

*The Taoiseach, Mr Bertie Ahern TD, launches the Centre's 2005 yearbook, with (left) CCBS Vice-Chairman, Dr Pauric Travers, and (centre), Chairman, Dr Chris Gibson.*

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## A Word from the Chairman – Chris Gibson OBE

February 2006



With the publication of this first number of *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland*, the Centre for Cross Border Studies has taken another major step on a journey that

began six and a half years ago when its offices first opened in Armagh. This is a journey that all of us on this island, North and South, have to make: the journey towards people learning to live together and work together on practical issues for mutual benefit, while respecting the many differences – political, religious and cultural – which continue to divide us.

This new journal is part of that process. It will bring the best brains together, on the island and abroad, to research and write about issues that are important to all the people in Ireland. In this issue a Harvard professor writes about what the United States can teach us about planning our cities and countryside; a Queen's University professor explores the problems of sustainability facing the large number of cross-border programmes and projects which have emerged over the past decade; and members of the Centre's staff write

about cross-border educational exchanges, cross-border health co-operation, and the provision of information across the border. The tone of these articles is sober, realistic and practical, asking serious questions about the future nature of cross-border co-operation on the island of Ireland. The issue of sustainability is a common theme.

The articles raise issues which are of real interest to business people and planners, health professionals and educationalists, and ordinary people who need basic information in order to cross the border to live, to work, to study and to retire. These are the people who are the Centre's supporters and clients, the kind of people who realise that in a globalised world the problems of Northern Ireland and Ireland don't matter very much, and that the leaders of the two jurisdictions on this island – indeed all its inhabitants – have to find new ways of working together in order to make a decent living in a highly competitive international climate.

Once again, we have to thank the following for their continuing support: the Irish Department of Education and Science, the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, the EU Peace Two and INTERREG programmes, the



Atlantic Philanthropies and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. We are also grateful to those organisations which have partnered the Centre over the past year: the North/South Ministerial Council, InterTradeIreland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, Co-operation Ireland, the nine universities, the colleges of education and the institutions which

make up the new International Centre for Local and Regional Development.

Thanks are once again due to the Centre's dedicated team for another year's fine work. Extra thanks go this year to Leslie Stannage Design and Ashley Bingham for their superb work in preparing this journal, and all the Centre's other reports, for publication.

## THE FUTURE OF CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION: ISSUES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Liam O'Dowd



**The wider question of sustaining the 'peace process' and re-establishing the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive has rather obscured another key dimension of the Belfast Agreement: the promotion of cross-border co-operation. Yet there seems to be compelling evidence that the latter is at a crossroads and serious questions now arise about its future scope and sustainability. The underlying argument developed in this article is that the current phase of cross-border co-operation is coming to an end with the impending negotiations on the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland institutions and a steady diminution in transnational sources of funding.**

The following discussion draws on a series of research projects which have examined cross-border co-operation using a qualitative case study approach.<sup>1</sup> It is not primarily concerned with the merits or demerits of cross-border co-operation, issues which have been discussed at length elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> Rather the concern here is with factors which affect the sustainability of cross-border co-operation and with what sustainability might mean across the major societal sectors: the state, the economy and the third (voluntary and community) sector.

Two distinct, if gradually interwoven factors have driven cross-border co-

operation over the last two decades. The first has been the search for a political settlement of the conflict which developed the notion of inter-locking strands (involving Strands One, Two and Three of the 'peace process'). Beginning with the emergence of a sustained British-Irish inter-governmental partnership formalised in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, by the mid 1990s a more inclusive process had emerged involving all the Northern Ireland protagonists. The second influence has been the thrust toward closer European integration which emanates from a rather different source: the creation of the Single European Market (1986-1992) and the European Union at



Maastricht (1992). However the two influences gradually became interwoven, and from 1994 onwards the search for a political settlement accelerated, supported by an active, transnational funding regime.

The scale of formalised cross-border co-operation since the mid-1980s contrasts dramatically with the previous sixty years of largely 'back to back' state-building dating from partition.<sup>3</sup> Tannam<sup>4</sup> argues that the key drivers of this upturn have been increased political co-operation between the British and Irish governments rather than spillover from European economic integration. Certainly, since the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985), both governments have created a broad political framework for co-operation culminating in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and the resulting North/South Ministerial Council and implementation bodies. This framework has been given substance by funding from three main sources: the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), the three INTERREG initiatives and the two Peace Programmes. The EU has contributed to the first and has directly sponsored the other two. Since 1994 all three funds have been operative simultaneously, thus providing unprecedented support for cross-border co-operation. A huge number of diverse projects and activities have been initiated involving both states, and business and the voluntary and community sectors in both jurisdictions.

The GFA appeared to put North-South

links (Strand Two) on a firm footing, embedding them within a broader complex of relationships linking the two N.Ireland communities and the island of Ireland with Britain. The outworkings of the Single European Market provided a rationale for co-operation to improve economic competitiveness on the island. Although the funding regime has been transnational from the outset, most of the projects generated have been confined within the boundaries of each state on the island. Nevertheless, over time the INTERREG initiatives have become more focused on genuine cross-border projects, and 15% of Peace Programme funds have been allocated to the cross-border dimension.

The GFA represents a particular institutionalisation of three sets of relationships within a constitutional agreement that formally recognises the border and specifies that a united Ireland can only come about with the consent of a majority within Northern Ireland. Strand One covers cross-community relations within Northern Ireland; Strand Two involves North-South relationships; and Strand Three represents relationships between Britain and Ireland. Within Strand Two, a distinction may be made between co-operation involving both jurisdictions in Ireland generally, and co-operation confined to the 12 northern counties of the island which have been effectively defined as a border region by the EU INTERREG and Peace programmes. It must also be noted that, in practice, Strand Two co-operation frequently involves both cross-

community co-operation within Northern Ireland as well as Strand Three relationships.

The GFA marked the high water mark of a policy framework for both resolving the N.Ireland conflict and promoting cross-border co-operation. While the relationship between the British and Irish government remains close at several levels, it would be wrong to *assume* that it necessarily translates into an effective and dynamic environment for developing cross-border co-operation on the ground. Likewise, with enlargement, the priorities of the EU are changing and the flow of funds to Ireland will certainly diminish.<sup>6</sup> Combined with the continued impasse over the full implementation of the GFA, it might be hypothesised at least that the environment for sustaining cross-border co-operation has deteriorated. It is against this background that we undertook our latest case studies during 2005.

### Case Studies

These case studies range over different areas such as tourism, health, energy, economic development, training, local authority networks, womens' issues, sport and rural development.<sup>7</sup> While each area raises specific issues of its own, our aim has been to identify the generic factors which shape cross-border co-operation. One such factor is the question of sustainability – an issue which is now looming large for many practitioners as funding sources decline and the political momentum

engendered by the Good Friday Agreement has diminished, if not stalled.

As cross-border (and cross-community) co-operative projects have developed, they have generally revealed the deep-rooted nature of divisions within Northern Ireland as well as the problems of linkages between two separate jurisdictions. There is a keen awareness among practitioners at all levels that the underlying sources of division, tension and conflict will not be tackled effectively by short-term expedients or projects. Andy Pollak<sup>8</sup> has even raised the prospect that effectively promoting peace and reconciliation through the educational system may take centuries rather than decades. Research on cross-border co-operation in the early 1990s reveals the extent to which even localised economic co-operation across the border was slow to get underway. The first INTERREG initiative stimulated much talk about co-operation but little practical activity that was genuinely cross-border. Nevertheless, talk about co-operation was an important counter-balance at a time when there also much debate over the ongoing conflict, the military fortification of the border, the periodic closure of the Belfast-Dublin railway line and the struggle over the closure of border roads.

### Threats to Sustainability

Promoting cross-border co-operation goes 'against the grain' in many respects. There is a powerful institutional inertia rooted in the



*Two cyclists enjoying a holiday in the Fermanagh-Leitrim border region organised by Greenbox, one of the more innovative examples of cross-border co-operation in tourism.*

consolidation of partition over a long period, the development of two separate states, and associated with this, the creation of separate mindsets, agendas and priorities. Partition, in this sense, represents not so much a historical event as an ongoing process of separation. Deep-rooted communal divisions pre-date partition of course, and have been exacerbated by periodic violent conflict, most notably in the period 1969 to 1994. A widening cross-border gulf has been integral to deepening divisions within N.Ireland. In this context, promoting cross-border co-operation is a matter of 'running to stand still'. Without pro-active and sustained policies aimed at promoting such co-operation (including cross-communal interaction within N.Ireland), there is a likelihood that the process of

North-South divergence will accelerate.<sup>10</sup>

At present, however, a complex of factors is emerging that threatens the sustainability of the programme of cross-border co-operation that has been gathering pace since the mid 1980s. Firstly, viability is under threat from the scaling down and possible ending of two key funding initiatives, the International Fund for Ireland and the EU Peace programmes. While the EU's cross-border INTERREG programme will survive, it may be diminished by the diversion of funding to Eastern European border regions and by pressure to re-nationalise EU Structural Funds.

On the political front, the continued suspension of the N.Ireland Assembly

and the North/South Ministerial Council, and the increased polarisation of Northern Ireland politics, have created a political environment less conducive to the strategic development of North-South co-operation into the future. Peter Smyth<sup>11</sup> has noted how the lack of ministerial direction has inhibited progress particularly in the areas of co-operation as designated under the GFA, while the North/South implementation bodies have survived on a 'care and maintenance' basis. While John Coakley<sup>12</sup> has advanced a number of reasons why the implementation bodies will survive (i.e. because of human resources committed, the policy niches they fill, and the political cost of ending them), his analysis scarcely envisages a strategically dynamic future for these bodies either.

### Scope and Sustainability

Of course, the field of cross-border co-operation is much broader than that covered by the implementation bodies, or by political and administrative institutions narrowly construed. It includes:

- *The state sector* – politics and administration
- *The profit motivated economy/business sector* – private companies, corporations and market transactions between individuals
- *The social economy/third sector* – non-governmental organisations such as charities, community and

voluntary groups, credit unions and co-operatives

In a general sense, each sector has different implications for sustainability. Given the stability of state institutions on either side of the border, the state sector provides, potentially at least, the most durable basis for long-term cross-border co-operation from an institutional and financial perspective. While, as Tannam, Smyth and others have pointed out, political direction is crucial in advancing co-operation, the 'short-termism', territorial constituencies and conflicting political ideologies of elected representatives can inhibit or preclude effective cross-border co-operation.

Electoral politics as currently practiced in Northern Ireland tends to mobilise communal division rather than encourage co-operation. Excessive bureaucratic regulation and centralisation, especially when combined with institutional conservatism, is also a formidable obstacle to co-operation. The evolution of two separate administrations on the island since 1920 has generated a huge legacy of 'back to back,' rather than co-ordinated co-operative activity that has become ingrained in the culture of both sets of state institutions. Of course, this culture of division does not exist in a vacuum – it represents, institutionalises, and often exacerbates deep divisions in popular culture and politics.

The profit-motivated economy promises an underlying rationale for co-operation





which is 'outside' politics and 'blind' to communal divisions. It is particularly attractive to those who are wary of politicians' involvement in cross-border co-operation or of the political implications of co-operation. The measuring stick of profitability and economic self-interest provides an in-built guide to sustainability, although a tension remains between short-term profitability and long-term strategic considerations.

The Joint Business Council (JBC) of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) and the N.Ireland branch of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has co-operated to put pressure on the two governments to improve the general business environment in relation to telecommunications, energy, waste management, business education linkages, transportation, supply management, logistics, and cross-border labour mobility. One of our interviewees in the JBC noted that for individual companies, the issue was less cross-border co-operation *per se* – rather the aim was increased competitiveness on the island and internationally. The extent of this kind of co-operation can be limited by the imperatives of competition and the vagaries of local, national and global economies. Nevertheless, advocates of social capital and the value of embedding economic relationships in co-operative relationships continue to insist on the mutual interdependence of co-operation and competition.

Finally the third (community and voluntary) sector has the potential to mobilise cross-border co-operation at grass-roots level and to identify practical projects which are of mutual benefit to groups on either side of the border. The third sector is capable of responding to gaps in social provision by the state and identifying the consequences of market failure. Its relative distance from the state and business sectors has led it to take the lead in directly tackling issues of peace-building and reconciliation. Its flexibility and mobilising potential is limited by the constraints of uncertain funding; the difficulty of maintaining core funding; duplication and overlap of projects; the capacity of volunteers to commit their time and effort, and the extent to which the third sector itself mirrors the communal divisions in civil society and the different orientations of both jurisdictions.<sup>13</sup>

While each of these sectors may be distinguished analytically as having its own internal dynamic, in practice cross-border co-operation to date has involved a partnership between some or all of these sectors. Thus, for example, the third sector and the state have worked closely together on EU funded programmes with periodic involvement of the business sector. Similarly, much funding has been directed to partnerships between government and the private sector. Two key concepts have been central to cross-border co-operation: partnership and networking. These have operated at a variety of levels and have been largely

fuelled by funding from the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), INTERREG and Peace.

At the other end of the spectrum to this co-operation is the institutionalised emphasis on territorial sovereignty and accountability by politicians and civil servants alike. The existence of two states ensures the sustained importance of the territorial dimension of policy, politics and identity. On the other hand, transnational networking and partnership have a tendency to be more transient, project or task oriented, short-term and funding dependent.

Any overview of the plethora of cross-border projects and initiatives cannot fail to be struck by their varied and unsystematic nature. Some projects have been noticeably dynamic, others much less so. This has led organisations like Co-operation Ireland to call regularly for a more coherent, strategic policy framework for such co-operation. The Good Friday Agreement and the resulting North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC), cross-border implementation bodies and 'areas of co-operation', were aimed at providing a supportive and integrated framework for the great variety of cross-border projects. The subsequent stalling of the GFA, combined with the uncertain future of EU funding, threaten existing projects while raising the question of long-term sustainability. More generally, lack of political direction, threats to funding, institutional inertia and poor institutionalisation of existing

co-operation all undermine the prospects for sustainable co-operation in the medium and long-term.

### Key factors

A preliminary analysis of the context of cross-border co-operation and of our case studies to date suggest a number of factors that impinge on sustainability.

1. Political, administrative and funding contexts. One of the overarching factors affecting sustainability is the orientations of both national governments (and the N.Ireland Assembly, should that be re-established). Here the priority and commitment accorded to cross-border co-operation is critical, as is the extent to which both governments will compensate for the decline in EU and IFI funding.
2. Nature of the project – the extent to which it is distinctive, innovative, and meets or creates an ongoing demand for its services or outputs.
3. Effectiveness and relevant experience of project personnel and of personal networks
4. Degree and nature of institutionalisation – measured by consolidation of funding arrangements, mainstreaming of co-operative activities, embeddedness of cross-border agencies in wider networks of institutions on either side of the



border, and declining reliance on individual ‘champions’ of cross-border co-operation.

5. The degree to which cross-border co-operation is underpinned by durable grassroots relationships capable of generating trust and viable, fundable projects.

The following section illustrates the effects of these five factors from a number of our completed case studies.

### **1. Political and Administrative Contexts**

At a general level, many respondents singled out the Good Friday Agreement as as improving the environment for co-operation, noting the generally encouraging attitude of both administrations. One of our respondents saw politicians as an obstacle to cross-border co-operation in the period prior to the GFA, but acknowledged that the political climate had improved subsequently. Nevertheless he observed: “The best bet is to keep the politicians out of it. As soon as they are involved, the argument of politics or religion is put...it is doomed”. In the health sector, he saw administrative co-operation between the health boards and hospitals on either side of the border as the best way forward (Co-operation and Working Together interview). In most of our case studies, participants typically maintained an arms length relationship with politicians beyond local authority level, while acknowledging occasional support from them.

On the other hand, a Southern respondent from Greenbox, a relatively new cross-border eco-tourism project, emphasised that ministerial direction was crucial to cross-border co-operation, suggesting that very few government or semi-state agencies have succeeded in bringing forward effective cross-border projects without been told to do so by a government minister or ministers. He complained about excessive administrative regulation and centralisation as inhibiting effective co-operation, and argued that senior managers, policy makers, chief executives of agencies or secretary generals of government departments have low expectations of cross-border projects. They have “a very patronising view ...they do not expect them to deliver”. This respondent felt that few cross-border projects had been really successful and laid the blame on institutional culture:

[It is] the conservative short sighted, very reactionary constipated culture of so many institutions, both north and south, that has really inhibited any form of genuine healthy engagement, or exploration of synergy between north and south. There is a huge impediment there – that impediment is the cultures within individual organisations, within government departments, within development agencies. It’s culture, culture, culture.

Interestingly, this respondent was himself a development agency employee promoting an innovative project

involving local networks. Not all our respondents were as critical of state administrations. Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT), a cross-border health project representing an established area of social provision, emphasised the importance of practical administrative co-operation on the ground. Our CAWT respondents saw the interest of both governments as benign, but felt that the actual ideas for co-operation were developed at a local and regional level among the four health boards involved. They suggested that health provision in the border area was not a top priority for the Dublin and Belfast administrations, but welcomed indirect official endorsements via the INTERREG initiative, the cross-border local authority networks and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

In all cases, we were struck by the extent to which very different partnerships and networks were dependent on IFI or EU funding, and the degree to which the initiation of cross-border networks depended on the availability of such funding. Obviously the disappearance or elimination of such funding sources will seriously test the survival capacities of many projects

## **2. Nature of the projects**

The more high profile and durable projects we examined were those which had developed a niche role for themselves. For CAWT, their niche was responding to the demands of border residents (especially in the north west) on health-related issues. For Border

Horizons, a sub-sector of the IFI Wider Horizons programme, it was to address in an innovative way the training needs of young people who had under-achieved in the formal education system of both states.

The Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) has sought to forge a role for itself as a "strategic broker and facilitator for development within the (mid-border) region and for the allocation of resources within the region" (interview). In acting on behalf of 10 local authorities in the mid-border region, it has complemented the two other cross-border local authority networks. Its structure spans elected representatives, officials, business interests and the third sector, and its co-ordination activities cover a wide remit from broadband access to fisheries boards, water maintenance, independent living for people with intellectual disabilities, and cultural heritage. It has developed extensive partnership links in its region with government agencies and the EU Commission. Given the prospect of local government reform in Northern Ireland and the possibility of a reduction in the number of local authorities, these networks may prefigure an amalgamation of groups of local councils in the future.

The eco-tourism rationale of Greenbox represents an innovative approach to promoting marginalised rural areas close to the border. The project combines an organic farm and shop with training courses for NI and RoI participants, the



promotion of bed and breakfast provision and cross-border cycle tours. As such it has linked a variety of diverse activities in a novel way. However our Greenbox respondents suggested that continued government support would be necessary for a number of years before the project could rely on market demand for its survival. One estimated that a realistic goal would be that it would become 70% self-funding.

### **3. Effectiveness of project personnel and personal networks**

Our most active and durable projects were those which contained active champions of cross-border co-operation, with experience of working in, or with, both jurisdictions, and with personal networks which spanned the state, market and third sectors. In this respect, the cross-border co-operation activities of the last 15 years have produced a considerable human resource of individuals with experience of working in and across both jurisdictions.

The persons involved in the initiation of the more active projects are generally well linked to various sources of power and support. Those involved in the initiation and further development of ICBAN, CAWT, Border Horizons and to a limited extent Greenbox originated from highest levels of the statutory bodies that fund the organisations and their activities. For example, Derry Well Woman Centre has in retrospect benefited from the work of the manager of its cross border project who

went on to be elected as the Chair of the Western Health Board. The development and design of the Greenbox project has been ascribed to an individual with a long track record in many cross border projects and with experience of working in both jurisdictions. One of our respondents underlined the importance of personal networks, seeing them as vital to successful co-operation:

When it comes to cross border co-operation (...) it really has to do with personal networks. I know people, people trust me, I trust them. I know what I am capable of doing. I know if I want a problem solved, or if I want to propose an idea, I just have to phone them up, and I can talk it through with them – and if it is to our mutual benefit, we would do it. So it is all to do with personal networks. If there is any message to get through to you today – it is that the key asset that will drive cross border co-operation is the ability of individuals on the ground to network effectively with counterparts in the other jurisdiction.

### **4. Degree and nature of institutionalisation**

Personal networks or the existence of a cadre of cross-border workers, however, cannot not be sustained over the medium and long-term without effective institutionalisation. The latter may be measured by the existence and/or consolidation of core funding

arrangements, the routinization or mainstreaming of co-operative activities, and the embeddedness of cross-border agencies in wider networks of institutions on both sides of the border. Perhaps the most significant example of successful institutionalisation is InterTradelreland, established as one of the North/South implementation bodies under the Good Friday Agreement. Its remit involves improving the business environment on an all-island basis and it has taken up and developed many of the concerns of the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council.

The weakness and uncertain future of the funding base is the overriding factor which affects institutionalisation of cross-border co-operation generally. Much co-operation still constitutes niche activity for the organisations involved. As such it tends to be marginal rather than central to institutional priorities, an 'add-on' because of the availability of funding, which will be dispensed with when funding runs out. On the basis of our work to date, we would hypothesise that cross-border co-operation ranks higher on the agendas of Northern than Southern organisations. While political commitment to co-operation is reiterated regularly at the highest political levels in the South, the institutional arrangements there for cross-border co-operation are less impressive. One of our respondents in a Southern government agency involved in cross-border co-operation sharply articulated this issue in pointing out that cross border co-operation was outside the

mainstream interests of the agency as a whole:

So it can hinder your career development. You are on a sidewalk, you are in a backwater, and nobody really knows about what goes on in this (cross-border) unit.

In some respects, the differential emphasis of northern and southern organisations on cross-border co-operation is understandable, given the relative size of the two jurisdictions, and the fact that funding for cross-border co-operation is relatively more significant in the North.

Our interviews with projects dealing with women's issues demonstrated the other side of the 'niche' problem. Women's issues span a broad spectrum both in terms of general policy and day to day concerns. Therefore they could hardly be termed niche issues. On the other hand, weak institutionalisation of these concerns on each side of the border limits the scope and sustainability of cross-border co-operation.

In one such project in Derry, one of our respondents pointed out that she been successful in raising consciousness of women's issues at the beginning of the project, but over time organisational commitment waned. She also pointed to the problem of the personnel changes within organisations creating problems of continuity in cross-border co-operation. Expertise in cross-border



co-operation is frequently tied to particular individuals with strong interest and experience in the area. When they change jobs or leave the organisation, this weakens organisational commitment and capacity to engage in cross-border co-operation. Again, this is an indication of weak institutionalisation affecting sustainability.

### **5. Durable grassroots relationships**

In the last two decades there has been a mushrooming of cross-border projects, networking and organisations across a broad spectrum of activities at local, regional and national levels. It remains difficult to estimate the degree to which such co-operation has influenced popular perceptions and promoted durable grassroots relationships capable of generating trust and viable cross-border projects in the future. It is at this level that the political impasse over the Good Friday Agreement has had most effect in creating a less than benign environment for sustaining cross-border co-operation. The question of the popular legitimacy of cross-border co-operation is analogous, and not unrelated to, the legitimacy of European integration generally. It generates a constituency of committed networkers and participants, but has difficulty engaging the awareness or positive support of those not directly involved. Clearly too, grassroots support is far more important in some areas of co-operation than others, notably in projects predicated on engaging large numbers of participants in cross-border

activities. For example, promoting peace and reconciliation through cultural or educational co-operation is more dependent on popular support and legitimacy than inter-firm co-operation.

### **Conclusions**

As the funding for cross-border co-operation declines, many cross-border projects face a major crisis of sustainability, a crisis foreshadowed in the gap that developed between the end of the Peace 1 programme and the beginning of the Peace 2 programme. The preceding discussion has only begun to highlight the factors which will determine the survival or otherwise of cross-border co-operation activities. Our case studies illustrate the extent to which IFI and EU funding has sustained cross-border projects across all sectors – with the decline in funding such projects are at serious risk.

It would appear that those activities capable of maintaining flexible partnerships across the three main sectors – state, business and the third sector – are better placed to survive. However, in *cross-sectoral* co-operation across the border, a key question is what definition or understanding of ‘sustainability’ will prevail. As suggested above, each sector accords a different priority and meaning to sustainability. For the market sector, sustainability is ultimately defined as making a profit. For the third sector, there is immediate and continuing pressure to ensure both core and project funding which can

inhibit strategic long-term planning. For the state sector, core funding is seldom an issue as far as organisational survival is concerned, although the sustainability of particular projects may be subject to changing administrative and political priorities and negotiation. Where cross-border co-operation depends on partnerships across the state, market and third sectors, much depends on which definition and understanding of sustainability prevails within the partnership, i.e., short-term market criteria, the funding dependent criteria of the third sector, or the potentially more long-term standards of the state sector. The balance struck between short, medium and long-term strategies of co-operation remains a critical issue for the future.

Even then, however, much depends on the general political environment, personal networking and the capacity to institutionalise co-operation effectively. The Good Friday Agreement underpinned the preferences of the majority in Northern Ireland in constitutionally recognising the border. This has facilitated cross-border co-operation and networking on the basis of mutual benefit.

The great contribution of cross-border co-operation is that it challenges the zero-sum calculations which have bedevilled politics within Northern Ireland. It holds out the prospect of a 'positive-sum' politics which is outward looking and capable of revealing existing and new areas of common

interest which cross the internal and external borders of N.Ireland. Over the last two decades, a small but significant human resource has developed consisting of workers with a history of commitment and experience in cross-border working. As the current phase of cross-border co-operation comes to an end, one of the main dangers is that this resource will be dissipated by the inertia of state institutions, a process of re-nationalisation within the EU, and the associated funding crises which face cross-border co-operation generally.

**Dr Liam O'Dowd is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Centre for International Borders Research at Queen's University Belfast.**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This article draws primarily on research with Cathal McCall and Ivo Damkat carried out as part of an interdisciplinary research project (2004-2006) funded by the Higher Education Authority and the Special EU Programmes Body via the Peace 2 programme. The project is entitled: *Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways, Routes to Co-operation in a Divide Island*. (For a fuller description of the project and of sustainability, see O'Dowd, L., McCall, C. and Damkat, I. (2006) 'Sustaining Cross-Border Co-operation: A Case Study Approach', [www.mappingfrontiers.ie](http://www.mappingfrontiers.ie). This article also draws on research with Cathal McCall funded by the Royal Irish





Academy's Third Sector Research Programme and on earlier research undertaken by the author between 1991 and 1994 funded by the Economic and Social Research Council ('Negotiating the British-Irish Border: Transfrontier Cooperation on the European Periphery', Grant Number R000 23 3053.)

<sup>2</sup>There is considerable literature on the potential of economic cross-border co-operation in particular. See, for example: D'Arcy, M. and Dickson, T.[eds] (1995) *Border Crossings: Developing Ireland's Border Economy*, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan; Munck, R. and Hamilton, D. (1998) 'Politics, the economy and peace in Northern Ireland' in D. Miller (ed) *Rethinking Northern Ireland*, London: Longman; Bradley, J. and Hamilton, D. (1999) *Accelerating Growth and Development: Border Effects in Ireland, North and South, Report to the Border Crossing Project*, supported by the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, administered by Co-operation Ireland; Bradley, J. and Birnie, E. (2001) *Can the Celtic Tiger Cross the Irish Border?* Cork: Cork University Press and Centre for Cross Border Studies.

<sup>3</sup>See for example, Tannam, E. (1998) *Cross-Border Co-operation in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland*, Basingstoke: Macmillan and Kennedy, M. (2000) *Division and Consensus: The Politics of Cross-Border Relations in Ireland, 1925-1969*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

<sup>4</sup>Tannam, E. (2005) *Cross-Border Co-*

*operation Between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland: Neo-Functionalism Revisited*, Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways (MFPP, Ancillary Paper 1, Dublin and Belfast: UCD/QUB.

<sup>5</sup>Magennis, E., Clarke P, Shiels, J. (2006) 'Mapping Study of Funding Support for Cross-Border Co-operation on the island of Ireland, 1982-2005', Armagh: MFPP/CCBS.

<sup>6</sup>The threat to the EU funding of cross-border co-operation is not specific to Ireland and is being experienced even in some advanced cross-border regions in western Europe (Jörg Saalbach, 2005, 'Pamina Infobest: A successful information partnership in the Franco-German border region', address to CCBS/Borderwise conference: *Crossing the Information Border: Developing an all-island agenda for cross-border information, advice and advocacy*, Share Centre, Lisnaskea, 20 September 2005.)

<sup>7</sup>We undertook 10 case studies and carried out 35 in-depth interviews with individuals associated with these cases. The bulk of the interviewing for this project was undertaken by Ivo Damkat.

<sup>8</sup>Pollak, A. (2005) 'Educational Co-operation on the island of Ireland: A Thousand Flowers and a Hundred Heartaches', MFPP Discussion Paper, [www.mappingfrontiers.ie](http://www.mappingfrontiers.ie)

<sup>9</sup>see O'Dowd, L. (1994) 'Negotiating the British-Irish Border: Transfrontier Co-operation on the European Periphery', *Final Report* to ESRC, Grant No. R000 23 3053.

<sup>10</sup>We have analysed elsewhere the extent to which cross-border co-

operation in the cultural sphere is a necessary complement to cross-communal co-operation in undermining the zero-sum territorialism of politics in NI (O'Dowd, L. and McCall, C. 2004, 'Escaping the Cage of Ethno-national Conflict', MFPP, Discussion Paper, [www.mappingfrontiers.ie](http://www.mappingfrontiers.ie)).

<sup>11</sup> Smyth, P. (2005) *North-South Cooperation since the Agreement*, MFPP Ancillary Paper 6, Dublin and Belfast: UCDC/QUB.

<sup>12</sup> Coakley, J. (2005) *The Future of the North-South Bodies*, MFPP Ancillary Paper 7, Dublin and Belfast: UCDC/QUB, p.10.

<sup>13</sup> For obvious reasons the third sector, especially within NI, is currently much more exercised about 'sustainability' than the other two sectors. These debates about resourcing the sector reveal the extent to which third sector in NI is bounded by the latter's jurisdictional limits. There has been little discussion beyond project level about sustaining cross-border co-operation within the sector. For an exception that addresses this issue directly see Logue, P. (2003) 'Cross Border Reconciliation and Development' in Community Federation for NI, *Taking "Calculated" Risks for Peace II*, Belfast: CFNI, pp.86-91. For organisations like the Centre for Cross Border Studies, specifically established in 1999 to promote and research cross-border co-operation, the uncertainty around core funding, as distinct from project-related funding, has been a significant constraint (see evaluation reports on CCBS on

[www.crossborder.ie](http://www.crossborder.ie)). For such organisations, sustainability pressures are a continuous concern.

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## IS NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION WORKING? – SOME LESSONS FROM BORDER IRELAND<sup>1</sup>



*Eoin Magennis*



*Joseph Shiels*

**Eoin Magennis, Patricia Clarke and Joseph Shiels**

**One story in the recent release of cabinet papers from 1975 shows just how much has changed in thirty years in terms of cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland. The Direct Rule cabinet met in January 1975 at Stormont to discuss criticism from Dublin that Britain was ‘blatantly dragging its feet’ over two proposed studies of the economic impact of the Border. In response the Minister of State at Stormont wrote to the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Garret Fitzgerald, to tell him that ‘any cross-border studies must be small and severely practical’ in order not to stir up political difficulties.<sup>2</sup>**

In the Dáil Dr Fitzgerald made his disappointment and frustration clear over the lack of progress made on assurances given 18 months earlier.<sup>3</sup> Thirty years on in 2005 there were over 20 reports, papers and studies issued on the same subject. Indeed, talk of an ‘island economy’, however vague the concept, has become commonplace.

This article uses the new [borderireland.info](http://borderireland.info) online cross-border

information system (from here on called Border Ireland) developed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies to reveal a picture of the extent of cross-border activity over the past two decades.<sup>4</sup> The Centre initiated Border Ireland to centralise the very large amount of uncoordinated and fragmented information about the Irish border region and cross-border co-operation.<sup>5</sup> Border Ireland is an online searchable database of cross-border information



produced by EU-funded programmes, government departments, academic researchers and other key information providers in Ireland, North and South. This information covers cross-border projects, the publications emerging from these projects and the details of the organisations, groups and individuals who have gained cross-border expertise through this work.

Cross-border cooperation since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) takes place in a radically altered context. This changed context has produced two largely accepted assumptions. The first is that Strand Two (or the North/South strand) of that Agreement has been one of its quiet success stories.<sup>6</sup> Institutionally there has been the establishment of six North/South implementation bodies<sup>7</sup> and Tourism Ireland. Joining these bodies at a local level in the border region are well-established cross-border organisations such as the three local authority networks<sup>8</sup> and the health body Cooperation and Working Together (CAWT). Beyond government, there others – some pre-1998, some post – such as Co-operation Ireland, the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council and the publisher of this journal, the Centre for Cross Border Studies. And of course there are many longer-established organisations which either ignored the partition of Ireland or chose consciously to work on an all-island basis after 1921.<sup>9</sup>

The post-1998 institutional changes are

an important part of the cross-border story but only one part. The second assumption from the changed context is that European Union and other funding supports have animated cross-border co-operation to heights never before seen. A recent Centre for Cross Border Studies mapping study, based on data from Border Ireland, found that this funding has been critical in animating over 2800 activities involving at least 1750 organisations since 1982.<sup>10</sup> This article will highlight some of the key findings of this mapping study,<sup>11</sup> identifying the funding programmes associated with cross-border co-operation as well as the types of activities that these programmes have supported since the 1980s. The article will give some initial findings on the patterns of activities and funding, and identify avenues for further research into the sectors covered and the levels of co-operation reached.

### **A quiet success story?**

The North/South implementation bodies set up by the GFA have been criticised from various directions: some nationalists say they are tokenistic; some unionists and others claim that they are purely political with little proven benefit to either part of the island.<sup>12</sup> A recent paper on the bodies has asked whether they are too technocratic in their approach and lack both accountability and a core reconciliation element.<sup>13</sup> In spite of these criticisms, a May 2005 conference which looked at their first five years in operation was largely positive in tone about their progress.

They all had functioning boards (where relevant), around 700 staff and various programmes up and running. A figure which gives some sense of the scale of the six bodies and Tourism Ireland is that their combined budget for 2000-2005 was €712 million.<sup>14</sup>

The operation of the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) is also regarded by many as a relative success story, albeit a fractured and currently suspended one. The picture presented is one of significant trust-building among civil servants from the two jurisdictions. One criticism that has been levelled is that the NSMC's 'no surprises' principle at ministerial meetings can lead to no innovation.<sup>15</sup> One contributor to the May 2005 conference captured the scale of the work of the NSMC in 1999-2002, when the Northern Ireland institutions were up and running, with its 65 meetings in various formats. These meetings ranged from the full plenary sessions involving a large number of government ministers, North and South, to sectoral meetings which either involved supervision of the North/South bodies or set work programmes for the six areas of ministerial co-operation agreed under the GFA.<sup>16</sup> The lack of excitement of many of the meetings, as reflected in NSMC communiqués and statements relayed to the Northern Ireland Assembly, explained why this success story was so quiet.<sup>17</sup>

The suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive in October 2002 significantly eroded the momentum behind co-operation. The

North/South bodies have continued to do their work in a low-key manner, but there can be no major new initiatives taken by them. In the short term this can be managed, although in areas such as tourism and business development the need to constantly innovate is a challenge under 'care and maintenance'.<sup>18</sup> The NSMC has also had to reinvent itself in the absence of ministerial meetings. It has become something of an advisor on, and initiator of, methods to improve corporate governance in freedom of information, pension provision and implementing equality legislation in the North/South bodies. The six areas of ministerial co-operation have felt the effects of suspension most strongly. Contacts continue between officials, of course, and there have been very occasional meetings between Dublin ministers and their Direct Rule counterparts. These have largely acted as symbols of continuing contact rather than pushing matters forward.<sup>19</sup>

One of the clearest examples of failing momentum has been in the implementation of the 'Common Chapter'. This is the text agreed in the two National Development Plans, North and South, which was meant to provide a guide to cross-border co-operation in utilising EU Structural Funds in 2000-2006. Before October 2002 it had proved difficult to turn the Chapter into a working strategic framework, but there had been some progress towards a template for both collecting and disseminating information. There was a joint steering group established, headed



by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) and the two Departments of Finance. However since suspension this process has slowed almost to a halt. In early 2006 there is still no sign of the progress reports showing how the Common Chapter has been implemented since 2000.

Against this, initiatives such as InterTradeIreland's FUSION programme (which brings companies from one side of the border together with academic know-how and graduate skills from the other) or the Loughs Agency's interpretive centre Riverwatch (which is the first centre on the island to offer educational activities for the public focused on rivers and their environments) reinforce the assumption that Strand Two has been the quiet success story of the Good Friday Agreement. However, among the details of progress made and plans laid, the North/South bodies face a more central (and ultimately political) question: What are they *working for*?

#### Four funding sources

Alongside the institutional arrangements sits another feature of cross-border co-operation since the 1980s (and particularly since the mid-1990s): the wide variety of funded activities in the non-governmental organisation (NGO) area. In total Border Ireland holds details on 2,790 funded activities for the period 1982-2005. In terms of sheer numbers, this total reveals that there have been many more of these NGO funded

activities than the various programmes and projects generated by the North/South governmental institutions.

The 2,790 activities have been funded from four sources:

1. Funding programmes specifically designed to promote cross-border co-operation: the EU INTERREG programmes.
2. Funding programmes which do not have cross-border co-operation as their primary aim but do have it as a subsidiary priority: in particular the EU Peace programmes, and, in a much smaller way, LEADER.
3. Funding programmes open to applications which have resulted in cross-border activities: the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs' Reconciliation Fund and the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) are the main examples.
4. Charitable trusts which are also open to supporting cross-border activities, including the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Ireland Funds and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.<sup>20</sup>

The headline figures in the Centre for Cross Border Studies' mapping study are that approximately €762 million has been spent on 2,790 activities in the period 1982-2005. The table below shows, in descending order, the most important funding programmes as supporters of activities and sources of

funding. The five largest programmes have supported 2,534 activities or 91% of the total, providing over €675 million or 88% of the total funding. The dominance of the EU's cross-border INTERREG programmes as a supplier of funding or supporter of activities should not be a surprise. However the fact that EU Peace I, the funder of the largest number of activities, does not feature at all among the five largest funding

programmes is more surprising. This is due to the large number of small grants provided by Peace I to small networking or other 'once-off' or community-based activities. Indeed a third of all grants to cross-border activities were based on such small grants under Peace I, even though such grants accounted for only 3% of the total funding given to support cross-border co-operation.

**Key funding programmes in terms of activities and funding**

<b>Number of activities supported (in descending order)</b>	<b>Sources of funding (in descending order)</b>
Peace I (1994-1999)	INTERREG IIIA
INTERREG II (1994-1999)	INTERREG II
Peace II (2000-2004)	International Fund for Ireland (1986-2005)
INTERREG I (1991-1993)	Peace II
INTERREG IIIA (2000-2006)	INTERREG I

An important point to note is that although all 2,790 activities were funded to be cross-border projects, not all have actually had cross-border elements. Border Ireland has classified cross-border elements as including one or more of the following (in ascending order of cross-border engagement):

- Initial contact between parties on either side of the border
- Development of cross-border networks
- Joint cross-border planning of an activity
- Joint cross-border management of an activity
- Joint cross-border financing of a project

- Joint cross-border delivery of a service.

One finding from Border Ireland is that 38% of funded activities (1,083 in total) lacked any cross-border element at all and are best described as 'back-to-back'. Almost three quarters (786) of these 'back-to-back' activities can be traced to the INTERREG I or INTERREG II programmes. Most of them operated on one side of the border alone, and dealt in particular with improvements in sewage, transport or tourism infrastructure in the border region of one or other of the jurisdictions.

With 1,249 activities funded, the three INTERREG programmes have been





critically important in supporting cross-border co-operation since 1991. However, from that year INTERREG had the dual remit of developing cross-border approaches and improving competitiveness in the EU border regions, which were believed likely to lag behind the economies of the core regions under the Single Market. Across the Irish border, at least until 2000, there was strong tension between the two parts of this remit. This was one of the factors in the high number of 'back-to-back' activities during the first two INTERREG programmes (1991-1999). Evaluations and research on these early INTERREG programmes also note poor joint management and a lack of local input.<sup>21</sup>

Until INTERREG IIIA (2000-2006), the establishment of the SEUPB and an enhanced role for the cross-border local authority networks<sup>22</sup>, there was little sign of regional competitiveness being successfully joined with cross-border development. The CCBS mapping study concurs that these changes in managing the programme have promoted a more focused cross-border approach, and that INTERREG 111A's new 'civil society' priority also means the programme is reaching a new audience.<sup>23</sup> It notes that these changes are most pronounced in the cross-border management of infrastructure or environmental protection. A good example is the N/S SHARE project, where the management of cross-border river catchment areas has passed to a cross-border consortium of Donegal County Council, academics

in the University of Ulster and a consulting engineering company.

The second important source of funding for cross-border activities is EU programmes such as Peace or – to a much lesser extent – LEADER, which have dedicated only a proportion of their funding to encouraging this work. Programmes such as these have accounted for 1,301 activities, thus – interestingly – making them the biggest funder of all the EU programmes in terms of the number of cross-border activities supported. Peace I, in particular, had a focus on the animation of new contacts and new networks, and to this end funded small projects. According to Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency figures, 33% of all approved Peace 1 grants for cross-border activities were €5,000 or less, a figure broadly in line with the overall Peace 1 programme. This pattern of funding was significantly altered in Peace II, with only 17% of cross-border grant approvals for €5,000 or less.

The figure of 1,301 activities funded by Peace and LEADER also includes a very high percentage of activities (93%) with at least a basic cross-border dimension. This high percentage can probably be attributed to the requirement, particularly in Peace I and II, for applications to the relevant cross-border measures having at least the intent to make contacts across the border. This figure is even more remarkable given that these programmes did not regard cross-border co-operation as their key

objective. For the Peace programmes, dealing with the legacy of the conflict and promoting reconciliation were the keys. Similarly LEADER (a rural development programme), URBAN (urban regeneration) and EQUAL (tackling workplace discrimination and inequality) did not regard cross-border co-operation as their central aim.

A negative view of the approach taken by EQUAL or LEADER would be to stress the danger of cross-border co-operation ending up largely ignored within the larger programme.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand the inclusion of cross-border events to share learning (in EQUAL) or making cross-border co-operation one of the necessary elements of peacebuilding (in the Peace programmes) can arguably place such cooperation closer to the mainstream.<sup>25</sup> The efforts of the Peace programme's Intermediary Funding Bodies, such as Co-operation Ireland and Border Action,<sup>26</sup> has meant that cross-border co-operation has been kept to the forefront of that funding mechanism.

The third, although much less important funding source for activities is non-EU programmes open to applications with a cross-border element. The most important of these are the International Fund for Ireland (with its North/South secretariat drawn from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and the Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs' own Reconciliation Fund. These account

for 223 activities (or 8% of the total), although in funding terms this figure hugely underestimates the importance of the IFI's very large Wider Horizons initiative, which has supported over 750 projects at a cost of €93 million since 1987.

The IFI has focussed on economic development, youth training, tourism and infrastructure. Since 2001 it has begun to emphasise reconciliation, supporting cross-border projects involving church and community groups through the Community Bridges initiative. The smaller Reconciliation Fund has tended to support organisations dedicated to reconciliation, including some with cross-border or 'east-west' work at their core, such as Co-operation Ireland or Anglo-Irish Encounter. This focus has widened in recent years to include projects like cross-border schools exchanges or all-island human rights conferences.

The last source of support is the independent charitable trusts, which are by far the smallest in terms of numbers of activities (less than 20). However, both the Atlantic Philanthropies in the USA and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust in the UK have been important in terms of providing 'core funding', always difficult to come by, for organisations such as the Glenree Centre for Reconciliation and the Centre for Cross Border Studies.



**Border Ireland’s findings**

This survey of funding programmes gives something of a flavour of what the full mapping study reveals in greater detail. Working with the data collected by Border Ireland has also allowed some initial findings about the patterns of funding and the recipients of that funding. Some of the initial findings fall in the five areas below.

*Chronology*

Border Ireland’s activity details include the year in which an activity began or received its first funding and the end date/year of that activity. This can tell us more about the chronological trends in

numbers of both ‘new’ and ‘live’ activities as well as peaks and troughs in funding. Initial findings on numbers of activities can be seen in Figure 1 below. The importance of the funding provided by EU programmes is such that the number of ‘new’ activities did not go over 50 in any year before 1993 and then soared from 96 in 1995 to 500 two years later with the impact of Peace 1 and INTERREG II.

The chronological profile for funding committals for cross-border activities is slightly different. Figure 2 shows that 1996 and 2004 are the two peaks, reflecting the importance of INTERREG II and INTERREG IIIA beginning to commit their large expenditures.

**Figure 1: Number of activities by start year**

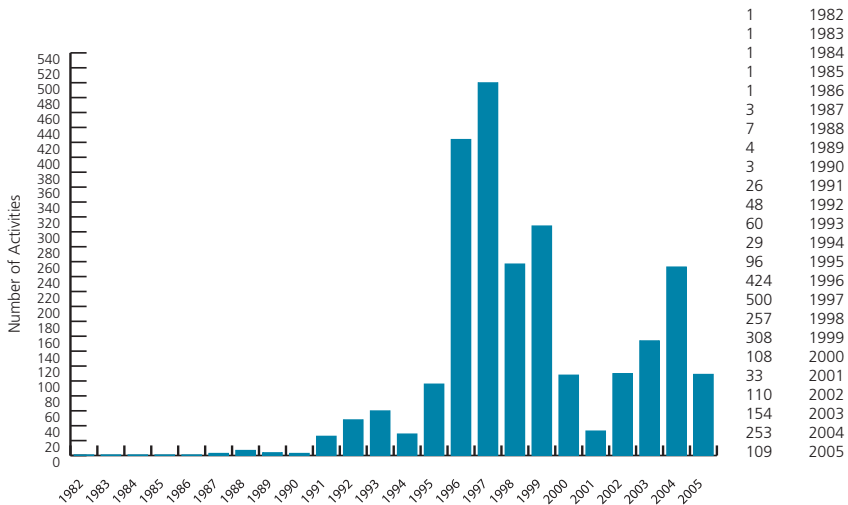
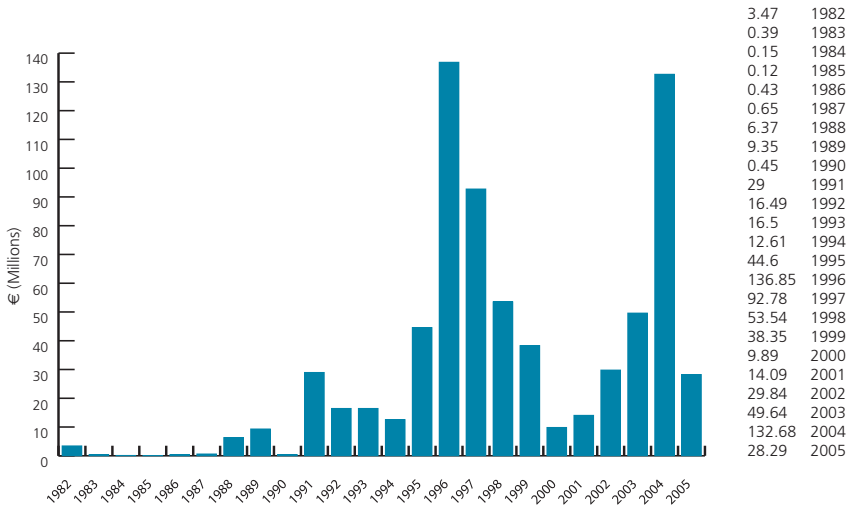


Figure 2: Funding committals by start year



### Organisations

On the Border Ireland system each of the more than 1700 organisations which have been involved in cross-border co-operation have been assigned one of four types (academic, government, private sector or community/voluntary sector), one of eleven sectors and a spatial reference. Almost 60% of these organisations fall into the community/voluntary sector, although most of these have had only an ephemeral involvement in cross-border co-operation. Initial findings would suggest that, despite the influence of the Peace programmes in supporting this sector's participation, governmental and public sector

organisations have more than held their own in terms of the number of cross-border activities they have run.

### Sectors

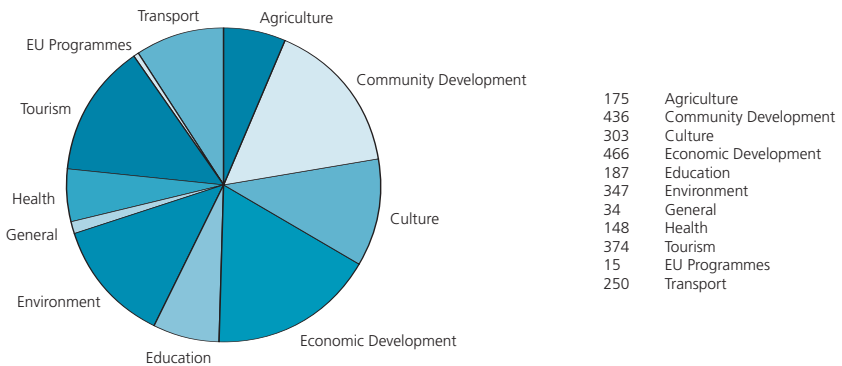
Each activity on Border Ireland has been assigned one of 11 sectors<sup>27</sup> and 89 sub-sectors. For example agriculture has been broken down into sub-sectors including forestry, aquaculture, rural development, horticulture, agri-diversification and animal health. Figure 3 below shows the breakdown of all funded activities by sector. The two biggest sectors overall are economic development and community development which account for 466 (or 16.5%) and 436 (or 15.5%) respectively



of the activities on Border Ireland. Further analysis will be able to identify which funding programmes favour

which sectors, the changes in this over time, and the types of organisations involved in the different sectors.

**Figure 3: Breakdown of activities by sector**



### *Locations*

Each activity on Border Ireland has both the location of the organisation(s) managing it and the spatial area which the activity has targeted. Initial findings on the location of managing organisation(s) reveal the not unexpected importance of Belfast and Dublin as centres of government departments and agencies. Thus 950 managing organisations out of 2918, or 32.5% of the total, are in Counties Antrim and Dublin. Again, not surprisingly, the dominance of managing organisations from Northern Ireland and the six Southern Border Counties is

shown by the finding that if Dublin's 10% share is excluded, only 3% fall outside that area. In terms of target areas for activities, there is an even greater concentration on the 12 Northern counties, with only 7% falling outside that area (this time including Dublin). Which counties or council areas received most activities and funding, as well as the spatial patterns of cross-border partnerships, will be areas for further research.

### *Levels of co-operation*

Each activity in Border Ireland has been assigned one or more levels of

engagement in cross-border cooperation (see list on p.24), which makes the question of changing levels of co-operation a profitable one for further research. Initial findings would suggest that, for example, the changes in the levels of co-operation are most dramatic between the earlier and later INTERREG programmes. There is also the issue of how co-operation deepens between different phases of a cross-border project, and how initial contacts – the lowest level of cross-border activity – can lead to joint financing of an activity or even joint delivery of a service. The Border Ireland system thus provides the potential to uncover patterns showing which sectors or funding programmes have led to the highest levels of cross-border cooperation.

### Conclusions

These patterns of chronology, levels of cooperation and organisational involvement lead to a strategic question only occasionally asked by policy-makers working in the area of North/South and cross-border co-operation. What has been the impact of all of these initiatives in cross-border co-operation since the 1980s?

Firstly it should be noted that individual funding programmes have had their own specific indicators to measure effectiveness and outputs. These have become more sophisticated over time as the Special EU Programmes Body has laid down indicators by which the INTERREG IIIA programmes or cross-

border measures within Peace II or LEADER + can be measured.<sup>28</sup> They include the number of cross-border networks, the number of jobs created by cross-border projects and so on. Among the North/South bodies, InterTradelreland has led the way in identifying the indicators by which its 2005-2007 corporate plan might be judged.<sup>29</sup> However measuring the wider impact of the combined range of cross-border activities, rather than just the evaluation of individual programmes or institutions, remains an issue for further examination. The informal Cross-Border Funders Forum<sup>30</sup>, which has attempted to bring some coordination and focus to funding for cross-border activities, might be the genesis of a network in which such issues can first be raised and then brought to a wider audience.

This debate is difficult when cross-border co-operation is always in danger of becoming a live political issue in Northern Ireland. The impact and operation of North-South and cross-border cooperation tend to get lost in discussions about other matters entirely or in rhetoric about what cross-border co-operation is *working towards*. This continued politicisation of cross-border co-operation is something that key North-South policy makers recognise. In a recent article InterTradelreland's Director of Strategy and Policy, Aidan Gough, expressed the opinion (or hope) that his North/South body had "moved from being a political body in the eyes of business to one that is seen as having a real economic credibility".<sup>31</sup> One of the



then NSMC Joint Secretaries, Peter Smyth, made the point in May 2005 that managing complexity would require the North/South bodies to continue to balance political and value-for-money demands.<sup>32</sup>

This debate might learn something from debates going on elsewhere in Europe, most notably on the impacts of the Structural Funds. The question of whether North-South and cross-border co-operation is or is not working would benefit greatly from the design of impact evaluation models showing economic and societal performance 'with' and 'without' the North-South bodies and funding programmes to support such co-operation.<sup>33</sup> Such a model could pave the way to a debate over whether the cross-border activity described above is providing the context in which civil society, business and politicians can make North-South and cross-border cooperation work better for mutual benefit.

**Dr Eoin Magennis is Research and Information Officer of the Center for Cross Border Studies. He was formerly Information Officer at InterTradelreland.**

**Patricia Clarke is Research Manager of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, and manages the Border Ireland system.**

**Joseph Shiels is ICT leader of the Centre for Cross Border Studies.**

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Marion McAneney, Dermot O'Doherty and colleagues in the Centre for Cross Border Studies for their comments on an earlier draft.

<sup>2</sup> *The Irish Times*, 31 December 2005.

<sup>3</sup> *Dail Debates*, 5 February 1975.

<sup>4</sup> Clarke, P., Shiels, J. and Magennis, E. (2005), 'Border Ireland: The framework of an all-island information service', available from [www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info)

<sup>5</sup> Magennis, E., Clarke, P. and Shiels J. (2006), *A Mapping Study of Funding Support for Cross-Border Cooperation on the Island of Ireland, 1982-2005*. Armagh: Centre for Cross Border Studies.

<sup>6</sup> O'Connor, T. (2005), 'The Establishment of the North/South Ministerial Council and the North/South Bodies', Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways ancillary paper 5.

<sup>7</sup> These are InterTradelreland, Loughs Agency, the North/South Language Body (comprising Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster Scots Agency), SafeFood, Special EU Programmes Body and Waterways Ireland.

<sup>8</sup> These are the East Border Region Committee, the Irish Central Border Area Network and the North West Region Cross-Border Group.

<sup>9</sup> Whyte, J. (1983), 'The Permeability of the United Kingdom – Irish Border: A Preliminary Reconnaissance', *Administration* 31 (3): 300-315.

<sup>10</sup> Some programmes, particularly exchange ones, involve a much larger group of participants. A recent report covering youth and schools exchanges

for 2000-2005 establishes that more than 3,000 schools and informal groups have been participants on approximately 80 exchange programmes; see North/South Exchange Consortium (2005), *Research on the Current Provision of North/South School and Youth Exchange Cooperative and Exchange Activity*. Dundalk: NSEC.

<sup>11</sup>The mapping study was completed as part of the Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways research project managed by University College Dublin and Queen's University Belfast, funded by Peace II and implemented by the Higher Education Authority.

<sup>12</sup>These criticisms have been made, respectively, by Prof. Jonathan Tonge at a conference in Queen's University in September 2004 and Lord Laird at the May 2005 IBIS conference at UCD.

<sup>13</sup>Coakley, J., Wilson, R. and Ó Caoindealbháin, B. (2006), 'The Operation of the North/South Bodies', Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways discussion paper 17.

<sup>14</sup>Figures from *Hansard* written answers on 7 September 2004 and 7 April 2005.

<sup>15</sup>See Coakley, Ó Caoindealbháin and Wilson, 2006, p.20.

<sup>16</sup>These are agriculture, education, environment, health, tourism and transport.

<sup>17</sup>Smyth, P. (2005), 'North-South cooperation since the Agreement', Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways ancillary paper 6.

<sup>18</sup>This is the term used to describe the arrangements which were designed in 2002 to ensure that the North/South implementation bodies would continue

to fulfil their functions on a 'care and maintenance' basis, pending the restoration of devolved government to Northern Ireland. This arrangement provides a mechanism for decisions to be taken on policies and actions relating to the bodies but no new functions can be conferred on them during the period of suspension.

<sup>19</sup>Examples of ministerial meetings include a recent health meeting where ministers discussed the treatment of County Donegal cancer patients in Belfast, cross-border child protection and other issues.

<sup>20</sup>For fuller data on these programmes see Magennis, Clarke and Shiels, 2006.

<sup>21</sup>For this research see Kinahan, H. (1992), *An examination of the European Community's INTERREG initiative on cross-border cooperation and its implications for the border regions of Ireland and Northern Ireland*. MA thesis. Limerick: University of Limerick; KPMG (1994), *Ex-post Evaluation of the Ireland/Northern Ireland INTERREG Programme, 1991-1993*. Dublin: Department of Finance; Laffan, B. and Payne, D. (2001), *Creating Living Institutions: EU Cross-Border Cooperation after the Good Friday Agreement*. Armagh: Centre for Cross Border Studies; Laffan B. and Payne, D. (2004), 'European Integration and Domestic Territorial Politics: INTERREG III and Cross-Border Cooperation' in *Perspectives on Politics and Society*, Special Edition on the Domestic Politics of Regionalism and European Integration, 4 (3): 447-474.; Quinlivan, E. (1997), 'The 'Evil Genius' of European





Integration and Co-operation across the Irish Border: A Study of the INTERREG II Initiative. MA thesis, Galway: National University of Ireland.

<sup>22</sup> See n.8 for details.

<sup>23</sup> Harvey, B., Kelly, A. and McGearty S. (2005), *The Emerald Curtain: The Social Impact of the Irish Border*.

Carrickmacross: Triskele Community Training and Development.

<sup>24</sup> This has happened in some projects where North/South elements seem to have been something of a difficult afterthought for both programme managers and project promoters.

<sup>25</sup> Lynch, C. (2004), 'The Peace II Programme in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties: A 'distinctive' development programme?', paper presented to European Evaluation Society Conference in Berlin, September.

<sup>26</sup> Known as ADM/CPA until late 2005.

<sup>27</sup> These are agriculture, community development, culture, economic development, education, environment, EU programmes, health, tourism, transport and 'general'.

<sup>28</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers (2003b), *Ex-post Evaluation of Peace I and Mid-term Evaluation of Peace II*. Belfast: SEUPB; PricewaterhouseCoopers (2003a), *A Mid-term Review of the INTERREG IIIA Programme*. Monaghan: SEUPB.

<sup>29</sup> InterTradelreland (2005), *Collaborate to Compete: Corporate Plan, 2005-2007*. Newry: InterTradelreland.

<sup>30</sup> This is an informal network of those involved in funding cross-border cooperation, particularly in the economic development sector. The

cross-border local authority networks, the International Fund for Ireland, Cooperation Ireland, InterTradelreland and others sit in the forum.

<sup>31</sup> Gough, A. (2005), 'Fusion of skills reaps dividends', *European Innovation*, November: 28-9.

<sup>32</sup> Smyth, 'North-South cooperation since the Agreement', p.6.

<sup>33</sup> For more on these debates and impact models see Bradley, J. (2005), 'Has EU regional policy been effective? The debate on Structural Funds', paper presented to the 45th Congress of the European Regional Science association, Amsterdam, August.

## EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION ON THE ISLAND OF IRELAND: ARE THE GOOD YEARS ENDING?<sup>1</sup>

Andy Pollak

**Education has been a 'core value' for Irish people – North and South, Protestant and Catholic, unionist and nationalist – for at least two centuries. Both the 9,000 'hedge schools' in the 1820s and the 7,000 state-supported national schools which succeeded them were part of a genuine all-island system, with a great deal of teacher mobility.**



And then came partition, and education in Ireland, coming from a common root, sprang apart like a child's catapult and stayed apart, with an almost 100% 'back to back' separation. The distinguished Irish educationalist, John Coolahan, has said that he trained twice a teacher in the Republic of Ireland in the 1960s, and "as far as education in Northern Ireland was concerned it could have been Timbuctu. There was no reference to it, no mention of it – it was just out of one's consciousness."<sup>2</sup>

Any serious thought of renewed educational links between the two parts of Ireland would have to wait until the late 1980s. The political contexts for this involved the British and Irish governments working together to seek common solutions to the problems of Northern Ireland, while on the continent of Europe old enemies came together in the European Union, stressing education

as a way of fostering and promoting a common sense of European heritage and unity.

This European emphasis led to a multiplicity of exchange programmes – Erasmus, Socrates and Comenius – linking students, teachers and education officials, and bringing together schools and other educational institutions to do joint projects and research. In Ireland the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement led to the initiation of the first major North-South educational programme, itself firmly embedded in the wider European context: the **European Studies Project (ESP)**.

The ESP was generously funded by the Departments of Education in Northern Ireland, Ireland and England in a way that no school-based educational exchange programmes were in the later 'peace process' period from the mid-



1990s onwards. In its first six-year phase it had a £3.2 million budget and six full-time field officers in the North, the South and England. It had a junior programme for 11-15 year olds, with schools linked through ICT and occasional visits for the study of history, geography and environmental studies (themes which were common to the curricula of the three jurisdictions); and a senior programme based around the study of contemporary European issues, cultural, social, political, technological and economic.

The ESP's firm foundations were shown by the fact that by 1999 193 secondary schools (94 in Northern Ireland and 99 in the Republic of Ireland) were involved, and its website in 2006 still shows 67 Northern Irish and 56 Irish participating secondary schools plus schools from England, Scotland, Wales and 21 other European countries. One of the ESP's strongest values is that it has allowed Northern Protestant schools to be involved in a North-South link alongside East-West links with Britain and continental European countries – "it takes in the wider, safer environment" in the words of one senior Education and Library Board official.<sup>3</sup>

### **An extraordinary growth**

The European Studies Project presaged a remarkable flowering of North-South relationships in the educational sector by non-governmental organisations and individual school groupings. The first organisation into the field was Co-operation North (now Co-operation

Ireland), which in the late 1980s organised exchanges between 200 schools and youth groups.<sup>4</sup>

An article of this length can only give a flavour of the extraordinary growth in North-South school exchanges which occurred in the decade between 1995 and 2005, when generous EU Peace funding and other funding linked to the Northern Ireland peace process was made available. A Centre for Cross Border Studies (CCBS) scoping study for the Departments of Education in Belfast and Dublin in 2000 estimated that nearly 540 schools on the island – 261 in the North and 276 in the South – were by then involved in a wide range of cross-border programmes and projects, involving either face-to-face or ICT contact.<sup>5</sup>

A 2000-2004 study by the North South Exchange Consortium (made up of Léargas, the British Council and the Youth Council for Northern Ireland) of both school and youth exchanges showed an even more dramatic increase in activities: it concluded that during this five year period nearly 3,000 school and youth groups had been financially supported, involving more than 55,000 young people.<sup>6</sup> Nearly two thirds (64%) came from the formal education (i.e. schools) sector with one third (36%) from the informal (youth work) sector. In the formal sector, 57% of those involved came from secondary schools and 25% from primary schools. The NSEC study bore out the somewhat surprising conclusion of the earlier CCBS study that participation by

Northern schools and youth groups from a Protestant background was broadly in line with their proportion of the population of Northern Ireland as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

This paper will now look briefly at three successful cross-border projects in ICT, citizenship and reconciliation education. One of the few largely funded by the Departments of Education North and South has been the ICT-based programme, **Dissolving Boundaries**, which is managed and co-ordinated by the University of Ulster and National University of Ireland Maynooth. This project received nearly €1.2 million from the Departments between 2000 and 2004. It began in 1999 with 52 primary, secondary and special schools, taking part in computer conferencing, video-conferencing and e-mailing on subjects like local history, geography, literature, art, drama, sport, human rights, and the developing world. By 2004 the number of schools who had participated had grown to 172, with 121 schools active in that year. Unusually 66% of the schools involved in Dissolving Boundaries are primary schools.

Another significant programme has been **Civic-Link**, which has also been one of the best funded, with €1.44 million from the Departments of Education and €1.6 million from the US Centre for Civic Education. It grew out of a commitment given by President Clinton's Education Secretary, Richard Riley, to support an Irish cross-border adaptation of a US citizenship education

initiative, Project Citizen. Civic-Link involves second level students working with their teachers to identify and explore local community problems, and then to devise an action plan to present to policy makers. Unlike in the US, this work is not focussed in one locality but involves the students using ICT and face-to-face meetings to share their ideas with partner schools and youth groups across the Irish border. Over 160 Irish schools and youth groups have gone through the Civic-Link programme since it began seven years ago.

The European Studies Project, Dissolving Boundaries and Civic-Link are all examples of what one pioneer of North-South schools co-operation, Aidan Clifford, director of the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the City of Dublin VEC, calls the "indirect model", where schools come together to work in areas of mutual interest that are not directly related to issues of Irish conflict and identity. The more difficult "direct model" is rarer: it is where teachers and students take on, in the classroom, the social, political and religious issues which divide Irish people. Both approaches have value and should work alongside each other, Clifford believes.<sup>8</sup>

**Education for Reconciliation**, a highly innovative citizenship education project conceived and managed by the CDU, is an example of the latter. It also provides an example of the financial insecurity experienced by many trail-blazing smaller projects. It brought together over 30 secondary schools, North and



South, to train teachers to deal with the 'hard topics' of reconciliation through the citizenship programmes for 12-15 year olds in both jurisdictions (Civic, Social and Political Education in the Republic, and Local and Global Citizenship in the North), and to research and develop a reconciliation module for those programmes.

Unusually, it has been funded by all three EU Peace programmes since 1999, making it something of a model project. Its 2004 evaluation said it was characterised by "excellent leadership, high motivation by the participating teachers, and a courageous effort to grasp one of the most difficult 'nettles' of the post-conflict period in Ireland, the demands of reconciliation".<sup>9</sup> However despite several such glowing evaluations, it had to endure gaps in funding in 2000-2002 and 2005-2006 which led to a dispersal of its participant schools and loss of highly skilled and experienced staff. On the other hand it has recently overcome one key barrier faced by all EU Peace-funded projects – Brussels' bar on involving all but a few schools in the Republic outside the Southern Border Counties – by being awarded grant assistance from the Irish Department of Education and Science.

Despite this barrier, EU funding has been crucial in supporting a very large number of smaller North-South educational exchanges. The North South Exchange Consortium study confirms that funding for cross-border education work in Ireland comes overwhelmingly from overseas governmental and EU

donors. Funding from such external sources accounts for 80% of the more than £69 million invested in cross-border exchange and co-operation activity between 2000 and 2004. The International Fund for Ireland invested over €38 million of this (largely in the Wider Horizons youth training programme – see below), and another €20.7 million came from the EU Peace Two programme. Only 13% of funding (or 20% if the 25% governmental contribution to the EU Peace Two programme is taken into account) came from the three education departments in Ireland: the Department of Education and Science in the Republic and the Departments of Education and Employment and Learning in the North

### Measuring the Impact

If the funding for cross-border co-operation in education is sometimes erratic, evidence of its impact on peace-building, creating mutual understanding and moving towards that elusive concept, reconciliation on the island of Ireland, is even more problematic. This is a difficult area. Inside Northern Ireland, where cross-community work has been going on for far longer than work across the border, there is little measure of its impact on community relations. Almost from the outbreak of the Northern Ireland 'Troubles' education has come under scrutiny as a possible agent of social change and improved community relations, with considerable research on the segregation of schooling and experimentation with cross-community

contact schemes and other initiatives. The 1989 Education Reform (NI) Order included a range of measures which institutionalised the new concept of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU), formalising joint activities between mainly Protestant (controlled) and Catholic (maintained) schools in the North.

However although EMU and its related area Cultural Heritage were now statutory, there was no requirement for actual joint activities involving pupils from the two sides. Cross-community contact was encouraged and some funding for it was made available, but schools could, if they wished, teach these themes entirely within their own classrooms.<sup>10</sup>

Alan Smith and Alan Robinson, the principal researchers in this field, believe that there is only limited empirical evidence to support the thesis that increased contact and interaction between groups is likely to lead to a reduction in conflict. They believe that one reason why it is difficult to establish causal links between inter-group contact and attitudinal change range is the possibility that attitudinal changes only emerge over a long period of time. They suggest that there may be merit in following a significant cohort of young people who have gone through a variety of educational and reconciliation programmes over a 25 year period to see "whether certain formative events are more likely to lead to positive inter-group attitudes than others."<sup>11</sup>

## Wider Horizons

There is no cross-border educational programme that goes back anything like 25 years. However there is one training programme for young people, Wider Horizons, started in 1987 and well-funded and managed by the International Fund for Ireland, which has been deemed successful by a series of evaluations. It is run through the main state training organisations, FÁS in the South and Department for Employment and Learning in the North, and nearly 15,000 young people, Protestant and Catholic from Northern Ireland, and all kinds from the Republic of Ireland, have passed through it. And there is at least one in-depth evaluation which examines the impact of this important initiative on the attitudes of the young participants.<sup>12</sup>

Like the International Fund for Ireland itself, Wider Horizons has two integrated aims – to promote employability and reconciliation through vocational preparation, training and work experience. These aims are implemented by sending religiously mixed groups of young people from the two jurisdictions abroad for periods of up to two months to countries where they can obtain relevant training and work experience – usually the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the EU. While abroad the participants must learn to live and work together as a united group.

Since the early 1990s Wider Horizons has tended to focus on the needs of



disadvantaged young people and disadvantaged areas. The programme has been particularly successful in improving the work motivation of participants, particularly those in employment 'black spots.'<sup>13</sup> A 2002 evaluation – which was conducted through questionnaires and interviews over a period of three years and involved over 700 participants, including trainees, leaders and key administrators – showed that trainees tended to move from part-time to full-time employment and from unskilled to skilled work.<sup>14</sup>

In the more difficult to measure area of reconciliation, Wider Horizons also showed some significant progress. Anton Trant says that "at a general level it can be said that bringing people together from different sides of the divide in a meaningful, purposeful and non-threatening way has been a very beneficial experience. There is plenty of evidence to show that participants in Wider Horizons projects genuinely look beyond the stereotypes they hold of each other and in many cases actually form close friendships."<sup>15</sup>

He notes that after starting from a position where any formal reconciliation activities were largely avoided, with the passing of time four reconciliation elements have been incorporated into the programme. Firstly, as part of their preparation all project leaders are now required to take a formal leadership training course that includes reconciliation. Secondly, the normal practice is to understand reconciliation

in a broad and inter-related manner which will be acceptable to young people, encompassing any issue that tends to divide people, including racism, homophobia and gender discrimination, as well as sectarianism.

Thirdly, reconciliation – and employability – are based on "the building up of the individual person. Prejudice is especially difficult to combat when the individuals concerned are themselves vulnerable, fearful and disadvantaged. Hostile attitudes and behaviours towards others derive as much from personal insecurity and low self-esteem as from ignorance and lack of contact."

Fourthly, Wider Horizons "lends itself particularly well to what could be called institutional reconciliation." The programme works with the training centres and community and youth organisations to which the young people belong and identify with. "Several observers of the current conflict in Northern Ireland have pointed to the close connection between the reconciliation of individuals affected by the conflict and the reconciliation of the institutions with which they identify."<sup>16 17</sup>

The 2002 Wider Horizons evaluation asked whether the programme was succeeding in its task of reconciliation by using three independent assessment measures: a) friendship and social contact between the participants; b) participants' perceptions of each other's communities; and c) the internationally

recognised Bogardus Social Distance Scale for measuring tolerance and prejudice.

All three measures showed positive gains. With regard to friendship and social contact, all the participating groups – Northern Catholics, Northern Protestants and Southerners – showed a clear trend of increased cross-border friendship, and at the end of the projects four-fifths of the young people were planning further cross-border visits. Cross-community friendships also increased, with, at the end of the project, over four-fifths of the Northern participants planning to make more cross-community social contacts.

With regard to measuring tolerance and prejudice, the evaluation used the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, which has been used extensively in the United States as a means of measuring racial prejudice, and well as in a number of Irish research studies (notably Miceal Mac Gréil's 1977 and 1996 studies of prejudice and tolerance in Ireland<sup>18</sup>). The scale measures seven levels of closeness, ranging from 'part of my family, for example through marriage' and 'close friend' to 'visitor only to my country' and 'expel from my country.' Using this scale, from 1 to 7, the perceptions of participant groups to each other were measured before and after their involvement in Wider Horizons.

The results showed that all social distance ratings reduced (i.e. improved) following the Wider Horizons experience: there was a "significant"

change (meaning that there was a 95%+ probability that the change being measured was the result of the Wider Horizons experience) in Northern Protestant participants' perceptions of people from the South; and a "highly significant" change (a 99% probability that the change was the result of Wider Horizons) in Northern Catholic perceptions of Northern Protestant, and vice-versa.<sup>19</sup>

Trant concludes that "the Wider Horizons formula has proved over the years to be a simple, practical and very powerful force for co-operation and integration." Its uniqueness lies in the way the programme integrates its twin aims of reconciliation and employability, so that vocational training and work placements are the vehicle through which people come to know and trust one another – it is because the vocational training element of Wider Horizons is perceived to have no ideological threat, that it can be used as a bonding and integrating activity."<sup>20</sup>

It is invidious to compare Wider Horizons with any other North-School programme involving young people because it is so hugely well-resourced. Up to 2005, Wider Horizons had received £67 million in International Fund for Ireland funding, and its annual budget was running at around £4.5 million, largely explaining why the recent North-South Exchange Consortium study found that IFI had provided 55% of all funding for North-South school and youth exchanges.





## Civic-Link

However for the purposes of this article, it is necessary to take one of the better funded and longer-running schools-based programmes so as to compare its impact, as measured by evaluators using similar methods, with the impact of Wider Horizons. One of the best resourced programmes involving schools (with a few youth groups) has been Civic-Link, started in 1999 with funding from the US Department of Education, the Irish Department of Education and Science and the Department of Education Northern Ireland.

Civic-Link, which is managed by Co-operation Ireland, is a pilot initiative that aims to:

- o Promote values of mutual understanding, respect and acceptance of diversity; and
- o Empower young people to action these values by assuming responsibility for and participation in civic action and community building for the mutual benefit of all people on this island, North and South.<sup>21</sup>

Between 1999 and 2002 the number of schools and youth groups involved in Civic-Link's programme of exploring community problems with cross-border partners grew from 30 to 120. The programme drew on two pedagogical approaches: an action learning, public policy focus promoted by the US Centre for Civic Education, and Co-operation Ireland's own North-South relationship building model. The former encourages

and supports students to explore community problems and then devise an action plan to present to policy-makers. The latter emphasises personal contact as a means of tackling inter-group conflict, stereotyping, mutual distrust and prejudice. It is grounded in what is known as the 'contact hypothesis' developed by social psychologists working on issues of prejudice and ethnic relations in the 1950s and 1960s. At the risk of some over-generalisation, this proposed that inter-group prejudice and conflict derive from a lack of knowledge and therefore misinformed stereotypes between members of groups engaged in inter-group hostility and conflict. The solution proposed to such ignorance, and therefore prejudice, is to provide forms of contact that will enable individuals to learn about one another and to realise that they have much in common.

Using the same Bogardus Social Distance Scale as the Wider Horizons evaluation, a 2003 evaluation of Civic-Link<sup>22</sup> found that for the majority of students completing pre- and post-programme questionnaires, there was no significant change in social distance between Northern Catholics and Northern Protestants. The only statistically significant change was among Southern Catholics, who reported improved (i.e. reduced) social distance towards 'Protestant people' and 'people from Northern Ireland'.<sup>23</sup>

Another finding was that the main positive effect of Civic-Link participation was among students from non-

disadvantaged schools. The evaluator pointed to the value of “deepening the engagement” of students from Northern Protestant schools in particular and disadvantaged schools in general.<sup>24</sup>

The evaluator also stressed that attitudinal changes were more marked among Civic-Link participants – and particularly those from the Northern Protestant community – who had experienced two residential exchanges rather than among those who had gone on one or no exchanges.<sup>25</sup> The importance of longer-term exposure to young people from the other Northern Irish community or the other Irish jurisdiction was thus stressed.

### Three levels of co-operation

The picture painted of North-South co-operation involving school students and young people in this paper is necessarily only a snapshot. However three distinct levels of co-operation are already apparent.

On its own, at the top, is Wider Horizons, generously funded over a 19 year period with funding currently running at around Stg£4.5 million per year, with around 800 young people passing through its programmes every year. Its evaluators believe it is a model of good practice in working towards its joint aims of employability and reconciliation. In the words of one programme manager: “Wider Horizons is too valuable to be let go easily. It represents a unique blend of reconciliation and labour market

considerations. In the present situation in Ireland, such a programme must be preserved.”<sup>26</sup>

Trant compares Wider Horizons to the Franco-German Exchange, a generously-resourced youth exchange programme not dissimilar to WH in its concern to promote co-operation and mutual understanding. This was set up over 40 years ago with the hugely ambitious aim of effecting a fundamental cultural change in the way the future citizens of those two formerly warring nations would view each other. Trant cites evidence<sup>27</sup> that this programme “has made a substantial contribution towards promoting good relations between the two countries, but this was only discernible after a generation of young people had been given the experience of participating. The lesson for Wider Horizons is clear: if the programme is to make a serious contribution towards reducing prejudice and sectarianism in Ireland, then it must prepare for the long haul.”<sup>28</sup>

Some informed commentators wonder about the likelihood of the International Fund for Ireland continuing in existence for the 15-20 further years necessary for Wider Horizons to make a similarly discernible impact. Recent cuts in IFI's funding from the US government and a general reduction in funds to Irish programmes from the EU – as well as the smaller numbers of disadvantaged young people due to the prosperity of recent years in both parts of Ireland – would suggest that this is by no means a certainty. Another danger, according



to its evaluators, is of the agencies delivering the programme – FÁS and the Northern Ireland Training and Employment Agency (now part of the Department for Employment and Learning) – neglecting its central reconciliation aim in favour of its much more deliverable employability element, which, after all, is their core business<sup>29</sup>. If it were ‘mainstreamed’ into a post-IFI phase, the danger of such a ‘loss of direction’ (the evaluators’ phrase) would be far more likely.

Similarly, the evaluators point to one of the problems of Wider Horizons “from the very beginning - how to link up effectively with the mainline educational and training schemes.”<sup>30</sup> If the gold-plated Wider Horizons programme faces problems of sustainability, mission drift and mainstreaming, then how much more serious is the situation facing the second group of North-South educational programmes – the few relatively well-funded schools programmes like Civic-Link, the European Schools Project and Dissolving Boundaries – and, at the bottom of the feeding chain, the multitude of one-, two- and three-year projects kept alive largely by EU Peace funding and unpaid voluntary work.

One obvious way to longer-term sustainability for schools-based programmes is for some incorporation of ‘good practice’ materials and methodologies learned from them into mainstream practice in the two jurisdictions, and particularly into the development of teachers. The kind of

active teaching and learning methodologies which are common to many of these innovative cross-border projects are now seen as international best practice by the OECD and Education Ministries all over the world.

Some might argue that this is unrealistic, pointing, for example, to the marginalisation of even a general, single jurisdiction citizenship programme such as Civic Social and Political Education in the South. Similarly Tony Gallagher, the internationally-regarded Queen’s University-based researcher on citizenship education, has noted the long struggle in Northern Ireland to achieve a higher status and priority for work in education aimed at promoting reconciliation. He believes that as long as “schools are held to account primarily for academic achievement through base-lining, targets, inspection and development planning, then citizenship education is always going to come lower down, perhaps much lower down, the pecking order.”

Aidan Clifford of the City of Dublin VEC Curriculum Development Unit points out that in a highly prescribed and structured school curriculum and assessment process there are limited methods of entry for innovative curriculum ideas or methodologies – in one Irish jurisdiction, let alone across a contested border between two. He feels that in the future North-South innovators will have to put more energy into bringing about change in the system, e.g. through the policy

documents of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. However this painstaking, long-term kind of movement towards sustaining innovation might not be to the liking of funding bodies, most of whom view sustainability in crude terms of “take away the funding and the course will continue in the schools anyway.”<sup>31</sup>

### Conclusions

A major problem in identifying both good practice in North-South education co-operation and ways in which such co-operation might be sustained has been its extraordinarily rapid growth over the past decade. The 2005 North South Exchange Consortium report highlighted a number of features which have emerged from this luxuriant but unsystematic growth. Among its findings were:

- Programmes and projects are funded in very complex ways, and funding routes are unclear (in the Northern Department of Education, six different sections are involved in the funding of cross-border projects). This lack of clarity does not help the efficient or effective transfer of resources to target groups on the ground.
- Core funding to sustain organisations is very limited.
- The requirement of the two largest funders, EU Peace Two and the International Fund for Ireland, that funding must go to Northern Ireland and the six Southern border counties (other than in exceptional circumstances), has “negatively affected wider north-south activity.”
- There is “a perception among some sections of the Protestant or Unionist community that the focus of peace building efforts in this specific region is an attempt to soften or blur the border.”
- There are few organisations promoting east-west activities between schools and youth groups in Britain and Ireland (only a tiny 1% of funding goes to such programmes).
- There are overlaps and duplication between programmes, with the result that some schools and youth groups are participating in several programmes, while the majority are not involved in any activity.
- There is a need for more institutional involvement (less than 10% of cross-border activity is currently through institutional linkages). “Personal relationships developed between group leaders alone cannot sustain a project.”
- “Proper policy making structures are needed to provide clarity for future programme



*Children from St Malachy's Primary School, Ballymoyer, in Armagh, and Redeemer National School in Dundalk enjoy story-teller John Campbell. This exchange was organised as part of the Pride of our Place project, run by a cross-border partnership of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, the Southern Education and Library Board and the Department of Education and Science.*

development", particularly as funding becomes scarcer, in order to meet the need for a more coordinated, transparent and effective system of oversight and funding.<sup>32</sup>

The report's key policy recommendation is that the current, embryonic North South Exchange Consortium should be developed into a new body, the North South Exchange Trust. This new body would "coordinate and manage the north south programme framework by identifying priority areas for funding, delivering programmes through tenders, developing an overarching monitoring and evaluation framework and developing a corporate plan."

However in their endorsement of the report's proposals, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland, make it clear that "in the current political context it is not possible to establish such a body at this time, but it is hoped that in the future conditions might arise when the establishment of an independent north south exchange Trust will exist."<sup>33</sup> In other words, until there is agreement on returning power to devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, there is no possibility of setting up a formal North/South body in the area of education and youth exchanges. An obvious question follows from this: If and when devolution happens, will the sizeable funding – most of it from

abroad – brought about by the generous international response to the Irish peace process, have run out?

It is also worth remembering that this difficult work has already been going on for a very long time indeed. In his address to mark the opening in 1814 of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, the distinguished Belfast radical Dr William Drennan spoke passionately of the desire of the new school's board that "all pupils of all religious denominations should communicate by frequent and friendly intercourse in the common business of education, by which means a new turn might be given to the national character and habits, and all the children of Ireland should know and love each other."<sup>34</sup>

The difficulties facing educationalists even in the 'good years' of the past decade indicate that it may be the best part of another two centuries before that noble aim is realised.

**Andy Pollak is Director of the Centre for Cross Border Studies and Secretary of Universities Ireland. He is a former Education Correspondent of *The Irish Times*.**

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on a longer discussion paper for the *Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways* project, available at

[www.crossborder.ie/pubs/mfpaper4.pdf](http://www.crossborder.ie/pubs/mfpaper4.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> From paper by John Coolahan, North-South School, Youth and Teachers Exchange Conference, Armagh, 18 October 2001. Available on

[www.crossborder.ie/pubs/exchange/final.pdf](http://www.crossborder.ie/pubs/exchange/final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *Cross-Border School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges on the island of Ireland* (unpublished). Andy Pollak, Ciarán O Maoláin, Zena Liston and Sheena McGrellis. Centre for Cross Border Studies (for the Department of Education (NI) and the Department of Education and Science), November 2000, p.32

<sup>4</sup> *A Model of Managed Co-operation: an evaluation of Co-operation North's School and Youth Links Scheme*. Helen Ruddle and Joyce O'Connor, Irish Peace Institute, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> *Cross-Border School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges on the island of Ireland*, p.6

<sup>6</sup> *Research on the Current Provision of North South School and Youth Exchange and Cooperative Activity 2000-2004*.

Rodney Green, Ian White, Sean McGearty and Tony Macaulay for the North South Exchange Consortium, p. 1

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p.47

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Aidan Clifford, City of Dublin VEC Curriculum Development Unit, 23 May 2005

<sup>9</sup> Evaluation of the Education for Reconciliation (Phase Two) Project – Annual Report 2003-2004, Michael Arlow, Andy Pollak and Tony Gallagher, pgs. 2, 11 & 14

<sup>10</sup> *EMU in Transition*. Alan Smith and Alan Robinson. Centre for the Study of



- Conflict, University of Ulster. 1992
- <sup>11</sup> *Education for Mutual Understanding: The Initial Statutory Years*. Alan Smith and Alan Robinson. Centre for the Study of Conflict, University of Ulster. 1996, pp.77-78
- <sup>12</sup> Evaluation of the Wider Horizons Programme of the International Fund for Ireland (unpublished). Anton Trant, Shaun Trant, Deirdre Fitzpatrick and John Medycott. January 2002
- <sup>13</sup> Promoting Peace in Ireland through Vocational Training and Work Experience. Anton Trant. *International Journal of Vocational Training and Education*. Vol 11, Number 1. 2003, p.87
- <sup>14</sup> Evaluation of Wider Horizons Programme of the International Fund for Ireland, Trant et al. 2002
- <sup>15</sup> Promoting Peace in Ireland through Vocational Training and Work Experience, p. 88
- <sup>16</sup> *Paths to Settlement in Northern Ireland*. S.Farren and R.Mulvihill, Colin Smythe, Gerrard's Cross, Buckinghamshire. 2000, pp. 103-119
- <sup>17</sup> Promoting Peace in Ireland through Vocational Training and Work Experience, pp. 88-89
- <sup>18</sup> *Prejudice and Tolerance in Ireland*, CIR, Dublin, 1977; *Prejudice in Ireland revisited*, St Patrick's College Maynooth Survey and Research Unit, 1996.
- <sup>19</sup> Promoting Peace in Ireland through Vocational Training and Work Experience, pp 90-91
- <sup>20</sup> *ibid*, pp. 92-93
- <sup>21</sup> Civic-Link Resource Pack, 2001
- <sup>22</sup> *Learning to Live Together: An Evaluation of Civic-Link* (unpublished).
- Tom Ronayne, WRC Social and Economic Consultants. 2003
- <sup>23</sup> *ibid*, pp. 8-11
- <sup>24</sup> *ibid*, p. 48
- <sup>25</sup> *ibid*, p. 46
- <sup>26</sup> Evaluation of the Wider Horizons Programme of the International Fund for Ireland, p.89
- <sup>27</sup> Report on the Franco-German youth office (OFAJ). Mary-Liz Trant. City of Dublin VEC Curriculum Development Unit. 1994
- <sup>28</sup> Promoting Peace in Ireland through Vocational Training and Work Experience, p 92
- <sup>29</sup> Evaluation of the Wider Horizons Programme of the International Fund for Ireland, p 108
- <sup>30</sup> *ibid*, p. 107
- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Aidan Clifford, 23 May 2005
- <sup>32</sup> *Research on the Current Provision of North South School and Youth Exchange and Cooperative Activity 2000-2004*. Rodney Green, Ian White, Sean McGearty and Tony Macaulay for the North South Exchange Consortium, pp 40-41 (funding conclusions) & 51-60 (qualitative findings)
- <sup>33</sup> *Research on the Current Provision of North South School and Youth Exchange and Cooperative Activity 2000-2004*, preface.
- <sup>34</sup> From paper by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, North-South School, Youth and Teachers Exchange Conference, Armagh, 18 October 2001. Available on [www.crossborder.ie/pubs/exchangefinal.pdf](http://www.crossborder.ie/pubs/exchangefinal.pdf)

## CROSS-BORDER HEALTH CO-OPERATION: FROM OPTIMISM TO REALISM

Patricia Clarke and Jim Jamison

Health is consistently viewed as a key area for cross-border co-operation. Although there are important structural and funding differences in the two health systems in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, they share common core principles, face similar health and service problems, and have adopted similar approaches to tackling issues. For example, the two jurisdictions have similarly poor population health outcomes when compared to the rest of the EU. Their top causes of premature mortality are the same: cardiovascular disease, cancer, accidents and suicide.



Patricia Clarke



Jim Jamison

The provision of services in the two jurisdictions is also similar, although Northern Ireland has more medical specialists and greater investment in community care. Both jurisdictions experience long waiting lists. The total number of patients waiting to be admitted to hospitals in Northern Ireland at the end of December 2004 stood at 49,250, the highest per capita figure in the UK. The corresponding figure for the Republic of Ireland at December 2003 was 27,318<sup>1</sup>. In both jurisdictions there are major current or proposed plans for organisational change, each with a policy favouring concentration of hospital services. Significantly, officials from both jurisdictions have recently

stated that the problems inherent in each system relate more to the use of resources rather than the lack of resources.

The 1998 Good Friday Agreement embodied the first commitment by the two governments to work towards specific objectives in relation to cross-border co-operation in the health sector. This included provision for the establishment of a small North-South implementation body in the health field (the Food Safety Promotion Board) and recognition of health as one of six fields for co-operation to be overseen by the new North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC). Five specific areas for co-





operation were identified: accident and emergency services, major emergency planning, cancer research, health promotion and high technology equipment. Other key developments included the establishment by the Departments of Health, North and South, of the Institute for Public Health in Ireland in 1999 with its priority of reducing health inequalities on the island, and the signing of a tripartite relationship with the United States National Cancer Institute.

However cross-border co-operation in health care at a ground level predates the Good Friday Agreement. In 1992 the first dedicated sectoral cross-border organisation, Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT)<sup>2</sup>, a partnership of the health boards and health trusts in the border region, was established. Between October 1996 and December 2000 CAWT secured over €7.3 million in funding from the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (Peace 1) and developed project work across a wide range of sectors, including acute care, primary care, family and child care, learning disability, health promotion, information technology, human resources, public health and mental health.

This work has brought people together to gain a better understanding of their professional inhibitions and political difficulties, and extensive networks of contacts have been established in the border region. There has also been a concentration on education and training, with a large exchange of

information across the border on approaches to work, review of practice models and delivery of joint training. The main impact of this early cross-border co-operation in health was described as “preparing the ground” for future, more substantive co-operation initiatives. There was a high level of optimism that this project-focused, EU-funded co-operation in health which predated the Good Friday Agreement could be upgraded to include cross-border service development and patients crossing the border for treatment<sup>3</sup>.

In order to examine whether these expectations have been met and how attitudes and policy towards health co-operation have changed over time, this paper draws on material from two studies, both involving the Centre for Cross Border Studies. In 2000 the Centre commissioned a study<sup>4</sup> to investigate the current state of cross-border relations in the field of health services; to identify any barriers, gaps, opportunities and challenges in relation to enhanced cross-border co-operation, and to explore the enthusiasm for accelerating and extending cross-border co-operation.

Since February 2004 the Centre has been collaborating with research institutes in Britain, Spain, France, Belgium, Slovenia and Estonia in the EU Sixth Framework funded Europe for Patients<sup>5</sup> research project. The aim of this project is to enhance the ability of patients across the EU to benefit from the cross-border health care advantages created by an increasingly integrated

Europe. The overall project is examining legal frameworks at both national and European level, with a focus on recent European jurisprudence, contracting for health services across borders, and systems for ensuring quality of care provided in this way. The objectives of the Irish case study are to provide information on the motives, expectations and information needs of patients receiving elective (non-urgent) treatment across the Irish border.

### **Reforming health administration**

The policy of reforming the health systems, North and South, has developed separately but in parallel over recent years.

In November 2005 details of a landmark reform of public administration in Northern Ireland were announced<sup>6</sup>. Health administration changes are an integral part of this reform and have been publicly linked to the recent findings of the Independent Review of Health and Social Care Service undertaken by Professor John Appleby, chief economist at the King's Fund, the London-based independent charitable foundation. In essence the Appleby Report sets the reform agenda for the shake-up in the Northern Ireland health service administration, which is due to begin in early 2006. This reform sees the shrinking in size of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety; the appointment of a new executive authority (the Strategic Health and Social Services Authority) to replace the four health boards; the reduction in

the number of hospital trusts from 19 to 5; the establishment of seven new local commissioning groups to organise the purchase of services for their communities, and the development of a Patient and Client Council.

In the Republic, the Irish Health Reform Programme<sup>7</sup> also sees a new national focus on service delivery and executive management of the health services involving the consolidation and amalgamation of 32 agencies. The new Health Services Executive (HSE), established on 1 January 2005, now provides services to patients through three principal national directorates: the National Hospitals Office (managing the 53 acute general hospitals through eight local hospital networks); the Primary, Community and Continuing Care Directorate (delivering regional and local non-hospital services through four regional offices and 32 local offices), and the Population Health Directorate (responsible for strategic planning aspects). Interaction with local communities and their elected public representatives is included in the role of the four regional offices.

The reform programmes, North and South, could have important impacts on current and potential cross-border co-operation on the island. In both jurisdictions the reforms provide a focus on patient outcomes, integration between different levels of care, partnerships between all sectors, strengthening of primary care, and centralisation of services. The establishment of centres of excellence in



*Monaghan hospital has taken Northern Ireland patients for hernia operations, but local protests about its downgrading give an indication of the kind of opposition to be expected if it were to lose services to hospitals across the border as part of increased cross-border health co-operation.*

large hospitals represents a shift in practice from the delivery of care in small acute hospitals such as those currently operating in both border regions. The reforms have also seen the abolition of the existing regional health board/authority structures in the South, some of which have been intimately involved in cross-border co-operation.

The reform programmes in the two jurisdictions emerged from a number of influential reports:

- Audit of Structures and Functions in the Health System (The Prospectus Report, June 2003), Ireland
- Report of the Commission on Financial Management and Control Systems in the Health

Service (The Brennan Report, June 2003), Ireland

- The Report of the Task Force on Medical Staffing (The Hanly Report, October 2003), Ireland
- The Independent Review of Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland (The Appleby Report, August 2005), Northern Ireland
- The Northern Executive's Review of Public Administration (November 2005), Northern Ireland

Surprisingly, within the extensive documentation produced by these reports there is not a single specific reference made to the implications of change for cross-border health care, or

the potential that cross-border health care offers. For instance, while two leading health economics experts from Dublin, Professor Charles Normand of Trinity College Dublin and Dr Miriam Wiley of the Economic and Social Research Institute, sat on an informal advisory board for the Appleby Review, there is no all-island or cross-border perspective in either the analysis or the recommendations of this work. The potential benefits relating to economies of scale, better co-ordination of services and opportunities for specialisation among clinicians that might flow from improved all-island co-operation in health services remain to be examined. Clearly the concept of cross-border working and planning for health is not yet embedded in the overall context of reforming the health services.

### **Upgrading practical co-operation**

Although the devolved arrangements in Northern Ireland have been subjected to a series of interruptions, the Irish and British Governments, and the EU, have continued to give considerable verbal encouragement to practical cross-border initiatives in health. As in the past, the cross-border agenda continues to emphasise opportunities for joint training, staff development and staff exchanges (e.g. in areas of radiotherapy, renal services and major emergencies); exchanges of information (e.g. experience of combatting drugs); and the completion of feasibility studies into areas such as the introduction of Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scanning for cancer patients, and the

possibility of first responder schemes involving local volunteers responding to pre-hospital emergencies in the border region alongside the ambulance service.

Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) has continued to lead the development of cross-border co-operation in health. Indeed CAWT is one of the more prolific cross-border organisations on the island, having been involved in 78 cross-border health activities to-date<sup>8</sup>. This work continues to be driven by very substantial European funding, with CAWT having received approximately €19 million in EU funding over the 10 year period from 1996 to 2006. For example, between 2000 and 2004 CAWT obtained €1.8m for a range of mental health initiatives under the Peace II programme. This funding has facilitated such developments as awareness training in cognitive therapy, a needs assessment of carers, and an examination of the clinical, demographic and social predictors of past suicide behaviour. CAWT was also selected by the two Departments of Health to deliver the whole €9.9m INTERREG 3.2 Measure – Health and Social Wellbeing (2000-2006) – which has seen the research, development and implementation of 35 projects covering diverse areas such as road safety, sex offenders, fostering care, health impact assessment training, care of diabetes, emergency planning and cross-border GP out-of-hours provision.

The political endorsement of cross-border co-operation has seen the health



agenda upgraded to address both operational and strategic issues. An example of the former is the development of joint ambulance communications and control arrangements in the border region. The latter include a joint review of the need for renal services in the border region and a joint approach towards designing and implementing joint health promotion initiatives such as the shared folic acid campaign and the joint public information campaign on physical activity. A Joint Departmental Health Technology Group has been established to draw up protocols for the assessment and evaluation of emerging and new technologies in relation to high-technology equipment and to identify a programme of work out of such evaluations. In light of the significant expenditure in both jurisdictions on goods and services, the Regional Supplies Services in Northern Ireland and the Healthcare Material Board in the Republic of Ireland have explored the

scope for co-operation in procurement and the achievement of value for money. However the implementation of these latter two initiatives has proved difficult.

### Mobility

Patient and professional mobility has been much less than expected and the model of cross-border service development remains largely untested. Data on the cross-border movement of patients provided by the two Departments and the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin is used to establish the extent of patient mobility and how it changed between 1996 and 2003. From Tables 1 and 2 below it can be seen that there has been some increase in patients from the Republic of Ireland going for treatment in Northern Ireland, but no increase in the other direction. The numbers overall remain very small.

**Table 1 Patient flows into Northern Ireland**

	<b>Total inpatients and day cases treated in Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Patients from Republic treated in Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Patients from Republic of Ireland as percentage of total</b>
1996/97	436,164	1,330	0.30
1997/98	450,417	1,438	0.32
1998/99	473,600	1,328	0.28
N.B. Data below exclude regular day/night attenders			
2000/01	429,985	1,708	0.40
2001/02	435,072	1,636	0.38
2002/03	445,263	1,722	0.39

Source: NI Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

**Table 2 Patient flows into the Republic of Ireland**

	<b>Total inpatients and day cases treated in the Republic of Ireland</b>	<b>Patients from Northern Ireland treated in the Republic</b>	<b>Patients from Northern Ireland as percentage of total</b>
1997	679,214	915	0.13
1998	696,723	920	0.13
1999	758,149	995	0.13
2000	798,620	974	0.12
2001	857,270	1069	0.12
2002	891,312	902	0.11

Source: *Economic and Social Research Institute*

As expected, most of the cross-border discharges were from hospitals in the former Eastern Health Board area (which includes Dublin), or those close to the border (the former North Eastern and North Western Board areas) in the South, and Altnagelvin (in Londonderry), Daisy Hill (in Newry) and Erne (in Enniskillen) in the North.

### Changing attitudes

A series of in-depth interviews was carried out with senior health officials from purchaser and provider bodies in the two jurisdictions as part of the earlier study (2000), and again as part of the Europe for Patients project (2004-2006). A comparison of findings shows that the rationale for co-operating in health remained unchanged. In both instances interviewees saw considerable advantage to be gained from co-operation, including:

- collaboration would address the relative disadvantage of border areas

- the border region is a “natural” geographic area
- there are benefits in planning health care on an all-island basis
- threats to health do not respect political or other boundaries
- cross-border collaboration will bring a faster response in an emergency
- patient benefits will accrue from exchanging good practice.

In addition, it was suggested that the benefits of enhanced co-operation would enable the pooling of expertise and the development of critical mass and economies of scale in areas such as education, manpower planning and health technology assessment.

However there has been an important shift in attitudes. While interviewees were still positive about the potential for co-operation, all were more realistic about the practical difficulties and less optimistic about the immediate prospects, particularly for initiatives



involving patient mobility. There was a greater degree of appreciation of the problems inherent in arranging co-operation in the vicinity of the border, where hospitals are often perceived to be under constant threat of closure and where co-operation may be viewed as having future rationalisation as an implicit goal.

The 2000 study of cross-border co-operation identified a number of barriers and constraints, which, if tackled, had the potential to enhance the scope of cross-border working. These included different funding arrangements, entitlements to benefits and services, levels of baseline provision, structures/accountability, entrenched professional attitudes, professional accreditation and medical insurance. No solutions have been developed for dealing with these barriers. Interviewees commented on how some of these barriers had actually increased in complexity due to new legislation which had been enacted in both jurisdictions since 2000. One example of this is the UK legislation dealing with medical malpractice enacted in the North following the Shipman case, which does not have a reciprocal arrangement in the South.

This shift from "optimism to harsh realism" is not unique to co-operation in health, and has been quoted by the SEUPB<sup>9</sup> as contributing to the negative perception of the Peace II funding programme relative to the earlier Peace I programme.

## Two views of CAWT

The value placed on existing cross-border co-operation in health is varied. In late 2005 the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR) awarded CAWT the Europe-wide 'Sail of Papenburg' Award, which recognises excellence in cross-border co-operation. The judges selected CAWT as the overall winner from 52 border regions and hailed it as an innovative and effective model of how cross-border co-operation can be planned and implemented. For many, including the SEUPB, this award provides confirmation of the real value EU funding is bringing to people in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties.

In contrast, the value of CAWT's work has been questioned by the research team involved in the EU Europe for Patients project. While accepting that many of the current CAWT projects provide valuable enhancements to health services and/or capacity in the vicinity of the border, they were struck by the fact that little of this work involves the movement of patients for treatment. Indeed the Europe for Patients team concluded that developing such patient-based initiatives did not appear to be a priority for those running the organisation. This is despite the fact that respondents in the 2000 study judged those projects which had arisen out of a clinical need, such as the provision of cross-border renal services and dermatology clinics, as the most successful.

However CAWT is starting to address mobility issues with the appointment in June 2005 of a human resources officer to promote and facilitate workforce mobility, and a project manager to implement a cross-border GP out-of-hours pilot scheme.

A separate 2000 evaluation of CAWT<sup>10</sup> documented 65 senior health staff (chief executive and director level) from the border health boards and trusts meeting regularly to promote and facilitate cross-border co-operation in health services. Given the substantial amount of funding which has been secured by CAWT (€19 million over a 10-year period) and the significant amount of health staff time which is allocated to discussing cross-border health care, the Europe for Patients team asked whether the health of the border population could have been better improved by allocating these resources elsewhere.

In addition, the team highlighted the need to introduce a greater degree of openness and transparency in the selection of projects being funded using EU and Department of Health resources. The current projects funded by INTERREG through CAWT have been selected through a closed process by CAWT itself. While it is accepted that all INTERREG projects are subjected to rigid accountability controls, there was virtually no opportunity for those not already associated with the organisation to bid for funding. By appointing CAWT as the delivery agent for this measure, the two Departments of Health appear to have abdicated all responsibility and

any inherent workload in managing such a selection process.

### **Mainstreaming Co-operation**

The creation of the CAWT institutional structure provided an identifiable focus of responsibility for taking forward health co-operation initiatives in the border area. However it has also distanced cross-border co-operation from the mainstream activities of the agencies involved in routine health care. It is notable that the bulk of resources devoted to co-operation in health services across the Irish border continue to be provided by the European Union, through the Peace II and INTERREG programmes. Apart from their required 25% 'match' contribution to the current INTERREG projects and the research funded under the Health Research Board, the tripartite Cancer Agreements and Institute of Public Health, the two governments have made virtually no specific financial provision for such co-operation. Nor, despite their avowed enthusiasm, have the health boards, North or South (except in terms of people's time).

Over the past eight years politicians, senior civil servants, health service managers, health professionals and others have made speeches, attended conferences, sought election, attended meetings, written and read papers and reports, and funded initiatives<sup>11</sup> all aimed at facilitating and encouraging co-operation across the Irish border. Both the 2000 and 2004-2006 studies examined the extent to which views on





co-operation are reflected in the official strategies and policies of the two Departments of Health and the North/South institutional framework. When statements by government ministers and other senior policy makers are examined, it is difficult to find any clear, measured objectives for such co-operation. The rationale for co-operating in health is expressed at a very general level and no detailed appraisal is laid out to justify public investment in a co-operation strategy or individual initiatives.

However arrangements currently being put in place to allow patients from the north west to avail of radiotherapy services in a new unit in Belfast City Hospital from March 2006 rather than travelling to Dublin may mark a shift in government policy on cross-border co-operation<sup>12</sup>. In the past initiatives involving mobility of patients have typically resulted from partnership agreements between individual hospitals. Examples have included the use of Altnagelvin neo-natal intensive care facilities (North) for patients from Letterkenny (South), and the conducting of hernia operations for Craigavon patients (North) in Monaghan (South). The arrangement on access to radiotherapy services in Belfast differs in that it is an official, sustainable agreement led by the two Departments of Health. However greater clarity is still needed about the two administrations' overall objectives in seeking to improve co-operation in health and the obstacles to be overcome in achieving this improvement. This should include clear

statements about existing problems and how they might be ameliorated through closer cross-border working.

### **Contracting and planning**

There are a number of key areas for cross-border co-operation identified by the Europe for Patients 2004-2006 study which have grown in prominence or been identified by research since the 2000 study.

One of the most useful examples of co-operation has involved contracting (by the health boards in the North and the National Treatment Purchase Fund in the South) for elective surgery to reduce waiting lists within each jurisdiction. In Northern Ireland such initiatives are invariably of short duration because of concerns on the part of the boards that they should be investing resources to maintain the services in their own jurisdiction rather than exporting them. The establishment of the National Treatment Purchase Fund (NTPF) enables the health services in the Republic of Ireland to arrange and purchase treatment for qualifying patients in hospitals in Northern Ireland and the wider UK. Examples of treatments covered under the NTPF are cataracts, varicose veins, hernias, gall bladders, prostate, tonsils, plastic surgery, cardiac surgery, hip and knee operations. About 1,000 patients, mostly from Donegal but some from Dublin and elsewhere in the South, have been treated in a private hospital near Derry, and approximately 600 patients have travelled to England. If the two

governments are keen to exploit the putative advantages of reciprocal co-operation, one option would be to open up competition by creating a fund (or in the South increasing the resources available to the NTPF) to facilitate contracting for elective surgery, either within or across jurisdictions.

Perhaps the greatest potential for cooperation is in secondary care, where there are persistent and growing problems in both jurisdictions in maintaining the viability of small hospitals. Each Department of Health has a policy favouring raising standards through the concentration of resources. Small hospitals may have difficulty in attracting medical staff because of the amount of risk they are exposed to. To the extent that the catchment population of hospitals in the border region is unnecessarily restricted by the existence of the border, people there are clearly disadvantaged by receiving a sub-standard service. Ideally hospital rationalisation and planning exercises in both jurisdictions should take account of the possibility of attracting patients from across the border. In the past this has been done only to a limited extent. Applying modelling techniques, public health researchers at Trinity College Dublin have shown theoretically how people living in Leitrim, North Cavan, Donegal, Monaghan, Armagh and Down would currently have quicker hospital access if they could use the facilities across the border<sup>13</sup>. The researchers recommend abolishing the 'health care border' and formally

encouraging cross-border access to hospital facilities in this region.

## Research

There continues to be a need to undertake research to provide evidence of the value of cross-border co-operation in health and to compare the effectiveness of the two health systems. A recent publication<sup>14</sup> from the Healthy Ageing Research Programme<sup>15</sup> entitled *One Island-Two Systems* provided the first direct comparison of health status and health and social service use by older people resident in the community, North and South. The funders of this work, the Irish Health Research Board, alongside the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in the North, have provided funding for 21 research topics<sup>16</sup> since 1999 involving researchers from both jurisdictions collaborating on health proposals. Other publications worthy of mention include the *Population Health Profile of the Border Region*<sup>17</sup> and *Inequalities in Mortality 1989-98*<sup>18</sup>, and a feasibility study<sup>19</sup> on a helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS) for the island of Ireland, which does not appear to have progressed despite a positive report. The Institute of Public Health in Ireland has also recently launched an all-island Population Health Observatory<sup>20</sup>.

In 2000 there were an estimated 18,000 'frontier workers' who commuted across the Irish border to work in the other jurisdiction and who could, under EU law, legitimately use the health



services in both jurisdictions<sup>21</sup>. However the experience of this group of health service users – or indeed the large number of health service users in the Republic who use an ‘accommodation address’ in the North to access services illegitimately – has never been officially researched. A brief comparison of the current population and GP registration statistics<sup>22</sup> for the two health boards adjoining the border in Northern Ireland shows over 46,000 patients currently registered with GP practices over and above the official population of these regions. Ironically one could say that these statistics provide plenty of proof of the willingness of patients to avail of cross-border health services on the island of Ireland.

**Dr Patricia Clarke is Research Manager of the Centre for Cross Border Studies and a former senior researcher with the London Ambulance Service. She also manages the Centre’s online information system [borderireland.info](http://borderireland.info)**

**Dr Jim Jamison is former Director of the Health and Social Care Unit at Queen’s University Belfast and a former senior civil servant in the Northern Ireland Department of Health and Social Services.**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This figure does not include out-patient numbers i.e. those patients waiting to see a consultant in an out-patient department before being placed on a waiting list.

<sup>2</sup> See [www.cawt.com](http://www.cawt.com) for details

<sup>3</sup> Clarke, P. and Jamison, J. (2000). *From Concept to Realisation: An Evaluation of CAWT. Co-operation and Working Together*. Available online at [www.crossborder.ie](http://www.crossborder.ie)

<sup>4</sup> Jamison, J., Butler, M., Clarke, P., McKee, M and O’Neill, C. (March 2001). *Cross-border co-operation in Health Services in Ireland*. Centre for Cross Border Studies. Available online at [www.crossborder.ie](http://www.crossborder.ie)

<sup>5</sup> Jamison, J., Legido-Quigley, H., and McKee, M. *Cross-border care in Ireland*. Europe for Patients (EU Framework VI Research Project). Due to be published during 2006. See details of the Europe for Patients Project at <http://www.europe4patients.org>

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.rpani.gov.uk/> for further details

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.healthreform.ie/> for further details

<sup>8</sup> Details of these activities are given on the Border Ireland information system at [www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info)

<sup>9</sup> Henry, S. 2005. *Peace II - seeing the wood despite the trees*. Special EU Programmes Body. Available as a media article online at [www.seupb.org](http://www.seupb.org)

<sup>10</sup> Clarke, P. and Jamison, J. (2000). *From Concept to Realisation: An Evaluation of CAWT. Co-operation and Working Together*. Available online at [www.crossborder.ie](http://www.crossborder.ie)

<sup>11</sup> The Departments of Health have contributed the required 'match' contributions for EU funding programmes e.g. 25% of INTERREG III project budgets.

<sup>12</sup> The press release providing details of the recent meeting of Tánaiste and Minister for Health and Children, Ms Mary Harney TD and the Northern Ireland Health Minister, Mr Shaun Woodward MP in Belfast (November 2005) is available online at <http://www.nics.gov.uk/press/hss/051115m-hss.htm>

<sup>13</sup> Kelly, A., Teljeur, C., and Monleya, I (2005). *A Rational Way to Plan Health Services*. In *A Picture of Health: A selection of Irish Health Research 2005*, Dublin Health Research Board, pp 45.

Available online at [www.hrb.ie](http://www.hrb.ie)  
<sup>14</sup> McGee, H., O'Hanlon, A., Barker, M., Hickey, A., Garavan, R., Conroy, R., Layte, R., Shelley, E., Horgan, F., Crawford, V., Stout R., & O'Neill, D. (2005) *One Island-Two Systems – A Comparison of Health and Social Services Need and Use by Older People in the Republic and Northern Ireland*. Institute of Public Health in Ireland. Available online at [www.irishhealth.ie](http://www.irishhealth.ie)

<sup>15</sup> The Healthy Ageing Research Programme (HARP) is a five-year cross-institutional, cross-border project involving the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, the Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin and Queen's University Belfast.

<sup>16</sup> See details of this work at [www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info)

<sup>17</sup> Co-operation and Working Together (2001) *Population Health Profile of the Border Region*. Co-operation and

Working Together. Available online at [www.cawt.com](http://www.cawt.com)

<sup>18</sup> Balanda, K and Wilde, J. (June 2001). *Inequalities in Mortality 1989-1998*. Institute of Public Health in Ireland.

Available online at [www.irishhealth.ie](http://www.irishhealth.ie)  
<sup>19</sup> Booz Allen Hamilton (December 2003). *Feasibility Study on a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for the Island of Ireland*. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Belfast) and Department of Health and Children (Dublin). Available online at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hems.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> See [www.inispho.org](http://www.inispho.org) for details

<sup>21</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers and Indecon International Economic Consultants (2001), *Study of Obstacles to Mobility*. Armagh: North/South Ministerial Council. Available online at [northsouthministerialcouncil.org](http://northsouthministerialcouncil.org)

<sup>22</sup> Sourced from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland

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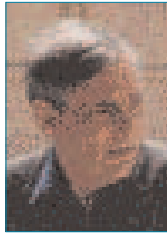
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## AD HOC REGIONALISM: MANAGING GROWTH THROUGH SPATIAL PLANNING – LEARNING FROM THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

François Vigier, John Driscoll and Christa Lee-Chuvala

The sprawl of large cities beyond their municipal boundaries became characteristic of industrialized countries in the late 19th century, driven by improved public

transportation – commuter rail, streetcars and subways. As both households and economic activities moved to peripheral areas where land was cheaper, the receiving municipalities had to start supplying a range of public services they were ill-prepared to provide. Practically all major cities moved to annex developing areas as a way to not lose property tax revenue.



*François Vigier*



*John Driscoll*



*Christa Lee-Chuvala*

Perhaps the most dramatic spatial extension of municipal powers was the creation of a new County of London by the 1888 Local Government Act with an elected municipal council responsible for the planning and management of an area whose population had reached 4,243,000. Its broad powers enabled it to address vigorously such critical problems as slum clearance, the provision of piped water and sanitary sewers, education, and the construction of affordable housing units.

Complex regional spatial structures consisting of urbanized areas interspersed with densifying suburbs became prominent after World War II, as increasingly affordable cars, first in the United States, later in Western Europe, made longer journeys to work possible. They are now characteristic of all metropolitan areas and annexation is no longer a practical way to manage growth. New ways to plan for the integrated development of large, multi-jurisdictional areas had to be found. This



was particularly so in the United States where the management of spatial growth through zoning and other development controls is the responsibility of local governments, and the role of the federal and state governments consists primarily in the construction and maintenance of major transportation infrastructure, the application of environmental standards, grants-in-aid to local governments – of which welfare is the major component – and a limited number of economic incentives to promote the economic revitalization of depressed areas.

The need for larger than local planning has often led to the adoption of *ad hoc* solutions that offer many of the benefits of regional planning without imposing a new administrative level over the individual jurisdictions that comprise a functional region. Rather, they are either driven by the need to address a specific problem – environmental management, economic development – or by the decision of adjacent local governments to engage in a voluntary association when facing common growth management issues – reducing the inefficiencies of urban sprawl, responding to a perceived threat to their economic competitiveness or jointly capturing an economic development opportunity.

The cases described below demonstrate that building upon the existing powers of local governments can often achieve the efficiencies of large-scale spatial planning. It is thus possible to capture

many of the benefits of coordinating the management of growth at a regional level without imposing an intermediate administrative level in the relationship between local, state and national governments. This type of *ad hoc* regionalism can preserve a strong voice at the local level and allows considerable flexibility in the definition of a region as well as in structuring the responsibilities and powers of an institution created to address specific growth management issues. The approaches they embody should be of interest in the Irish context where the current effort to reconcile the broad visions described by the Regional Development Strategy (Northern Ireland) and the National Spatial Strategy (Republic of Ireland) has become a primary concern.

They can be regrouped into three categories, each representing a different approach to regional planning:

- The need to supplement the powers of local governments to manage a region that is defined primarily on environmental grounds.
- The voluntary association of local governments to jointly manage growth and share the public benefits of future development.
- Special purpose regional agencies whose primary role is to provide information and advice to local governments.

### Supplementing local powers

The ***Cape Cod Regional Planning Commission*** was created in 1990 by the Massachusetts legislature to preserve the natural and cultural assets of Cape Cod, a peninsula south of Boston whose natural beauty attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists (and \$1 billion) each summer. Once composed of rural coastal communities, the Cape has experienced a sharp rise in population in recent decades coinciding with the explosive growth of Eastern Massachusetts. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of year-round residents on the Cape grew by 26%, and by another 16% from 1990 to 2000. This growth led to increasing development pressure that threatened to damage the region's ecological, historical and cultural assets. The Cape Cod Commission was created with the primary objective of ensuring the protection of the region's assets by supplementing the local governments' review and approval of development projects.<sup>1</sup>

Sixteen of its 19 members are selected by each of the municipalities and the Barnstable county government and another three are appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts: one Native American and two minority representatives. While the Commission's activities include providing affordable housing, managing coastal and marine resources, economic development, and the protection of natural resources, its statutory responsibilities pertain

specifically to planning and community development.

- *Develop and implement a Regional Policy Plan.* The Commission prepares a Regional Policy Plan (RPP) that must be reviewed and updated every five years. The RPP is both a planning and regulatory document that lays out a regional growth policy, establishes a framework for local planning, identifies regional resources, and provides Minimum Performance Standards in six key resource areas to evaluate the impact of all new large-scale development. The RPP is subject to an extensive public review process.
- *Delineate specific areas as Districts of Critical Planning Concern.* An important aspect of the Regional Policy Plan is to determine the region's key environmental, cultural and historical resources. The Commission can recommend the designation of these sensitive areas as Districts of Critical Planning Concern that warrant additional protective use regulations and a more stringent review process.
- *Assess and regulate Developments of Regional Impact.* Development proposals in excess of 10,000 square feet fall under the authority of the Commission. Each project is reviewed to determine its





environmental, economic and social costs and benefits. They are approved only if they meet all of the Minimum Performance Standards defined by the Commission. While local governments cannot approve rejected projects, they can reject an approved project as part of their local autonomy.<sup>2</sup>

The Cape Cod Regional Planning Commission is unique in a state known for the historical strength of its local governments. While other areas in Massachusetts have all but eliminated the role of county governments in development issues, residents of Barnstable County support this form of regional planning as a complement to robust local governance. In 2000 the Commission's success in averting undesirable large-scale development led Cape Cod residents to vote to rename their county government the "Regional Government of Cape Cod, Massachusetts".

### **Voluntary Associations**

The sprawl of development driven by market forces since the end of World War II has created blatant spatial economic inequalities. Older areas have seen their property tax base eroded by the demise of their traditional industries, the location of many new economic activities in suburban locations and the flight of their more affluent residents to new housing in the suburbs. Concurrently with the erosion of their

tax base, inner cities had to bear rising social welfare costs. Inequalities also developed in the suburbs as they competed with each other for such high revenue producing uses as commercial malls and industrial and office parks to pay for the public costs of lower-density residential development. The lack of a formal structure for regional planning in the US has led to the creation of *ad hoc* solutions to achieve greater efficiency in the provision of public services and, in some cases, the coordinated management of growth. Their creation has been encouraged by some state governments and, since 1960, the Federal Government through the provision of funding to regional Councils of Governments that undertake planning studies and collaborative projects. While these projects have been largely focused on infrastructure – water and sewers, public transportation – two cases stand out for their comprehensive approach.

Created in 1955 as an Inter-County Regional Planning Association, the **Denver (Colorado) Regional Council of Governments** (DRCOG) was incorporated in 1968 as a voluntary non-profit association of county and local governments designed to promote cooperation among the 43 municipalities and nine counties of the Greater Denver Metropolitan Area. Funded primarily from membership dues and state and federal grants, DRCOG represents a metropolitan population of 2,600,000 and includes one local elected official from each of the 52 participating governments.

Now in its sixth decade, DRCOG's primary contribution has been the development of *Metro Vision 2020* (recently updated to *Metro Vision 2030*), a regional strategy prepared by a task force of elected officials, private sector participants, and representatives from environmental organizations. The strategy proposes to shape regional development by:

- Creating urban growth boundaries;
- Constructing a multimodal transportation system;
- Preserving open space;
- Developing urban centers;
- Improving and monitoring water and air quality.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to regional planning, DRCOG also works with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs to support the local planning efforts of its member communities and provides them the support of its team of planners, economists, ecologists and GIS specialists.

The success of this voluntary regionalism led to the adoption of *The Mile-High Compact*,<sup>5</sup> a unique contract between county and municipal governments representing 85 percent of the Denver region's population. It is a legally binding agreement that commits local governments to prepare comprehensive plans and adopt zoning regulations that will contribute to the implementation of the *Metro Vision 2020* plan. While signing the Compact is strictly voluntary, all local governments in the Denver region are encouraged to join and can

do so at any time. Initially signed in August 2002 by 30 local government representatives, the number of participating governments had risen to 39 by June 2005.

As a result, DRCOG has made considerable progress in managing the growth of a rapidly expanding metropolitan region. Some of its key contributions include:

- Developing and championing alternative transportation programmes to reduce car dependency;
- Assessing all major rapid transit proposals before construction;
- Conducting studies to determine the best placement of large-scale developments; and
- Coordinating the implementation of the region's Clean Water Plan.<sup>6</sup>

A more prescriptive approach was taken by the Minnesota legislature when, in 1967, it created the **Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Council**, first state-established regional planning entity in the U.S. The Council currently manages wastewater collection and treatment for the 2.7 million residents of the metro area, operates bus and rail services, coordinates the regional park system, and provides affordable housing opportunities. Its *2030 Regional Development Framework* provides a framework for regional investments in transportation (including airports), open space and wastewater treatment. It also encourages collaborative projects among the region's 188 municipalities that



enhance livability while promoting environmental protection, economic competitiveness and the efficient use of resources.<sup>7</sup> The Metro Council is funded by revenue from wastewater treatment and transit user fees, state and federal funds, and a seven-county property tax surcharge.

The 1971 Minnesota's Fiscal Disparities Act extended inter-municipal cooperation in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. Its purpose is to equalize inter-municipal revenues between older urban areas and rapidly growing suburbs and is the only programme of its kind across the United States. The Act requires all municipalities in the metropolitan region to annually compare their current commercial and industrial property assessment with their 1971 values and contribute 40% of the value increase into a regional pool. The proceeds are redistributed to local jurisdictions using an index based on each municipality's "relative fiscal capacity", or the ratio of aggregate property value per capita to the region's average property value. Each city or town's population is multiplied by this ratio to determine the amount of money it will receive from or contribute to the pool. Perhaps most dramatically, this tax-sharing system has allowed smaller municipalities to share in the tax revenue of the world's second largest mall, the Mall of America. This 4.2 million square foot mega-development, located in the small city of Bloomington, has an annual economic impact of \$1.8 billion and brought in \$18.5 million in tax revenues in 2004. The proposal to

double its size in the next two years promises to substantially increase that amount.

Proponents of the Fiscal Disparities Act hold that the tax-sharing programme is an essential part of any comprehensive strategy to eliminate sprawl, shore up struggling municipalities and reduce the gap between lower- and higher-income groups. While this characterization may be ambitious, it is clear that the programme has been effective in limiting competition among municipalities, in restructuring regional land-use patterns and in encouraging investment in centre cities.<sup>8</sup> Initially Minneapolis and St. Paul received the majority of benefits from the tax redistribution formula but, by 2004, 137 municipalities were net receivers while 49 were net contributors. Sharing the fiscal benefits of development allowed municipalities to reject development proposals that might have long-run detrimental effects. Government officials estimate that the programme has narrowed the economic gap between its richest and poorest communities from 50-to-1 to 12-to-1.<sup>9</sup>

### **Special purpose agencies**

Information relevant to spatial planning and management is collected at the local level and rarely shared. Even though demographic and economic information provided by the Federal Government in the United States is available in both aggregated and disaggregated forms, its utilization by local governments to prepare their

individual development strategies is often unclear, as are the strategies themselves. This has always been an obstacle to intergovernmental co-operation, particularly when development trends cross state or national borders. The **Metropolitan Area Planning Council** (MAPC) was created in 1963 by the Massachusetts State Legislature to provide a common information base in the Greater Boston region, a 3,680 square kilometre area with a population of over 3,000,000 people living in 101 municipalities. As an independent advisory agency with an annual budget of \$2.8 million, funded by a combination of federal, state, local and private grants, MAPC initially focused its activities on the documentation of regional development trends but has gained an increasing influence in the formulation of regional policy.

It prepares periodic comprehensive sectoral reports to guide development within the region. It provides excellent GIS and data resources on regional development trends, support for the local planning initiatives of smaller municipalities, and assistance in implementing "smart growth." As a member of the Boston Area Planning Organization, it has become a major participant in the allocation of regional transportation planning funded by the federal and state governments. In conjunction with the City of Boston and the Boston Foundation (the city's primary philanthropic institution), MAPC is responsible for the Boston Indicators Project, an initiative to provide high-

quality data to the general public. Begun in 1997, the project will continue to publish a biennial report until 2030.<sup>10</sup>

Its most comprehensive study, *MetroFuture*, is a comprehensive series of regional scenarios for the area's future growth based on extensive consultation with public, private and civic stakeholders. A draft report will be presented for public comments. In its final version, *MetroFuture* will include a regional vision and plan, public policy recommendations, a framework for local planning, and short-term implementation plans slated for immediate action.<sup>11</sup>

A similar if older institution, the **New York Regional Plan Association**, is the oldest metropolitan planning organization in the United States. It was created in 1922 by business, civic, and community leaders as an independent non-profit membership organization. Since that time, the RPA has been an active advocate of regional planning in the 31-county urbanized region centering on Manhattan and including Long Island and parts of northeastern New Jersey and southern Connecticut. The organization undertakes studies of evolving trends in the region, develops strategic partnerships with regional stakeholders, makes recommendations to improve the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the region, and provides technical support to local governments and state agencies to implement growth management policies. The RPA has published only three comprehensive plans in its 84



*The Metropolitan Area Planning Council in the Greater Boston region has prepared a comprehensive series of regional studies for the area's future growth based on extensive consultation with public, private and civic stakeholders.*

years, most recently in 1996. They are long-range, regional strategies that have influenced the three state legislatures and helped shape the region's transportation and open space systems.

For example, the park system proposed in its 1929 plan led to the creation of 500,000 hectares of permanently protected open space throughout the region and served as an example for other metropolitan areas. Its well-researched documentation on the damaging effects of sprawl published in the 1968 plan was the first broad condemnation of the growth patterns that many regions are currently attempting to address. The 1996 plan, *A Region at Risk*, developed after a six-year process involving collaboration among hundreds of civic groups in the

region, identified the threats of a globalizing economy on the region and contains recommendations regarding open space, community design, public transit, workforce development, and regional governance.<sup>12</sup>

With a \$4.2 million annual budget from membership dues, grants and foundations, the RPA is renowned for the quality of its technical studies. Its work has provided models of effective planning for other cities and regions across the US. As an independent non-profit organization, RPA has been surprisingly effective in drawing municipalities together across state boundaries. Its emphasis on public-private partnerships and civic leadership has given it a strong voice in the formulation of public policy in three

states and allowed it to promote concepts that government planning agencies alone would not have advocated. Other successes include initiating and advocating the permanent protection of water supply watersheds for 14 million residents; bringing one million jobs into regional urban centers by promoting infrastructure projects and workforce policies, and successfully advocating capital investments and governance reforms that led to extensive subway and commuter rail services improvements.

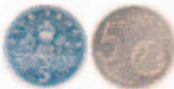
## Conclusions

Creating regional authorities with defined powers and responsibilities is the prerogative of higher levels of government. Their ability to assemble needed information, manage growth and preserve natural resources is undeniable. They are the only authorities that can marshal the resources to finance, and often manage, such large-scale regional investments as public transportation and regional water, sewer and solid waste systems. However

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since they often over-ride the traditional powers of local governments, it is indispensable that the procedures they follow must not only be transparent but must also include extensive consultation with the local authorities in their jurisdiction, whose economic and spatial development will be affected by their decisions. Yet even when following an extensive consultative process, they are often seen as a threat to the “home rule” philosophy that is deeply rooted in the United States political system. Hence their rarity in a political climate where interference in local affairs, whether by the Federal Government or the states, is viewed with suspicion.

The interest of the examples described lies mainly in the willingness of local governments to voluntarily cede some of their rights in exchange for the more effective management of growth, the more efficient delivery of public services and clear fiscal benefits. Achieving a political climate where local governments will willingly co-operate requires building a consensus that “a regional approach is needed”: the protection of natural assets in the case of the Cape Cod Regional Planning Commission; controlling sprawl and improving the delivery of public services in Denver’s Mile High Compact; achieving greater fiscal equity in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area. In all three instances, collaboration among the local governments concerned started in a relatively modest way and became more pervasive as the success of the original initiative became evident.

Similarly, the quality of the regional information provided and technical assistance provided by Boston’s Metropolitan Area Planning Council led to a gradual extension of its prerogatives as both local governments and state and federal agencies came to recognize its contributions. This is also the case for the New York Regional Plan Association which, in spite of its status as a private institution, has managed to gain significant influence. As Robert Yaro, its current director, is fond of saying: “We do not have any teeth but have very strong gums!” Politicians in the tri-state area may not always follow its advice but always listen carefully to its views.

Successful examples from abroad cannot always be replicated in another country. Yet they offer lessons that are worth pondering and their institutional structure can often be adapted to fit local conditions, especially when a consensus can be achieved on the benefits of inter-municipal cooperation. For example, staff of the Institute for International Urban Development successfully organized a voluntary collaboration, on the American model, among eight municipalities in a small region of northern Romania.

Located on a significant crossroad of the new European highway system, Oradea faced the necessity to ensure its economic development in the new political system. A series of workshops for public officials helped this micro-region define a development strategy and agree on the need to co-operate to

improve its opportunities for economic development, transportation, education, quality of life and the delivery of public services. The municipalities created a joint administrative framework to guide their co-operative effort that respected the autonomy of each local government. A regional information system has been prepared as the first step for a metropolitan plan that all eight municipalities will have to approve. Co-operation is also occurring on specific projects of common benefit, including an industrial zone, a gas distribution company and an ecological landfill for the region. The success of the Oradea experience has captured the interest of other Romanian municipalities who are exploring ways of applying the principle of metropolitan co-operation.

In both Northern and Southern Ireland, the implementation of the two spatial strategies requires the creation of new collaborative contexts among county and local authorities that will have to be defined by the two governments. On an all-island basis, the recent calls for closer co-operation in infrastructure investment and spatial planning by both British and Irish government ministers suggests a need to create mechanisms that will encourage dialogue and the definition of common endeavours at the regional and sub-regional levels. Given the fact that bi-national cross-border co-operation is far more complicated than between American states, the examples given above are worth looking at as they neither replace nor threaten

existing political structures. Rather, they build a consensus among local governments that collaboration is a more effective way to solve a common problem than independent action. They offer a range of solutions:

- A private entity, such as the New York Regional Plan Association, whose role is primarily that of a think tank proposing policies to governments;
- A public institution, such as the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, whose primary role is to provide information and occasional technical assistance to the governments in its region;
- Different models of local governments in a region ceding voluntarily some of their traditional prerogatives to a "regional authority" in whose creation they were involved.

Consensus building is the essential component of *ad hoc* regionalism. Information sharing and dialogue are the first component. The documentation of trends and the sharing of information among the local authorities in the cross-border development corridors identified by the two spatial strategies could lead to a structured discussion of what the future holds and of whether there are potential benefits to joint action. These issues are currently being addressed in a research project being undertaken by the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) for *InterTradeIreland* on a framework for collaborative action between the two





spatial strategies. North and South, which is due for publication in Spring 2006.

**François Vigier is the Charles Dyer Norton Professor of Regional Planning *emeritus* at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and the President of the Institute for International Urban Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has been responsible for numerous large-scale regional and urban planning projects in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. Dr. Vigier is the editor of *Sprawl: Beyond the Rhetoric* (2000, with Nicolas Retsinas), and *The New Planning Agenda* (1996).**

**John Driscoll is the Vice President of the Institute for International Urban Development and the Director of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development, based at the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh. He has over 30 years experience of cross-regional planning and urban regeneration and economic development in the United States, the EU, Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.**

**Christa Lee-Chuvala is a research associate at the Institute for International Urban Development where she assists in the development of projects and conducts research for the Institute's capacity building and technical assistance programmes in Latin America, Central Asia and Europe.**

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# THE CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES

February 2006

The Centre for Cross Border Studies, founded in September 1999 and based in Armagh and Dublin, researches and develops co-operation across the Irish border in education, training, health, ICT, business, public administration, agriculture, planning, housing, the environment and a range of other practical areas.

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 PEACE Two programme and the Atlantic Philanthropies. The Centre has also raised a large proportion of its income through sponsorship and selling its research and consultancy services to government and other agencies.

Controversy about relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland tends to obscure the broad consensus that exists in both jurisdictions about the value of cross-border co-operation on practical issues. This holds that the 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 understanding and co-operation.



## PURPOSE

The pragmatic view, that co-operation 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 co-operation 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 co-operation – provides an objective, university-based setting for policy research into and development of such co-operation.

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 co-operation 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 co-operation can be developed;
- Present the findings of such research and development projects to the EU, the two governments, the Northern Ireland Executive, employer,

trade union and third sector bodies, and the wider public.

- Manage and provide administrative support for cross-border programmes and organisations which have a strong education, research and development dimension.
- Provide sources of comprehensive and accurate information about North-South and cross-border co-operation in Ireland.

## FLAGSHIP INFORMATION AND RESEARCH PROJECT

### BORDER IRELAND

[www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info)

**Border Ireland is the first ever online system to provide access to the full range of information on North-South and cross-border issues in Ireland.**



It will be formally launched by the Irish Minister for Finance, Mr Brian Cowen TD, on 29 March 2006.

The significant growth in cross-border co-operation on the island over the past 20 years has produced an ever increasing amount of uncoordinated and fragmented information. In 2003, with EU Peace Two funding, the Centre initiated the development of ***borderireland.info*** (also called Border

Ireland), an online searchable database of cross-border information produced by EU-funded programmes, government departments, academic researchers and other key information providers in Ireland, North and South.

Border Ireland will provide an electronic gateway to a comprehensive range of North-South and cross-border research and development materials, publications, individual contacts, organisations, funding opportunities and other information opportunities available in Ireland. It will act as a one-stop shop for researchers, policy makers, business people, community workers and the general public, thus facilitating policy research and development, and strategic planning on a cross-border basis.

In its pre-launch phase up to February 2006, Border Ireland had captured information on 3,163 North-South and cross-border activities and 1,121 publications across a range of sectors including agriculture, community development, culture, economic development, education, environment, health, tourism, training and and transport. Border Ireland has documented cross-border work involving 3,910 contacts (individuals and organisations) and 19 different sources of funding. The main focus is on information produced since 1990, although information on work carried out since 1982 is also included.

Border Ireland is available online at [www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info), where

people can register without charge and access this information. They will find, *inter alia*, the most comprehensive compilation in Ireland of cross-border data from EU funding programmes (INTERREG, Peace and LEADER), government departments in both jurisdictions, semi-state bodies, academic institutions, libraries and charitable foundations.

Border Ireland's technology has been developed using a mix of proprietary and open-source software, consisting of a back-end storage database held within the Centre and a front-end which extracts subsets of the information and makes it freely available over the Internet at [www.borderireland.info](http://www.borderireland.info). Visitors to this website will be able to search through the information by year, sector and location, and view an organisation's history of involvement in cross-border co-operation. During 2006 a series of Border Ireland briefing papers will be published on different aspects of cross-border co-operation: for example, the functioning of North/ South networks, cross-border co-operation between libraries and cross-border cultural diversity issues.

The Border Ireland system provides a sophisticated and uniquely objective mechanism for improving understanding of cross-border and North- South co-operation. One of its aims is to produce quality assured audits and analyses of such co-operation. For example, the system can be used to identify strategic, sectoral and spatial patterns of activity



(and gaps in activity) to assist in the evaluation of current programmes, to inform future programme planning and to provide a baseline for future co-operation. The Centre is keen to develop this service on demand.

**WEBSITE**

**www.crossborder.ie**

Usage of the Centre’s website has increased greatly since October 2003, the first month for which statistics are available. Unique visits, total visits, page views and hits are all up (see table below). Visitors came predominantly

from the United States, followed by the Republic of Ireland, Britain, and the rest of the EU.



The number of unique visitors is up 90%, nearly doubling since October 2003.

The number of visits is up 116%, more than double October 2003.

The number of page views is up 110%, again more than double.

Monthly average	Unique	Visits	Pageviews	Hits	Average duration in seconds
Oct 2003	1,619	2,161	4,802	14,373	175
2004 (monthly average)	1,452	2,083	9,177	18,981	227
2005 (monthly average)	2,566	3,603	8,127	24,747	213
Jan 2006	3,054	4,675	10,043	31,885	194

**OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS**

The Centre has recently completed a number of EU-funded educational ‘action research’ projects carried out during the period 2002-2005. These have included projects at early childhood level (Diversity and Early Years Education); secondary level (Citizenship and Science Exchange), and tertiary level (the North-South Student Teacher Exchange project). At time of writing, it

has applied for further EU Peace Two (extension) funding for a research-based phase two of the North-South Student Teacher Exchange Project, and for a new project involving both primary and secondary schools: the Immigration, Emigration, Racism and Sectarianism Schools Project. One EU-funded project, at primary level, remains to be completed:

**‘Pride of our Place’: a cross-border environmental project for primary schools**



This four-year project (2002-2006) has been extended for a year because of demand from teachers and parents. It brings together 10-12 year olds from a group of primary schools in the border regions of both jurisdictions to study a key environmental

feature in their locality by looking at it historically and geographically, and then exploring it in the company of their cross-border partner schools. The project will end with a celebratory event in Armagh in May 2006 at which the pupils will showcase their project work.

**Public Services to Ethnic and Immigrant Groups**

The Centre has been commissioned by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland (OFMDFM) to undertake an 18-month research project, ending in autumn 2006, on how public authorities in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Scotland provide services for ethnic and immigrant groups within their respective legal frameworks. The study looks at how services such as health, housing, education, policing and employment support are provided to these groups in the three jurisdictions, with a particular focus on how Northern

Ireland public authorities can learn from the practice of their nearest neighbours. The research work is being carried out by a partnership led by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) in Dublin, together with Piaras MacEinri from University College Cork, the Institute for Conflict Research in Belfast and Organisation and Social Development Consultants Ltd in Edinburgh.

On 28 March 2006 NCCRI and the Centre for Cross Border Studies, supported by OFMDFM, are hosting an international conference at the Waterfront Hall in Belfast. The research team will present an ‘emerging findings’ discussion paper for further debate and discussion at this conference, which will be attended by policy makers, service providers, expert bodies, organisations representing and working with minority ethnic groups, and international bodies such as the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

The ‘emerging findings’ paper provides an overview of the growing ethnic diversity within the three jurisdictions and highlights a number of key issues, including the need for public bodies to be fully representative of the ethnic diversity of their societies, and the possibility of a strategy which encourages migrants to come to live and work in Northern Ireland similar to the ‘fresh talents’ initiative adopted in Scotland.





## Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways: Routes to North-South Cooperation in a Divided Island



The Centre has been involved since 2004 in a large-scale

collaborative project, commissioned by the Higher Education Authority, between University College Dublin (Institute for British-Irish Studies and Institute for the Study of Social Change), Queen's University Belfast (Institute of Governance and Centre for International Borders Research), the Centre for Cross Border Studies and Democratic Dialogue.

The project has focused on three main themes: a comparative study of borders with an emphasis on the creation and consolidation of the Irish border; the Irish border as a social, economic and cultural divide; and pathways for promoting cross-border contact, co-operation and mutual understanding. The Centre contributed two pieces of research to the project, which are available from its website. Dr Eoin Magennis completed a mapping study of the extensive but fragmented cross-border co-operation programmes and projects since the 1980s. Andy Pollak contributed a research paper on North/South and cross-border cooperation in education. These two studies form part of the more than 30 research papers generated by the project, covering subjects including cultural identities in the border region, sustainability of cross-border co-

operation, an assessment of the operation of the North/South bodies, and the role of imperialism and nationalism in creating borders.

The Centre also organised four local study days and a final conference for the project. The study days were held in Armagh, Clones, Newry and Derry, and covered the history of the Irish border, community identities and regeneration, economic co-operation, and mobility and spatial planning in the north-west. The final conference in Armagh in January 2006 brought together 25 speakers and over 80 participants. The keynote speakers were Professor Brendan O'Leary of the University of Pennsylvania on the historical evolution of partitions across the globe, and Professor Josiah Heyman of the University of Texas at El Paso on US border policies and the movement of people and goods across the US-Mexican border.

**Website:** [www.mappingfrontiers.ie](http://www.mappingfrontiers.ie)

## Europe for Patients

The Centre, through its research associate Dr Jim Jamison, collaborates with research institutes in Britain, Spain, France, Belgium, Slovenia and Estonia in the EU Sixth Framework-funded Europe for Patients research project. The aim of this project is to enhance the ability of patients across the EU to benefit from the cross-border health care advantages created by an increasingly integrated Europe.

**Website:** [www.iese.edu/en/events/Projects/Health/home/home.asp](http://www.iese.edu/en/events/Projects/Health/home/home.asp)



*Course speakers and organisers at the 4 April 2005 North/South and cross-border public sector training programme awards ceremony, with Minister of State Mr Brendan Smyth TD and Minister of State Mr Ian Pearson MP.*

## TRAINING PROJECTS

### North-South and Cross-Border Public Sector Training Programme

In 2005 the Centre came together with Co-operation Ireland and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), Northern Ireland's leading provider of training to the public sector, to offer two pilot training courses to civil and public servants working on North-South and cross-border issues in North/South bodies, government departments and other public agencies in the two Irish jurisdictions. There are currently few opportunities for such people to undertake induction or training courses to work in this new, complex and sensitive area.

The two courses were delivered between January and July 2005. They each featured four modules: North-South co-operation in the public and

NGO sectors; North-South public finance and governance issues; North-South economic and business co-operation; and cross-border co-operation at local authority and community level. They were delivered free of charge with funding from the EU Peace Two programme.

The programme featured prestigious guest lecturers including Sir George Quigley, chairman of Short Brothers (Bombardier Aerospace Group); the then North/South Ministerial Council joint secretaries, Tim O'Connor and Dr Peter Smyth; head of the Northern Ireland Review of Public Administration, Greg McConnell; director of the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, Dr Jane Wilde; Fermanagh businessman and former GAA president, Peter Quinn; chief executive of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, Dr Duncan Morrow; director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, Avila Kilmurray; Professor John Bradley from the Economic and Social Research Institute; and the chief executives of four North/South bodies – Liam Nellis from InterTradeIreland, Pat Colgan from the Special EU Programmes Body, Martin Higgins from the Food Safety Promotion Board and Derick Anderson from the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission.

A third course is planned for later in 2006, partly on a fee-paying basis and partly funded by the EU. Following feedback from participants in the first two courses, this course will begin with a two day 'residential'. There will also be



an alumni event for graduates of the three courses.

### 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.



*The North-South Masters Scholarship awards in Belfast, 1 September 2005. From left to right: Professor John Hegarty, Provost of Trinity College Dublin, Neal O'Grady (scholarship winner), Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, Chairman of Universities Ireland and President of NUI Galway, Stephanie Switzer (scholarship winner) and Professor Peter Gregson, Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University Belfast.*

### Universities Ireland

**The Centre acts as the secretariat for Universities Ireland, set up in 2003 to promote co-operation and collaboration between the nine universities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Its chairman for the 2005-2007 period is Dr Iognáid Ó Muircheartaigh, President of National University of Ireland Galway.**

Universities Ireland has undertaken work in the following areas:

- **A feasibility study into the establishment of an all-island Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Service** which was commissioned jointly with InterTradelreland and the Irish Universities Association and carried out by a team from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh. The team delivered its final report in January 2006, with its main recommendation the setting up of a joint task force to develop a comprehensive marketing strategy in IP and TT for all the universities on the island. This report will be launched by the Irish Minister for Enterprise Trade and Employment, Mr Micheál Martin, in spring 2006.
- **A delegation to explore enhanced co-operation between Irish universities, North and South, and universities in Africa**

This high-level delegation, with representatives from Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, University of Limerick and Queen's University Belfast, visited Uganda in November 2005 and reported to the governing Universities Ireland Council in January 2006. Its main recommendation was the establishment of a new Irish-sponsored third level institution in Uganda to train health professionals for East and Central Africa. A feasibility study to explore this concept further is planned.

- **A series of meetings with Universities UK**, the representative body of British universities, was initiated in September 2004 in Dublin. The second meeting took place in London in January 2006 and discussed matters of mutual interest in the areas of research, funding, leadership and management, business-university collaboration and European issues. A third meeting will take place in Galway in September 2007.
- **A research project on harmonising regulations, awarding joint degrees and developing joint credit transfer arrangements** between universities on the island of Ireland. This study, carried out by Lewis Purser, was delivered in summer 2005.

Among its 'action points' were a working group to examine the feasibility of establishing all-island graduate schools in key areas (e.g. bioengineering, human rights law); mechanisms to encourage greater North-South partnerships in European programmes; and the development of guidelines on the collaborative provision of modules, programmes and degrees.

- **North-South Masters Scholarships**

In July 2005 UI offered two scholarships to students undertaking a cross-border Master's course or a Master's course requiring location to the other Irish jurisdiction. The two annual 20,000 euro awards go to a Northern student attending a Southern university and a Southern student attending a Northern University. The first recipients were Stephanie Switzer, a QUB graduate taking a Masters in Commercial Law at UCD, and Neal O'Grady, a TCD graduate (and professional fire-fighter) taking an MSc in Fire Safety Engineering at University of Ulster.

- **A symposium on 'eLearning as a Strategic Imperative for Universities in Ireland'** which took place in Dublin City University in November 2004 and was addressed by two leading international authorities



on eLearning in education: Dr Andy DiPaolo of Stanford University in the USA and Professor Diana Laurillard of the Department for Education and Skills in the UK. A UI working group is formulating follow-up actions.

- University-Business collaboration events.** In June 2005, UI organised the fifth North-South Higher Education conference (in Belfast) under the title 'Higher Education and Business: Beyond Mutual Incomprehension', with Richard Lambert of the Bank of England as keynote speaker (see page 94). In September 2005, also in Belfast, UI held a high-level private seminar on university-business links, which was addressed by the Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, Sir Digby Jones, and the Director-General of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Turlough O'Sullivan. On 10 March 2006 the same speakers, along with David Begg, General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, are addressing the sixth North-South Higher Education conference (in Malahide, Co Dublin) under the title 'What role for Higher Education in the development of the 21st Century Workplace?' All these events have been organised in collaboration with the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council.

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 InterTradelreland in Newry.

**Website:** [www.universitiesireland.ie](http://www.universitiesireland.ie)

**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. This was set up in 2003 by a group of senior teacher education specialists from colleges of education and other teacher education agencies in both jurisdictions. The joint chairs of SCoTENS are Professor Richard McMinn, Principal of Stranmillis University College, Belfast, and Professor John Coolahan, Professor of Education Emeritus at National University of Ireland Maynooth.**



*Professor Richard McMinn*



*Professor John Coolahan*

SCoTENS has held annual conferences in Malahide, Co Dublin, in October 2003 under the title 'Challenges to Teacher

Education and Research, North and South'; in Armagh in November 2004 under the title 'The Changing Contexts of Teacher Education, North and South' (with a particular emphasis on Teaching Councils); and in Malahide in November 2005 under the title 'Teacher Education for Citizenship in Diverse Societies'. The keynote addresses at these conferences were delivered by David Istance of the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation; Sean Feerick of the EU Expert Group on Teacher Education; and Professor Jagdish Gundara, UNESCO Chair of Intercultural Studies and Teacher Education, University of London.

SCoTENS has also provided 'seed' funding for all-island conferences on social, scientific and environmental education (three), initial teacher education, citizenship and diversity education, educational research, and special educational needs (two); for North-South research projects on continuing professional development, children with profound and multiple learning difficulties, student teacher exchanges, and student perceptions of history, geography and science; for a book of essays on school leadership in both Irish jurisdictions; and for a 'toolkit' for teachers and trainers working in the area of linguistic and intercultural education.

A SCoTENS website, developed by a team from the University of Ulster ([www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte](http://www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte)) highlights, in particular, resources on special education and citizenship education.

SCoTENS is funded by annual grants from the Department of Education and Science, and the Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of Education (Northern Ireland).

### International Centre for Local and Regional Development



The Centre administers the new International Centre for Local and Regional Development. The ICLR D is a North-South-US partnership to explore and expand the contribution that planning and the development of physical, social and economic infrastructures can make to improving the lives of people in both Irish jurisdictions. The partner institutions are: the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis 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; the Athlone Institute of Technology, and the Centre for Cross Border Studies. Each of these partners brings together complementary expertise and networks to create a unique, all-island centre that is more than the sum of its parts. The initiative



also includes individual faculty and researchers at Harvard University.

**What does the ICLRD do?**

- Provides independent, expert, joined-up research, thinking and policy advice on cross-border and all-island spatial planning and local and regional development issues (economic development, transport, housing, environment, service provision, etc);
- Offers capacity building programmes for communities and local, regional and national government representatives and officials;
- Acts as a catalyst and conduit to bring relevant actors, North and South, together to work on common goals;
- Promotes international co-operation and exchanges.

ICLRD already has several projects under way and has been involved in running a number of all-island and cross-border policy studies and workshops:

Conferences/Workshops

- Role of the Private Sector in Spatial Planning Initiatives (March 2006);
- Managing Space: Making Places - Strategic Planning for Cohesion and Diversity. Conference, hosted by NIRSA/ICLRD and Southside Partnership, Dublin (Dublin, October 2005);
- The Economic and Social Implications of the National Spatial Strategy (Athlone, April 2005);
- Strategic Environmental Assessments (Newry, March 2005);

- Mapping the 2002 Census (Maynooth, January 2005);
- Citizenship, Mobility and Immigration (Maynooth, November 2004);
- Regional and Local Development Strategies on the Island of Ireland: Addressing Key Issues and Building Capacity (Athlone, May 2004).

Applied Research

- ICBAN: Cross-border transportation planning for strategic roads;
- InterTradelreland: Framework for collaborative action between the two spatial strategies, North and South;
- International Fund for Ireland: Documenting successful approaches to reconciliation, social inclusion and local economic development in interface and cross-border areas;
- Mapping linkages between regional development and EU programmes.

Capacity Building

- Module on local planning for officials/civic leaders in a cross-border region (ICBAN).

Networks

- North/South Forum for Sustainable Communities;
- European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON). The ICLRD is participating in this EU-level network on spatial planning and development.

**Website: [www.iclrld.org](http://www.iclrld.org)**

### North/South Forum on Sustainable Communities

The Centre has come together with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the International Centre for Local and Regional Development, the Affordable Homes Partnership (Dublin) and Monaghan County Council to organise the North/South Forum on Sustainable Communities. The Forum organised its first workshop in Armagh in February 2006, which was co-chaired by Brian Rowntree, chairman of the NI Housing Executive, and Des Geraghty, the senior trade unionist who chairs the Affordable Homes Partnership. The workshop brought together 40 housing and community regeneration specialists from North and South to discuss a range of issues, including urban and rural regeneration, affordable housing, the integration of social and private housing, the housing market in the border region, and the housing needs of homeless people, travellers and migrant workers. A programme of work for 2006-2008 has been prepared, along with a funding application to the EU INTERREG programme.

### Cross Border Openings

The Centre is also a partner with the Open University in Ireland and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in Cross Border 'Openings', an EU-funded project which offers free places on a return to study programme to socially and educationally disadvantaged people on both sides of the border. The project

also involves the provision of training on cultural diversity issues, and joint work with the trade union movement to promote the concept of workplace learning in general and workplace learning agreements in particular.

### COMPLETED RESEARCH PROJECTS

In its initial phase, the Centre commissioned 13 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, sustainable development, diversity in early years education; and science and citizenship education.

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 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.



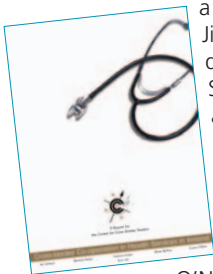
**Ireland's Learning Poor: Adult Educational Disadvantage and Cross-Border Co-operation (2001)**

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.



**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.



**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 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 officer, 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.



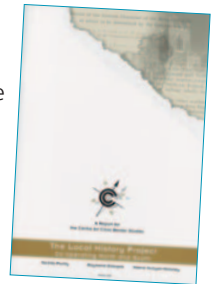
**Promoting Mental Health and Social Well-being: Cross-Border Opportunities and Challenges (2002)**

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 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. Its authors were project leaders Charlotte Holland and Dr Peter McKenna of DCU.



### COMMISSIONED STUDIES AND EVALUATIONS

The Centre has carried out **studies and evaluations for government and other public agencies**. These have included:

- A 'scoping study' of North-South School, Teacher and Youth Exchanges, for the Department of Education (Bangor) and the Department of Education and Science (Dublin) (2001).
- An evaluation of the Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) cross-border network of health boards and trusts, for CAWT(2001).
- A study into the feasibility of extending University for Industry/*learn*direct to the Republic

- of Ireland, for University for Industry.(2001)
- A report on public feedback to the PriceWaterhouseCoopers/Indecon Obstacles to Mobility study, for the North/South Ministerial Council(2002)
- 'Towards a Strategic Economic and Business Research Agenda for the island of Ireland', for InterTradeIreland (2002)
- 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 Education for Reconciliation Project for the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee.(2003-2005)

### SEMINARS AND STUDY DAYS

The Centre holds regular seminars and study days in Armagh, Newry, Monaghan and Dublin 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 focused 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

*\*For the Mapping Frontiers, Plotting Pathways project*

### 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; the Deputy First Minister, Seamus Mallon; the head of the EU's cross-border INTERREG programme, Esben Poulsen; Ambassador Hermann von Richthofen of the German-Polish Governmental Commission; and 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 speaker was 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.



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 will be held in Malahide on 10 March 2006 with the title **'What role for Higher Education in the Development of the 21st Century Workplace?'** It will be addressed by the Directors General of the Confederation of British Industry and the Irish Business and Employers Confederation, Sir Digby Jones and Turlough O'Sullivan; the General

Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, David Begg; the Chief Executive of Forfás, Martin Cronin, and the President of Dublin City University, Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski. The conference will be opened by the Secretary General of the Irish Department of Education and Science, Brigid McManus, and the Permanent Secretary of the Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Learning, Aideen McGinley.

## 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 Kiberle, 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

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the important work that the Centre for Cross Border Studies is taking forward under your direction. I wish you well and continued success in your work.

*Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Peter Hain MP, 29 January 2006 (in a letter to the director)*

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, 3 February 2005*

It is essential that North-South co-operation is not the exclusive preserve of the politicians or the public sector. Other actors in the North-South arena – the private sector, trade unions, the farming sector, the voluntary and community sector, the universities and other educational institutions, to name but a few – have a critical role to play also in this process. This is where the role of the Centre for Cross Border Studies has been, and will continue to be, so important and valuable. You have carved out a very useful role in complementing the work of the new North/South institutions created by the

Agreement, and serving as a kind of interface between the public sector in both parts of the island and non-governmental practitioners in the field.

*The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, 7 February 2005*

The Centre is a unique institution, playing a crucial role in North-South co-operation in the higher education sector.

*Permanent Secretary of the Department for Employment and Learning, Will Haire, 20 May 2004*

For over six years, the Centre for Cross Border Studies has been a pioneer in cross-border co-operation. Its reach into the academic and research community (via initiatives such as Universities Ireland) has been second to none. From its inception, the Centre's hallmark has been its commitment to innovative and high quality debate and research. Crucially, the Centre has also worked hard to ensure maximum access to its work by an ambitious conference and publications programme. Support from private foundations, the Department of Foreign Affairs, OFMDFM and the EU has been essential to the success of the Centre's work to highlight the shared benefits of co-operation on the island of Ireland.

Policy makers over the years have come to the Centre to participate in its examination of the full spectrum of areas for co-operation under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. Most

recently, the Centre has launched a new website – [borderireland.info](http://borderireland.info) – which will ensure that the Centre’s work can now reach a worldwide audience, and we applaud this initiative.

The Joint Secretariat of the North/South Ministerial Council congratulates the Centre on another successful year, and thanks Andy Pollak and his team for their support in a range of new initiatives, such as the International Centre for Local and Regional Development. We can assure them of our continued support in the year ahead.

*Mary Bunting and Joe Hayes, NSMC Joint Secretaries, February 2006*

We are at the cutting edge of new thinking in the public sector with the Forum for Sustainable Communities proposal, and a vehicle such as the Centre for Cross Border Studies has a pivotal role to play as we advance.

*Brian Rowntree, Chairman, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, February 2006*

## 2002-2005 EVALUATION QUOTES

**by Brian Harvey (Brian Harvey Social Research, Dublin)**

### Summary

“The analysis of the Centre’s performance is a positive one. The Centre has maintained, even accelerated, its performance:

- Growth in website traffic, up in all indicators;
- Volume of research reports, publications, paper and grey literature;
- Numbers attending events, 1,297;
- Quality of national and international speakers at Centre events;
- Publicity achieved;
- Finance, with income up by 55%;
- Endorsement from political leaders.

“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.”

### External Opinion

*[drawn from a cross-section of persons known to the Centre, key clients, and experts on north-south co-operation]*

“Comments were: ‘its projects are always very thorough’; ‘doing valuable work’; ‘doing a great job in challenging circumstances’; ‘the director has an excellent grasp of what is necessary to move things along’; ‘undertakes very worthwhile work’; ‘nothing more





important than north-south reconciliation'; 'good at publicising events and sending out invitations to people interested in education'; 'keep up the good work'; 'contributes a significant amount of information to the wider policy arena'; 'does important work and deserves more exposure.'

### Clients' Views

"The Centre had carried out its responsibilities properly and thoroughly. Typical comments were 'very good, competent, a good experience'; 'ran to a high standard'; 'bringing insights and skills beyond what we would have got from a commercial company'.

"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, focused, interested and believed in what they were doing.'

"Clients were asked to identify problems that had arisen during the projects carried out by the Centre and none could. Its staff were unfailingly courteous and respectful at all times."

"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."

### Expert Opinion

"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.'

"Its work was of high quality, substantial in nature, significant in quantity and relevant. What it did was valuable, useful and impactful.

"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'.

"Several commented on how Armagh was a well-chosen location for the Centre, one with which both communities in the North could feel comfortable, especially unionists.

"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**, pro-chancellor, Queen's University, Belfast; chairman, Northern Ireland Civic Forum (chairman)



*Chris Gibson*

**Dr Paucic Travers**, president, St Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra (vice-chairman)



*Paucic Travers*

**Dr Jane Wilde**, director, the Institute of Public Health in Ireland

**Professor Liam O'Dowd**, director of the Centre for International Borders Research and professor of sociology at Queen's University, Belfast

**Paul Nolan**, director, Institute of Lifelong Learning, Queen's University, Belfast

**Stevie Johnston**, director, Workers Educational Association (Northern Ireland)



*Andy Pollak*

**Professor Ronaldo Munck**, strategic theme leader for internationalisation, interculturalism and social development, Dublin City University

**Richard Jay**, senior lecturer in politics, Queen's University Belfast

**Dr Eileen Connolly**, lecturer in politics, Dublin City University



*Patricia Clarke*

The director of the Centre is **Andy Pollak**, formerly religion and education correspondent of The Irish Times, and in the early 1990s co-ordinator of the Opsahl Commission.

The Centre's research manager is **Dr Patricia Clarke**, formerly a senior researcher with the London Ambulance Service, and its ICT leader is **Joseph Shiels**, a former



*Joseph Shiels*



software developer with Fujitsu and consultant with PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

The Centre's finance manager and administrator is **Mairéad Hughes**. Its information and research officer is **Dr Eoin Magennis**, formerly information officer with InterTradelreland. The director's PA and events organiser is **Patricia McAllister**.



*Mairéad Hughes*



*Dr Eoin Magennis*



*Patricia McAllister*

## MAIN OFFICE

The Centre for Cross Border Studies  
39 Abbey Street  
Armagh BT61 7EB  
Northern Ireland

**Tel:** 028-3751-1550

**Fax:** 028-3751-1721  
(048 from the Republic of Ireland)

## DUBLIN OFFICE

The Centre for Cross Border Studies  
Room QG11  
Business School  
Dublin City University  
Dublin 9  
Ireland

**Tel:** 01-7008477

**Fax:** 01-7008478  
(00353-1 from Northern Ireland)

## E-mails

a.pollak@qub.ac.uk  
m.hughes@qub.ac.uk  
patricia.clarke@qub.ac.uk  
j.shiels@qub.ac.uk  
e.magennis@qub.ac.uk  
p.mcallister@qub.ac.uk

Andy Pollak  
Mairéad Hughes  
Patricia Clarke  
Joseph Shiels  
Eoin Magennis  
Patricia McAllister

## Websites

[www.crossborder.ie](http://www.crossborder.ie)  
[borderireland.info](http://borderireland.info)