Londonderry by NI Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Michelle Gildernew MP MLA. This research project explored the role of rural restructuring and economic diversification in both Irish jurisdictions, together with the growing importance of the urban-rural interface, in the achievement of balanced spatial development. The programme of research focused on three rural areas: the Draperstown-Magherafelt district in County Derry/Londonderry; Emyvale-Truagh-Aughnacloy on the Monaghan-Tyrone border; and Duhallow on the Cork-Kerry border. Both Draperstown and Duhallow have been engaged in the process of rural restructuring for the past 25 years. The challenges facing

the rural communities of Emyvale-Truagh-Aughnacloy have been further exacerbated by its cross-border location, 30 years of the Northern Ireland 'Troubles', and the impact of decades of back-to-back policy development across both administrations (North and South).

Following the launch of the report, the research team was invited to present the study's findings and recommendations to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Sectoral Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Development at Greenmount College, Antrim, in July 2009. Four Ministers were in attendance: from the North, Michelle Gildernew MP MLA and the Minister for the Environment, Edwin Poots MLA; and from the South, Minister for Agriculture, Brendan Smyth TD and Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Eamon O Cuiv TD.

The research team comprised Caroline Creamer, NIRSA, National University of Ireland, Maynooth; Dr Karen Keaveney, Queens University Belfast; Dr Neale Blair, University of Ulster; Dr Brendan O'Keeffe, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick; and John Driscoll, ICLRd and Institute for International Urban Development.

Sustainable Communities

This research project, which at time of writing is coming close to completion with the final drafting of the case studies and a synthesis paper, investigates initiatives in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to build and improve subsidised housing in mixed communities through six case studies:



Speakers and researchers at the launch of 'Rural Restructuring: Local Sustainable Solutions to the Rural Challenge'. From left to right (back): Dr Neale Blair, Caroline Creamer, John Driscoll, Andy Pollak; (front) Dr Karen Keaveney, NI Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Dr Brendan O'Keefe.

Springfarm (Antrim), the Irish Street and Gobnascale interface (Derry/Londonderry) and Carran Crescent (Enniskillen) in Northern Ireland; and Cranmore (Sligo), Mahon (Cork) and Adamstown (County Dublin) in the Republic of Ireland. Together, they provide a cross section of the challenges faced by communities working to provide mixed housing, and the strategies that have helped planners, housing providers and the communities themselves to create and maintain housing that is safe, prosperous and open to all. The study will be published in spring 2010, with the case studies and associated papers being available to download at www.iclrd.org. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive will publish the three Northern case studies in association with ICLRD.

The research team comprises Paddy Gray, School of the Built Environment, University of Ulster; Brendan Bartley, NIRSA, NUI Maynooth; Erick Guerra, Institute for International Urban Development (IIUD), Cambridge, Massachusetts; and John Driscoll, ICLRD and IIUD.

Delineating Functional Territories

In July 2009 the ICLRD, in cooperation with the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at NUI Maynooth, produced an interim report on the *Delineation of Functional Territories on the island of Ireland*. Those implementing both the National Spatial Strategy for Ireland and the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland are keenly aware of the need to better understand the patterns



of urban functional specialisation and urban functional regions. This study is helping policy-makers and practitioners involved in cross-border spatial planning to access compatible and high quality data and thus better understand both all-island economic trends and demand for cross-border services. As part of this initiative, innovative maps were developed to illustrate catchment areas for travel to work, delivery of services, and access to infrastructure. In an era of scarce public resources, an understanding of such functional inter-jurisdictional relationships can help target public investment in infrastructure and services.

In July 2009 ICLRD held a 'map feast' with policy-makers and academics from both jurisdictions, while in December the pioneering mapping generated through this work was presented to Walter Radermacher, Director-General of EUROSTAT, the statistical office of the EU. In late 2009 the research team turned their attention to mapping population accessibility, house prices and cross-border travel patterns. Phase two of this project, whereby functional territories will be considered on an all-island basis, is commencing in early 2010, with the research team already in consultation with policy-makers and practitioners in Northern Ireland to discuss the datasets available and the potential use of any maps generated.

The research team comprises Justin Gleeson, All-Ireland Research Observatory; Dr Declan Curran, Professor Rob Kitchin, Brendan Bartley and Proinsias Breathnach, all NIRSA, NUI Maynooth; Des McCafferty, Mary

Immaculate College, University of Limerick; Professor Francois Vigier, Institute for International Urban Development (IIUD); and John Driscoll, ICLRD and IIUD.

Briefing paper series

In November 2009 the ICLRD launched its series of online briefing papers of short timely articles that explore how various forms of planning, enacted at different spatial scales, can contribute to better collaboration on the pressing issues facing both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Articles available to date include:

- *Good Planning: Key to Future Success* by Professor Rob Kitchin, NUI Maynooth and Professor Alastair Adair, University of Ulster (November 2009);
- *Linking Spatial Planning with Public Investment: Perspectives from the island of Ireland* by David Counsell, planner and Professor Greg Lloyd, University of Ulster (December 2009).

Future papers will consider the role of smaller 'gateways' in economic development, spatial indicators, and the mapping of strategic infrastructure and key services on the island.

CroSPlan

Under the auspices of the Cross-border Spatial Planning and training Network (CroSPlan), funded by the EU INTERREG IVA programme, the ICLRD is currently engaged in:



- Applied research on the implications of the Review of Public Administration (NI) and new planning legislation in the Republic of Ireland on inter-jurisdictional spatial planning;
- Applied research on best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development within the EU and the USA that can inform cross-border cooperation in Ireland;
- A training programme for local councillors, officials and business leaders in the Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region.

The CroSPlaN network is also valuable in providing a regular link between planning policy-makers and practitioners in Northern Ireland and the Irish border region, as well as raising awareness in Ireland of the good practice of other successful European networking organisations in the spatial planning field, such as Mission Opérationelle Transfrontalière in France.

The implications of the Northern Ireland Review of Public Administration (RPA) and new planning legislation in the Republic of Ireland on inter-jurisdictional spatial planning

This applied research project considers the implications of governance reform in both jurisdictions on practical cross-border cooperation in spatial planning and regional development. Key questions being addressed include the priority planning issues for the new 'super councils' in Northern Ireland; the implications, if any, of the RPA on cross-

border cooperation at both departmental and council level; and the issue of vertical and horizontal policy integration on the island given the revised powers of the councils in delivering centrally-designed policies. Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders in the RPA process, together with desk-based research, including a review of relevant documents covering the history of the RPA process, were undertaken during the latter half of 2009. The resulting report is being finalised at time of writing. This project is being carried out by Caroline Creamer, Dr Neale Blair and John Driscoll of ICLRD with Dr Karen Keaveney of Queen's University Belfast.

Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development in the EU and USA

An ICLRD research team has reviewed the considerable volume of recent studies on EU projects with a particular focus on non-statutory mechanisms for cross-border spatial planning, and material on inter-jurisdictional planning within the United States that is directly relevant to North-South cooperation and cooperation between councils within Northern Ireland and Ireland. The team is exploring effective local development processes at the level of the 'micro-region' in Spain (particularly in rural areas); and good practices in shared services and non-statutory planning in urban agglomerations such as the Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai 'Eurometropole' cross-border region on the French-Belgian border and the Boston Metropolitan area in Massachusetts (which includes 101 independent cities and towns).



This research, which will conclude in May 2010, is being carried out by John Driscoll of ICLRD, Professor Francois Vigier and Jim Kostaras of the Institute for International Urban Development and Dr Brendan O'Keeffe of Mary Immaculate College/ University of Limerick.

Training programme for local councillors, officials and business leaders in the Newry-Dundalk region

In November 2009 the first training course for local councillors, officials and business leaders in the Newry-Dundalk Twin City region under the CroSPaIN programme was initiated in Ravensdale, County Louth. Building on the ICLRD's research in 2008 into areas of potential collaboration in the Twin-City Region, this programme takes the form of five three-hour modules on development along corridors, evidence-informed planning, cross-border economic growth, community planning and stakeholder engagement. The programme is led by Dr Neale Blair of the University of Ulster and John Driscoll of the ICLRD and the Institute for International Urban Development. A second training course will be delivered in another cross-border region in late 2010-early 2011.

The Journal of Spatial Planning on the island of Ireland

As part of its evolving publication strategy, the ICLRD will publish the inaugural edition of *The Journal of Spatial Planning on the island of Ireland* (in collaboration with the Centre for Cross Border Studies) in autumn

2010. The Centre is currently seeking high quality research papers on issues of spatial planning and regional development to include in this first issue of the new journal. The subject matter of articles can cover a range of areas such as spatial planning policy and practice, balanced regional development, local government reform, planning for energy (including renewables), retail planning, the rural-urban interface, community planning, planning for cross-border cooperation, and evidence-informed planning.

Networks and outreach

Since its inception, the ICLRD has been developing linkages, both at home and abroad, with a range of community and government agencies. The ICLRD is engaging with the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON) through NUI Maynooth; the French government's cross-border cooperation and territorial planning agency, Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT), and the Irish-Scottish Forum on Spatial Planning. It is actively involved on steering committees for the reviews of (i) the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland; (ii) the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Regional Authority in the Republic; and (iii) Village Design Statements with the Heritage Council in the Republic, as well as the advisory group for the Newry-Dundalk Twin-City Region.

NORTH/SOUTH ROUNDTABLE GROUP

Director Andy Pollak represented the Centre for Cross Border Studies and



The final meeting of the North/South Roundtable Group in Áras an Uachtaráin, 23 February 2009: (from left to right) Aidan Gough, Tim O'Connor, Martin Fraser, Professor Roger Downer, Feargal McCormack, William Poole, Jackie Harrison, Stephen Kingon, Dr Martin McAleese, Laurence Crowley, John Travers, Liz Gilmartin, Brendan Butler, Liam Nellis, Caroline Moore, Michael D'Arcy, Andy Pollak

Universities Ireland on this influential 'think tank', which ran from 2002 to 2009 and drew its members from business leaders and senior civil servants in both Irish jurisdictions. The joint chairs were Stephen Kingon, Chair of Invest Northern Ireland, and Laurence Crowley, former Governor of the Bank of Ireland. The joint facilitators, Michael D'Arcy and Liz Gilmartin, were supported by InterTradelreland. It held its final meeting in Áras an Uachtaráin on 23 February 2009.

EDUCATION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Centre is a partner with the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee's Curriculum Development Unit in the 2009-2011 phase of the cross-border, cross-community Education for Reconciliation project, subtitled 'Securing the Future through Active Citizenship.' The aims of this EU PEACE III-funded project, which in its successive phases has been working with teachers in both jurisdictions since 1998, have remained consistent.

They are:

- To contribute to peace and reconciliation, human rights and justice through citizenship education
- To enable young people to develop the understanding, attitudes and skills to be active citizens in relation to reconciliation, conflict and controversial issues within their communities and society
- To embed reconciliation as a key element within citizenship education.

The project aims to achieve this through a cross-border programme of professional development for citizenship education teachers in second-level schools, and through the development of teaching and learning resources on issues of local and global conflict, conflict resolution, human rights and peace building. The project particularly supports teachers to develop key skills such as critical thinking in relation to controversial issues such as conflict, reconciliation and human rights. Over 80 schools have participated in Education



for Reconciliation since its inception.

42 teachers from 25 schools across Northern Ireland and the northern part of the Republic of Ireland are involved in the current phase of the project. They are drawn from a wide range of school types (grammar and secondary – Protestant and Catholic – and alternative education centres in the North; community, vocational and gaelscoileanna in the Republic) from Belfast; Newtownabbey and Crumlin, Co Antrim; Ballynahinch and Dromore, Co Down; Keady, Co Armagh; Strabane and Dungannon, Co Tyrone; Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh; Belturbet, Co Cavan; Arranmore Island, Bundoran, Carrdonagh, Dungloe and Falcarragh, Co Donegal; Dunleer and Dundalk, Co Louth; Sligo Town, and Drumshambo, Co Leitrim.

The current phase was launched in Enniskillen in October 2009 and will run to the end of 2011. Lead teachers from the participating schools have so far participated in professional development at two residential sessions, as well as meeting in smaller local cluster groups. These sessions combine training in areas of need or interest and provide opportunities to work together on developing new ideas and activities for the classroom.

Workshops on two new project resources, *Policing Matters* and *Log onto Dialogue*, are also being run for citizenship education teams in both currently and previously participating schools. *Policing Matters*, a cross-border resource on policing and the law, has received the support of the PSNI

and the Garda Síochána. Both police services participated in its launch, which coincided with the launch of the new phase of Education for Reconciliation in Enniskillen in October 2009.

There is still capacity to include additional schools in this project, especially those in Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan, and controlled schools in Northern Ireland. Further details from Mary Gannon, Education for Reconciliation project, Curriculum Development Unit, Captain's Road, Crumlin, Dublin 12 (Tel. 01-4535487; email: mary.gannon@cdu.cdvec.ie)

CURRENT TRAINING PROJECTS

North/South and Cross-Border Public Sector Training Programme

Between May and September 2008 the Centre – together with its partners, Co-operation Ireland and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), Northern Ireland's leading provider of training to the public sector – organised a fifth training course for civil and public servants working on North-South and cross-border issues in North/South bodies, government departments, local authorities and other public agencies in the two Irish jurisdictions. The final course was over-subscribed: it enrolled 39 officials instead of the intended 30 (with seven still turned away), and over 50% of these were from central government departments (compared to only 15% central government officials on the first two courses in 2005). The intake included senior officials such as the



Chief Executive of NI-CO, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer for Northern Ireland, the Director of the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation, the Deputy Secretary to the Irish President and senior inspectors in the Irish Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Department of Education and Science.

In his foreword to a 2007 compilation of the best written assignments carried out by North-South teams of trainees, *The Wind across the Border*, the then Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dermot Ahern TD, said: "What these young public servants are doing is truly pioneering. Here is the pith and substance of what good government is meant to be about. These essays all outline fresh new ideas, clearly laid out, about how practical cross-border and all-island cooperation can make a real difference to improving the lives of the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland."

Having generously funded five of these courses in 2005-2008, bringing to 145 the number of public officials who had taken them, the Special EU Programmes Body said it was now time to seek funding from other sources, particularly the governments in Belfast and Dublin whose officials were benefitting directly from them. In late 2008-early 2009 the Centre and its partners approached a wide range of government departments, public agencies and private training firms looking for support for continuing this training programme. Among those approached in the Republic were the Department of Finance's training agency, the Centre for Management and Organisational Development (CMOD),

the Institute for Public Administration, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Public Affairs Ireland and private training firms in Dublin and Dundalk; and in the North, the Northern Ireland Office, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, the Department for Employment and Learning, the Centre for Applied Learning (the Northern Ireland Civil Service's training agency), Queen's University Belfast and University of Ulster. Unfortunately none of these departments, agencies, institutions or companies were interested in partnering and/or funding this very successful programme. Those most favourable to the programme, notably in Irish government departments, had seen their training budgets slashed by government cutbacks. We have not yet given up on this highly innovative programme, and are continuing to seek funding to sustain it.

PAST RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Centre has commissioned and published 17 cross-border research projects in the fields of telecommunications developments, health services, disadvantage in education, EU funding programmes, local government links, mental health promotion, waste management policies, local history societies, animal health, the euro, local sustainable development, diversity in early years education, science and citizenship education, public sector training, hospital services, mental health research and government services to minority ethnic groups.

These projects involved researchers

drawn from 13 universities, colleges and independent research centres in Ireland and Britain: Queen's University Belfast, University of Ulster, Dublin City University, University College Dublin, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Stranmillis University College, the Institute of Public Administration, Belfast City Hospital, Dundalk Institute of Technology, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Centre for Cross Border Studies itself. The research assignments under the North/South public sector training project (see *above*) also involved civil and public servants from both jurisdictions.

The Centre has published the following research projects:



The Evolution of Telecom Technologies: Current Trends and Near-Future Implications (2001)

A number of case studies of

developments in mobile and wireless telephony across the Irish border from a research team led by two of Ireland's leading specialists in information retrieval, data analysis and image and signal processing: Professor Fionn Murtagh, then of Queen's University Belfast, and Dr John Keating of National University of Ireland Maynooth. The project was sponsored by eircom.

Cross-Border Co-operation in Health Services in Ireland (2001)

A study of the past, present and potential for future co-operation in health services across the Irish border by a research team led by Dr Jim Jamison, formerly director of the Health and Social Care Research Unit at Queen's University Belfast, and including Professor Martin McKee of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Dr Ciaran O'Neill of the University of Ulster, and Ms Michelle Butler of the Institute of Public Administration in Dublin.



Ireland's Learning Poor: Adult Educational Disadvantage and Cross-Border Co-operation (2001)

A study of the needs of the more than a million people on the island who left school with few or no qualifications by Dr Mark Morgan of St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, and Mr Paul McGill, formerly education correspondent of the *Belfast Telegraph*. They concluded that current policies in both jurisdictions were far removed from a vision of lifelong learning which allows people of all ages and social classes equal access to education and training.



Creating Living Institutions: EU Cross-Border Co-operation after the Good Friday Agreement (2001)

A study by Professor Brigid Laffan and Dr Diane Payne of the Institute for British-Irish Studies at University



College Dublin, which analysed the interaction between the North-South Institutions set up under the Good Friday Agreement – notably the North/South Ministerial

Council and the Special EU Programmes Body - and the EU's funding programme for cross-border co-operation, INTERREG.



Cross-Border Co-operation in Local Government: Models of Management, Development and Reconciliation (2001)

A study by Professor Derek Birrell and

Amanda Hayes of the University of Ulster of the different kinds of cross-border links between local authorities, including one-to-one linkages, local government cross-border networks, and cross-border partnerships involving other agencies. It also analysed the project management methods used, the views of the councillors involved and the involvement of the European Union.



The Foot-and-Mouth Disease Crisis and the Irish Border (2002)

A study of the cross-border dimension of the 2001 foot-and-mouth disease outbreak by the

Centre's research manager, Dr Patricia Clarke, with comments from the Departments of Agriculture in Belfast and Dublin. Issued exactly a year after the original outbreak in England, the report's findings were praised by the two Ministers, Brid Rodgers and Joe Walsh, as "extremely valuable" in helping the Departments to formulate actions to deal with animal health emergencies.

Promoting Mental Health and Social Well-being: Cross-Border Opportunities and Challenges (2002)

This is a two-part study by a team from National University of Ireland Galway led by Dr Margaret Barry and Ms Sharon Friel. It examined a number of cross-border projects in the areas of postnatal depression, public awareness of suicide, cancer support services, the mental health of young men and mental health in rural communities. The study also looked at the comparability and compatibility of mental health data sources in the two jurisdictions.



The Local History Project: Co-operating North and South (2003)

This study, by Dr Jacinta Prunty, Dr Raymond Gillespie and Maeve Mulryan-Moloney of National University of Ireland Maynooth, provided the basis for the first all-Ireland register of local history



societies. They identified 330 societies, but estimated that a complete list would exceed 500 societies, North and South, involving an active membership of perhaps 28,000 persons.



Towards a Green Isle? Local Sustainable Development on the Island of Ireland (2004)

A study of local sustainable development as carried out (through the Local Agenda 21 process) by local authorities and social partners throughout Ireland, by a cross-border team comprising Geraint Ellis and Dr Bill Neill of the Queen's University Belfast's School of Environmental Planning, and Dublin-based researchers Una Hand and Brian Motherway. It found that 54% of local authorities on the island had begun a process of LA21, but stressed that the main challenge is to move from debate to action.



Diversity in Early Years Education North and South: Implications for Teacher Education (2004)

The aim of this EU-funded study was to identify the difficulties facing teachers and children in areas of inter-community conflict and tension on both sides of the Irish border with a view to developing a framework for preparing young teachers working with children in the early years.

It was carried out by researchers at St Patrick's College Drumcondra in Dublin and Stranmillis University College in Belfast, Mairin Kenny and Helen McLaughlin, under the direction of Philomena Donnelly and Louise Quinn.

Citizenship and Science: The Connecting Axes (2005)

The final report of the EU-funded Citizenship and Science Exchange (CaSE) Schools project looked at how a group of 12-14 year old students in 16 schools on both sides of the border deepened their understanding of the dynamic relationship between science and citizenship. The students explored subjects such as air and water pollution, waste management, GM and fair trade foods, renewable energy and energy efficiency. Much of the cross-border work centred on a shared Web resource. This project was led by Professor Peter McKenna and Dr Charlotte Holland of Dublin City University.



Improving Government Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups (2006)

This study, funded by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland (with additional funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the British Council), examined how public services such as health, education, policing and employment



support are provided to minority ethnic groups in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Scotland. It had a particular focus on how Northern Ireland's public authorities could learn from their nearest neighbours. The research work was carried out by a partnership led by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI), together with Piaras MacEinri from University College Cork, the Institute for Conflict Research in Belfast and Organisation and Social Development Consultants in Edinburgh.



The Wind Across the Border (2007).

This report brought together six award winning research assignments carried out by pairs and teams of officials as part of the North/South and

Cross-Border Public Sector Training Programme. They were on the proposed reopening of the Ulster Canal; an all-island service for the recycling of waste fridges and freezers; expanding the CAWT-sponsored eMed renal information system to the whole island; an all-island visitor pass for heritage sites; setting up a cross-border training and accreditation system for installers of renewable energy technologies; and cross-border sharing of patient electronic records.

Removing the Barriers: An Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Cooperation in Hospital Services (2007)

This short report compared the

planning of hospital service reorganisation, North and South. It noted that there are different strategies in the two jurisdictions, with Northern Ireland placing greater emphasis on travel time and the Republic on the size of the catchment population. The authors, independent Belfast researcher Dr Jim Jamison and Dr Michelle Butler, Senior Lecturer in UCD's School of Nursing Midwifery and Health Systems, point to the clear scope for joint hospital planning and rationalisation in the border region to benefit the health of the population.



Mental Health: The Case for a Cross-Jurisdictional Approach combining Policy and Research Efforts on the Island of Ireland (2009)

This study by Dr Patricia Clarke of CCBS explored the context of and challenges to the reform of mental health services (and related research) in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. It compared the two main mental health documents – the Bamford Review in the North and *A Vision for Change* in the South – in order to identify similarities and differences in policy approach in the two jurisdictions, highlighting areas of common concern, priorities for research and the gaps which exist. This work was carried in association with the Mental Health Commission (RoI), Cooperation and





Working Together (CAWT) and other agencies in the mental health field.

COMMISSIONED STUDIES AND EVALUATIONS

The Centre has carried out **studies and evaluations for government and other public agencies and social partner organisations**. These have included:

- A study of North-South cooperation in the education sector (pre-school, primary, secondary) for the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Education Northern Ireland (2010-2011)
- A review of cross-border consumer issues, employment issues and railway links, as reflected in Border People queries and User Group meetings, for the North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat (December 2009-April 2010)
- A study of the numbers of people crossing the border on a daily/weekly basis and what they are crossing the border to do (to work, study, retire, access medical services etc), for the EURES Cross-border Partnership (February 2010)
- A review of the 2008 study of postgraduate flows from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland for the Irish Department of Education and Science (December 2009)
- A study of mental health policy and research on the island of Ireland, for the Mental Health Commission (Rol) and other agencies, supported by the Cooperation and Working Together (CAWT) cross-border network of health authorities (December 2008)
- An evaluation of the cross-border GP out-of-hours service for Cooperation and Working Together (July 2008)
- A study of postgraduate flows from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland higher education institutions, for the Irish Department of Education and Science (January 2008)
- How the trade union movement can become more involved and influential in North-South cooperation, for the Northern Ireland office of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (December 2007).
- A review of policy recommendations from the five research projects commissioned by the Higher Education Authority under the 2004-2006 Cross-Border Programme for Research contributing to Peace and Reconciliation: Intergenerational transmission and ethno-national identity in the border area; Equality and social inclusion; Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways; E-consultation; and Virtual Research Centre for Point-of-Care Technology (February 2007).
- An overview of the activities of the Common Chapter of the Republic of Ireland's National Development Plan and Northern Ireland's Structural Funds Plan for the Special EU Programmes Body – in partnership with FPM Chartered Accountants (February 2007)
- A report on public attitudes to the development of cross-border health services, with particular reference to



The President of the University of Virginia, Professor John Casteen, addressed the spring Universities Ireland Council meeting on 12 February 2010: (from left to right) Professor James J Browne, President, National University of Ireland, Galway; Professor John Hegarty, Provost, Trinity College Dublin; Professor John Casteen; Dr Hugh Brady, President, University College Dublin.

GP out-of-hours services, for CAWT (January 2007)

- A report on education and skills in the North West, for the Irish Department of Education and Science and the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning (2006)
- An Evaluation of the Education for Reconciliation Project (Year One and Two), for the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (2003-2005)
- A Review of Cross-Border Mobility Information Provisions in the South of Ireland, for the North/South Mobility Information Group (2003)
- An Evaluation of the Upstate Theatre Company's 'Crossover' cross-border community drama project (2002-2004)
- 'Towards a Strategic Economic

and Business Research Agenda for the island of Ireland', for InterTradeIreland (2002)

- A report on public feedback to the PricewaterhouseCoopers/Indecon Obstacles to Mobility study, for the North/South Ministerial Council (2002)
- A study into the feasibility of extending University for Industry/ *learn*direct to the Republic of Ireland, for University for Industry (2001)
- An evaluation of the Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) cross-border network of health boards and trusts, for CAWT(2001)
- A 'scoping study' of North-South School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges, for the Department of Education Northern Ireland and the Department of Education and Science (2001)



SEMINARS AND STUDY DAYS

The Centre holds regular seminars and study days in Armagh, Dublin and in the border region to examine strategic areas of interest to North-South policy-makers. These bring together groups of policy-makers, senior practitioners and academics to discuss a research paper prepared by the Centre under the chairmanship of a distinguished authority in the field. As the Centre's research programme has developed, these seminars have moved from studying broad policy fields to examining more focussed areas which have been the subject of specific research projects and commissioned work. Cross-border seminars and study days have been organised in the following areas:

- Agriculture
- Education
- Tourism
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Health Services
- Mental Health Promotion
- Developments in Telecom Technologies
- Local government links
- Foot and Mouth disease
- School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges
- European citizenship education
- The euro
- Business research
- The North-South Consultative Forum

- Ageing
- *Border region history**
- *Border region regeneration**
- Waste Management
- *Economic co-operation**
- *Planning and mobility in the north-west**
- Science and Citizenship
- Information provision
- Housing and sustainable communities
- Education and skills in the north-west
- Mental health research
- Personal banking
- Web 2.0 aspects of online cross-border information
- Cross-border statistics
- Cross-border consumer issues

* *For the Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways project*

NORTH/SOUTH RESEARCH FORUM

The first meeting of the Centre's North/South Research Forum took place on 9 December 2009. This new initiative, which is funded by the EU INTERREG IVA programme (managed by the Special EU Programmes Body) through the Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory (INICCO), aims to bring together researchers, policy-makers and funders interested in North-South and cross-border cooperation in Ireland every six



months to discuss a research and/or policy issue of current interest.

The topic of the first meeting in Dundalk was 'What is the future for local and cross-border economic development in the context of the global economic crisis?' The keynote speakers were Michael Smyth, Head of the School of Economics, University of Ulster, and Celine McHugh, a senior policy advisor with Forfás, the Republic of Ireland's national policy advisory body for enterprise and science.

CONFERENCES

The first major conference organised by the Centre, jointly with the Centre for International Borders Research (CIBR), was held at Queen's University Belfast in autumn 2000 under the title '**European Cross Border Co-operation: Lessons for and from Ireland.**' This international conference was opened by the Irish President, Mary McAleese, and was addressed by a wide range of distinguished speakers, including the then First Minister of Northern Ireland, David Trimble and the Deputy First Minister, Seamus Mallon; the then RUC Chief Constable, Sir Ronnie Flanagan; the head of the EU's cross-border INTERREG programme, Esben Poulsen; the international emergency communications expert, Professor Edward Johnson; Ambassador Hermann von Richthofen of the German-Polish Governmental Commission; and the then SDLP leader John Hume. Participants came from 13 countries to discuss cross-border co-operation in five areas: administrative institutions,

security and policing, business and the economy, the environment, and culture and the arts.

The Centre has also organised six North-South conferences on aspects of higher education on behalf of the Department for Employment and Learning (Belfast) and the Department of Education and Science (Dublin). The first of these, in October 2002 in Armagh, was on '**Ireland as a Centre of Excellence in Third Level Education.**' This conference, which was attended by the presidents of seven of the nine universities on the island of Ireland, was addressed by several world authorities on higher education. These included Professor Malcolm Skilbeck, the OECD's former Deputy Director for Education; former US Secretary of Education, Richard Riley; the Director-General for Education and Culture in the European Commission, Nikolaus van der Pas, and the Chief Executive of the English Higher Education Funding Council, Sir Howard Newby.

In May 2003, the second conference was held in Cavan on '**International Education: A Capacity Builder for the Island of Ireland?**' The keynote speakers were Lindy Hyam, Chief Executive of IDP Education Australia, a world leader in international education and development services, and Neil Kemp, director of the Education UK Division of the British Council. The conference was chaired by Sir George Quigley.

In November 2003, the third conference was held in Belfast on '**Widening Access to Third Level Education**



on the Island of Ireland: Towards Better Policy and Practice'.

The keynote speakers were Dr Arnold Mitchem, President of the Council for Opportunity

in Education in Washington DC, a champion of access to higher education for low income and disabled Americans for 35 years, and Samuel Isaacs, Executive Officer of the South African Qualifications Authority.



The fourth conference – entitled '**Cross-Border Higher Education Co-operation in Ireland and Europe**' – was held in Cavan in May 2004. This examined examples of good practice in cross-

border higher education elsewhere in Europe, notably in the Oresund region of Denmark and southern Sweden (with keynote speaker Professor Linda Nielsen, Rector of the University of Copenhagen), and the EUCOR network between French, German and Swiss universities in the Upper Rhine region. The conference was co-chaired by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield and Noel Dorr.

The fifth conference was held in Belfast in June 2005 under the title '**Higher Education and Business: Beyond Mutual Incomprehension**'.

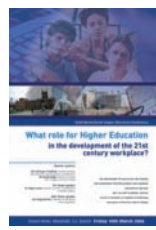
The keynote speaker was Richard Lambert, member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee,

former editor of the *Financial Times* and author of the seminal Lambert Review of University-Business Collaboration for the British Government. The conference was opened by the Irish Minister for Education and Science, Ms Mary Hanafin TD, and the Northern Ireland Minister for Employment and Learning and Education, Ms Angela Smyth MP. Other speakers included the Presidents of Queen's University Belfast and NUI Maynooth, Professor Peter Gregson and Professor John Hughes, and leading Irish entrepreneurs Dr Chris Horn and Dr Hugh Cormican.



The sixth conference was held in Malahide in March 2006 with the title '**What role for Higher Education in the Development of the 21st Century Workplace?**'

The keynote speakers were the Board Chairman of the Intel Corporation, Dr Craig Barrett; the Directors General of the Confederation of British Industry and the Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Sir Digby Jones and Turlough O'Sullivan; the Education and Training Officer of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Peter Rigney; the Chief Executive of Forfás, Martin Cronin, and the President of Dublin City University, Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski. The conference was opened by the Secretary General of the Irish Department of Education and





Astronomer Jay Tate and Professor Mark Bailey address participants at the 2009 'Discover the Stars at Armagh: the Second Cross-Border Schools Science Conference.'

Science, Brigid McManus, and the Permanent Secretary of the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning, Dr Aideen McGinley. The event was organised in collaboration with the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council.



In March 2007 the Centre joined with Armagh Observatory to organise **'Discover the Stars at Armagh: a Cross-Border Schools Science Conference.'** This

brought together 260 students from secondary schools in Belfast, Armagh, Dublin, Dundalk, Drogheda, Dungannon, Kilkeel, Cookstown, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Westmeath to engage in two days of astronomical activities

in Armagh. The event was funded by the Northern Ireland Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Irish Department of Education and Science, and was designed to attract students aged 13-14 towards science and scientific thinking at a critical stage of their academic careers. A 32 page booklet, edited by Dr Miruna Popescu, was produced for the participating schools by Observatory students and staff.

In June 2008 the Centre organised a major conference in Dundalk entitled 'Cross-Border Cooperation as part of the Northern Irish Peace Process: Some Lessons for Europe' which was attended by over 130 people from 13 countries: Ireland, England, Scotland, France, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Serbia, Kosovo,



China and the USA. The conference was opened by the Irish Minister for Justice, Dermot Ahern TD, and among the speakers were Stephen Kingon, Chairman, Invest

Northern Ireland; Martin Guillermo Ramirez, Secretary General of the Association of European Border Regions; Ronald Hall, Head of the European Commission's Northern Ireland Task Force; Professor Elizabeth Meehan, former Director of the Institute of Governance at Queen's University Belfast; Silvia Gobert-Keckeis of Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) in Paris; Linda Blom from the Euregio Gronau-Enschede (Germany-Netherlands); and Gorka Espiau Idoaga, Senior Advisor for Peacebuilding to the Basque Government. This conference was funded by the EU Peace Two programme.

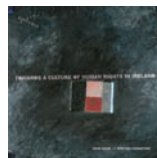
On 29-30 April 2009, the Centre, the Royal School Armagh, the Armagh Observatory and the Armagh Planetarium came together to organise **'Discover the Stars at Armagh: the Second Cross-Border Schools Science Conference'**. Again this brought together 260 students from 16 secondary schools on both sides of the border to learn about astronomy and related sciences and mathematics, using the unique joint facilities of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium. The keynote lecture on 'The Science of Armageddon' was given by the leading British astronomer, Jay Tate of Spaceguard UK in Wales, and

there were structured educational activities around the Planetarium's 'Star Show' and the Observatory's work on meteorites and the Human Orrery. The conference celebrated 2009 as the United Nations International Year of Astronomy.

PUBLICATIONS

In 2001 the Centre published, in association with Cork University Press, a series of short books containing essays by leading writers on key issues of interest to both Irish jurisdictions:

- *Multi-Culturalism: the View from the Two Irelands* by Edna Longley and Declan Kiberd, with a foreword by President Mary McAleese
- *Can the Celtic Tiger cross the Irish Border?* by John Bradley and Esmond Birnie, with a foreword by Peter Sutherland
- *Towards a Culture of Human Rights in Ireland* by Ivana Bacik and Stephen Livingstone, with a foreword by Mary Robinson



WHAT THEY SAY

The Centre for Cross Border Studies is an important catalyst for bringing



Left to right, Bruce Robinson, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Andy Pollak, and Mary Bunting, Northern Joint Secretary, North South Ministerial Council, at the Belfast launch of the 2009 'Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland'.

people to work together across a range of social and economic issues and thus find out what they have in common. The tragedy of the recent past on this island is that we turned our backs on each other and did everything separately. The value the Centre adds is to show how much more we can achieve by working together. The whole reconciliation project on the island of Ireland is about people learning that they have so many interests in common. The Centre's research and development work is key to building that kind of practical, mutually beneficial cooperation and collaboration.

*The Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD,
March 2009*

The Centre for Cross Border Studies and its researchers are to be congratulated on their terrific record of achievement over the past 10 years. They have been at the forefront of policy research and development on a cross-border basis at a time of very significant change on the island, providing leadership and energy and dynamism in this key area. They have added to the knowledge base and brought together policy-makers, academics and researchers to seek practical solutions to issues of real relevance to people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. One example of this kind of relevant work, undertaken in close collaboration with the North South Ministerial Council, is the development of the Border People



mobility information website. The cross-border mobility issues on which this website provides information are a key priority for Ministers on both sides of the border.

I warmly and openly pay tribute to the Centre's work. Without their energy and enthusiasm, the kind of practical cross-border cooperation issues now considered part of the mainstream certainly wouldn't be considered as self-evidently important as they now are. When the Centre set out on its journey 10 years ago they were not considered self-evident at all. I particularly commend the new series of INTERREG-funded research projects on the border region economy, cross-border spatial planning, health, impact assessment and mobility information which they are currently embarking on.

Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Bruce Robinson, March 2009

I mean it quite genuinely when I say that we wouldn't be able to work at the level that we are working at – at ministerial or departmental level – if the 'on the ground' cross-border work hadn't been happening for the last few years. If the type of interactions, workshops, seminars, publications and visiting speakers hadn't been going on in frameworks like that of SCoTENS, the barriers wouldn't have been broken down to the same degree. The contribution that SCoTENS, the Centre for Cross Border Studies and Andy Pollak have made to the overall process of peace and cooperation in this country is probably not widely noticed, but it is certainly well-recognised and

well appreciated as part of the overall process.

Irish Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin TD, November 2007

What the Centre for Cross Border Studies is doing is really important. We hope that you will provide analytical and research support to what we're trying to do in the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, pushing forward a significant North-South agenda on a purely practical basis, and looking at the concept of an all-island economy. We need to maximise the benefits of this cross-border work, identifying what will and will not succeed. This is not an academic exercise – its practical outcomes are almost limitless. In economic terms this is a pretty small island which should be looking outwards towards the global economy rather than inwards. We need to be encouraging cross-border cooperation to gain the maximum benefits for Northern Ireland in that global context. This is very rich and fruitful territory for the Centre to be working in.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Peter Hain MP, February 2007

The Centre for Cross Border Studies always takes a very fresh and innovative approach, bringing together sources of energy on both sides of the border that used to be back to back but are now in an extraordinary dialogue.

President Mary McAleese, February 2005

I want to thank the Centre for Cross Border Studies and Andy Pollak for all their work in helping to bring about greater cross-border understanding in a number of key areas.

*Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson MP MLA,
June 2009*

The Centre for Cross Border Studies remains committed to pursuing its continuing successful work in developing practical, mutually beneficial approaches to cross-border cooperation in a wide range of areas. We particularly welcome the Centre's commitment to dealing with obstacles to cross-border mobility. On behalf of the NSMC Joint Secretariat, the Centre operates the website **www.borderpeople.info**, which provides useful information for people who live, work or study in the other jurisdiction. The continuing rise in the number of people accessing the website is a measure of its relevance and usefulness.

Andy Pollak and his colleagues in the Centre are an important resource for a number of cross-border bodies in the education sector, carry out high quality research designed to highlight the practical benefits of cooperation in specific areas, and assist in the training of officials and others on issues of relevance to cross-border cooperation.

We look forward to continuing our cooperation with the Centre in 2010.

North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretaries, Mary Bunting and Tom Hanney, February 2010



Centre for Cross Border Studies chairman, Dr Chris Gibson, with staff outside Áras an Uachtaráin on 14 September 2009

EVALUATION QUOTES

by Brian Harvey (Brian Harvey Social Research, Dublin)

'Clients of the Centre appraised its work as more than competent, demonstrating the highest levels of professionalism, coupled with commitment and invariable courtesy. Expert opinion likewise gave a high assessment of the Centre's performance, admiring its quality, output, impact, relevance, value for money, working methods, expertise, vision, tact and diplomacy.

Comments were: "its projects are always very thorough"; "doing a great



job in challenging circumstances”; “the director has an excellent grasp of what is necessary to move things along”; “nothing more important than north-south reconciliation”; “contributes a significant amount of information to the wider policy arena”; “does important work and deserves more exposure”.

The Centre was considered to be professional, reliable and worked hard. Its staff were “a pleasure to deal with”. They did a “tremendous job”, provided “good support and service”, “they do what they have to do – and more.” All the staff were good – “but that comes from the values set down from the director at the top”. They were “efficient, focussed, interested and believed in what they were doing”.

‘Several commented that the Centre went beyond what was expected, “treating the project pro-actively, bringing fresh energy and commitment, finding imaginative ways to work around problems”.

The Centre was admired and respected for its commitment, energy, political even-handedness and ability to open doors to people who might not otherwise be in contact with each other. It has oiled the wheels of co-operation better than anyone else could, bringing an ever wider range of people into co-operation – “not just border people, but as far south as Cork”.

‘All had a sense that the Centre had performed well on minimal staffing and resources. “It is transparent, managing an extensive programme, working

within tight timeframes and with a small number of staff”.

One organisation, whose work had been facilitated by the Centre, spoke enthusiastically of the Centre’s commitment to arranging cross-border contacts and promoting relationships between groups that had hitherto little contact, making the comment that: “Once the relationship was established and got going, the Centre walked quietly away. It didn’t try to hog the limelight or build an empire but let them get on with it”.

BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

Dr Chris Gibson (chair), chairman, Foyle Meats Group and Wilson's Country Ltd; formerly pro-chancellor, Queen's University Belfast; chair, Chartered Accountants Regulatory Board



Chris Gibson

Dr Pauric Travers (vice-chair), president, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin



Pauric Travers

Helen Johnston, senior social policy analyst, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin



Mairéad Hughes

Professor Liam O'Dowd, director of the Centre for International Borders Research and professor of sociology at Queen's University Belfast

Professor Ronaldo Munck, strategic theme leader for internationalisation, interculturalism and social development, Dublin City University

Colin Neilands, director, Workers' Educational Association (Northern Ireland)



Ruth Taillon

Professor Dermot Diamond, director, Science Foundation Ireland-funded 'Adaptive Information Cluster', National Centre for Sensor Research, Dublin City University

Tony Kennedy, former chief executive, Co-operation Ireland, and member, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council



Andy Pollak

Colin Stutt, independent economic consultant, Belfast



The director of the Centre is **Andy Pollak**, formerly religion and education correspondent of *The Irish Times*, and in the early 1990s coordinator of the Opsahl Commission.

The Centre's deputy director (research) is **Ruth Taillon**, formerly research coordinator with Border Action (a partnership of Combat Poverty Agency and Pobal). Its IT manager is **Joseph Shiels**, a former software developer with Fujitsu and consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

The Centre's finance and administration manager is **Mairéad Hughes**. The director's PA and events manager is **Patricia McAllister**. The INICCO project administrator is **Eimear Donnelly**. The information officer is **Annmarie O'Kane**. The company secretary is **Margaret Connolly**, head of accounting services at Queen's University Belfast.



Patricia McAllister



Joseph Shiels



Eimear Donnelly



Annmarie O'Kane

EXTRACTS FROM 2008-2009 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The opinion of the independent auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP:

- The financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the charitable company's affairs at 31 July 2009 and of its net incoming resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- and the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, and
- the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2009

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2009	Total Funds 2008
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources				
Activities for generating funds	-	755,684	755,684	646,020
Other income	334,983	-	334,983	472,239
Total incoming resources	334,983	755,684	1,090,667	1,118,259
Resources expended				
Direct charitable expenditure	311,064	688,698	999,762	866,944
Costs of generating funds	21,526	2,634	24,160	14,141
Total resources expended	332,590	691,332	1,023,922	881,085
Net movement in funds	2,393	64,352	66,745	237,174
Fund balance carried forward at 1 August 2008	104,389	370,768	475,157	237,983
Fund balance carried forward at 31 July 2009	106,782	435,120	541,902	475,157



All amounts above relate to continuing operations of the company.

The company has no recognised gains and losses other than those included in the results above and therefore no separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has been presented.

There is no difference between the net movement in funds for the period stated above and its historical cost equivalent.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JULY 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Current assets		
Debtors	730,523	629,352
Cash at bank		200
	730,523	629,552
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(188,621)	(154,395)
Net current assets	541,902	475,157
Funds		
Unrestricted	106,782	104,389
Restricted	435,120	370,786
Total funds	541,902	475,157

Unrestricted funds are amounts which are expendable at the discretion of the Board in furtherance of the aims of the company.

Restricted funds are amounts which are expendable only in accordance with the specified wishes of the sponsor. The restricted funds consist of grants and awards for specific projects or administrative functions carried out by the company.



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