

Centre for Cross Border Studies

**Annual Report
2021**

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Our Vision

The Centre for Cross Border Studies will build further upon its reputation as an authoritative advocate for cross-border cooperation and a valued source of research, information and support for collaboration across borders on the island of Ireland, Europe and beyond.

Our Mission

The Centre for Cross Border Studies empowers citizens and builds capacity and capability for cooperation across sectors and jurisdictional boundaries on the island of Ireland and further afield. This mission is achieved through research, expertise, partnership and experience in a wide range of cross-border practices and concerns.

Our Values

The Centre for Cross Border Studies:

- Is committed to the principles of partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of relationships between people and governments;
- Is dedicated to contributing to social cohesion, economic development and environmental sustainability through cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland and beyond;
- Is independent and takes no position on the constitutional question;
- Supports the protection of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights and advocates the core values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, peace-building and social justice; and
- Acts in recognition of the fundamental importance of non-partisanship, the pursuit of excellence, openness and transparency, and the value of local experience.

**The Centre for Cross Border Studies is an independent
company limited by guarantee founded in 1999**

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and

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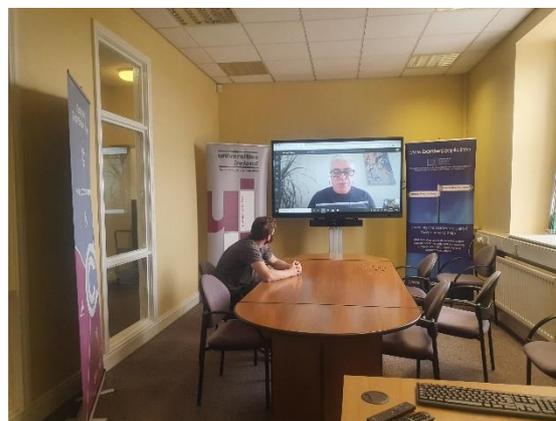
Introduction

2021 was a year in which the Covid-19 pandemic continued to disrupt the ability of organisations involved in cross-border cooperation to meet in-person with their counterparts, and to have those face-to-face conversations that are a vital underpinning of good working relations. It was also a year that saw continuing tensions between the UK Government and the European Union over the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, which came into operation on the 1st of January. Those tensions also affected relations between London and Dublin, and between political parties in Northern Ireland, with Democratic Unionist Party ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive beginning a boycott of meetings of the North South Ministerial Council in the final months of the year. Street protests marred by violence were also seen in Belfast in November, with anti-Protocol demonstrations taking place in other towns in Northern Ireland. And yet, despite this challenging backdrop, organisations continued to show their commitment to North-South and East-West cooperation and relations.

The Centre was privileged to witness this first-hand, as we collaborated with many organisations throughout 2021. However, just as in 2020, and as will be evidenced in this annual report and the images included in it, most of our activities had to take place online once again. This not only included our Annual Conference (although we managed to gather many of the speakers in a studio), but also the 2021 edition of the Sir George Quigley Annual Memorial Lecture and our range of seminars.

Nevertheless, the Centre was able to fulfil its work-plan for 2021, which would not have been possible without the ongoing commitment of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, as well as the project funding received from the Department of Foreign Affairs' Reconciliation Fund. Crucially, the Centre was also fortunate to receive support from the Dormant Accounts Fund NI, which not only allowed us to offer a more enriched online Annual Conference, but it also gave us the means to invest in a digital upgrade that included a meeting room equipped for

video-conferencing.



A digital upgrade thanks to Dormant Accounts Fund NI

The commitment to cooperation the Centre shares with other organisations across a variety of sectors was once again evidenced through the work of the [Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation](#). Established in 2020, and convened by the Centre, the Ad-Hoc Group continued in its efforts to ensure the

necessary conditions for North-South cooperation are maintained in the post-Brexit context, and that the ability of organisations on the island of Ireland to collaborate with counterparts in Great Britain is not impacted. Once again, this meant meeting with key decision and policy-makers throughout the year, with one of the priorities being to ensure that any structures for engagement between civic society and the mechanisms established by the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland that may emerge should include a focus on North-South cooperation and representation from civic society organisations from the Republic of Ireland.



Ad-Hoc Group meets EESC EU-UK Follow-up Committee

The Ad-Hoc Group’s efforts to safeguard North-South and East-West cooperation and relations are set to continue in 2022, as are the Quarterly Surveys on the conditions for North-South and East-West Cooperation the Centre initiated in 2021 as part of the [“Maintaining the necessary conditions for cooperation and cross-border lives”](#) project, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs’ Reconciliation Fund.



Quarterly Survey on North-South and East-West cooperation

These quarterly surveys have allowed the Centre to monitor the intensity of the cooperation activities of civic society organisations and local authorities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with their counterparts in the other jurisdiction on the island, and with counterparts in Great Britain following the end of the Brexit transition period and the beginning of the operation of the Protocol.



“Rights after Brexit” seminar

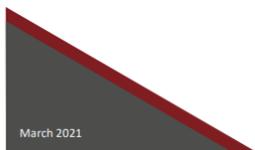
Three of this year’s seminars were centred on the results of our quarterly surveys, with a further two organised in collaboration with other organisations, and yet another focused on the concept of “border-proofing”. One of our collaborations was to discuss “Rights after Brexit”, which was a joint effort with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. The other collaboration was with UCD’s Centre for Ethics in Public Life

and the University of Liverpool’s Institute of Irish Studies, which resulted in a seminar to discuss proposals on a Truth Recovery Process to address the legacy of “the troubles”.



New Approaches for a New Decade? A Scoping Study of Border Communities: Summary Report

Dr Anthony Soares



Among the Centre’s research outputs in 2021 were three reports arising from the [“New Approaches for a New Decade”](#) project, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs’ Reconciliation Fund. The purpose of the project, and of the resulting reports, was to provide an overview of the challenges facing border communities, and in particular minority border communities, and what they see as the supports needed to overcome them.

We have continued to work with our European partners through our membership of the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network (TEIN). This feature of our work allows us to learn from what is happening elsewhere in Europe in terms of

cross-border cooperation, and to share what is taking place on the island of Ireland.



One of the key aspects of that work in 2021 was the Centre’s participation in the [Frontiers in Motion \(FRONTEM\)](#) project, which has set out to undertake a critical assessment of the model of a Europe without borders.

As part of our ongoing core work, in 2021 CCBS submitted responses to several consultations and parliamentary inquiries, including the Northern Ireland Executive’s consultation on the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework, and the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs’ call for evidence on the Climate Change Bill. However, once again, given the Centre’s overarching mission, other contributions focused on the potential impacts of Brexit on North-South cooperation and East-West relations.



The Centre’s flagship [Border People](#) project continued its work in support of cross-

border mobility through the provision of information, training and policy analysis. As has been the case since 2016, the project has also had to continue to consider how Brexit is impacting on the lives of those who cross the border to work, study, live or retire, and to continue to provide accurate and up-to-date information to citizens and those providing advice services.



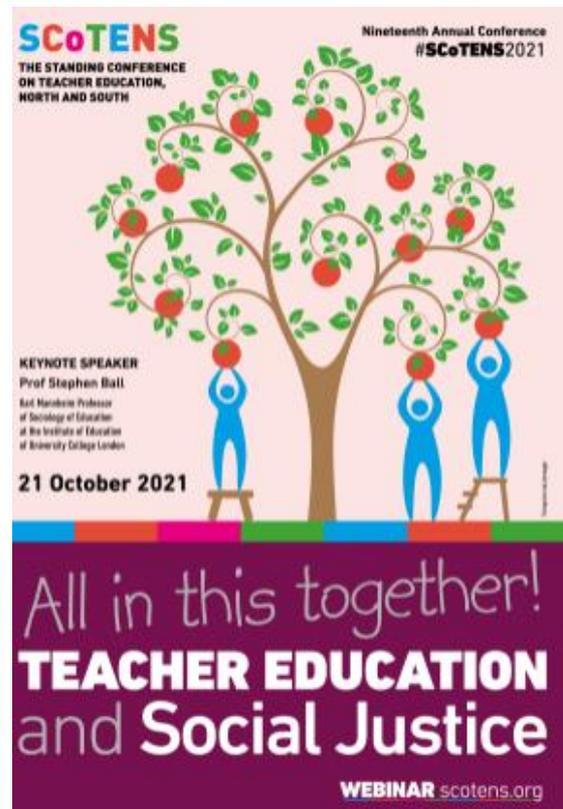
Sadly, given her stellar leadership and steadfast support for our organisation over many years, at its final meeting of 2021, Dr Helen Johnston stepped down from the Board of the Centre for Cross Border Studies and from her role as Chair. All of us at the Centre are enormously grateful for everything she did for us, and we know we will stay in touch.



However, we were delighted that, taking over as Chair of the Board, was [Peter](#)

[Osborne](#). Peter brings with him vast knowledge and experience given his involvement in political engagement, policy, participation, dispute resolution and reconciliation for over 25 years.

Although having to deal with the ongoing disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 was nevertheless a very busy year for the two all-island networks for which the Centre for Cross Border Studies provides the Secretariat: [Universities Ireland](#), and the [Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South](#) (SCoTENS).



SCoTENS held another very successful conference, which sought to examine how educators understand and enact social justice, with speakers making their contributions both online and from the Niavac studios in Belfast.

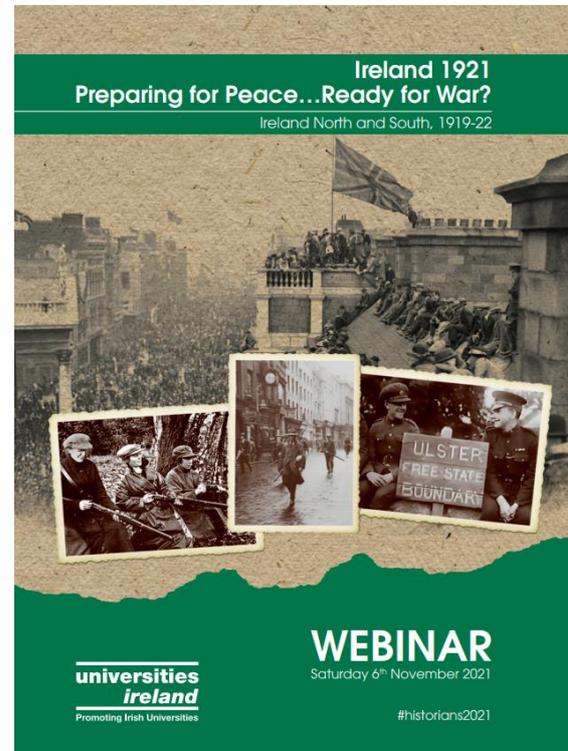


Not only was SCoTENS once again able to support a number of new North-South research projects through its seed funding scheme, but a further two new collaborative projects were awarded funding through a Shared Island-SCoTENS research partnership, with the winners being announced by Minister Norma Foley TD.



Similarly, Universities Ireland, led by the Universities Ireland Council, once again provided opportunities for students to take up postgraduate studies in the other jurisdiction through Universities Ireland’s provision of North-South Postgraduate Scholarships, as well as supporting students more widely through its History Bursaries. The latter came under Universities Ireland’s “Reflecting on a decade of War and Revolution in Ireland 1912-1923” initiative, which also provides support for the organisation of an annual conference dedicated to this period. This year’s conference explored the themes of truce,

treaty, the consolidation of Northern Ireland, and partition and its socio-economic dimensions.



These are just some of the highlights from what was another busy year, but also one where we were again enormously grateful to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, which contributes core funding to enable us to do the work we do. We are also grateful to all the organisations from both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland and further afield for their generosity in sharing and collaborating with us throughout the year. We hope that that collaboration will continue and strengthen in 2022, so that together we can maintain and strengthen relations within and across these islands.

Targets

The Centre for Cross Border Studies' Workplan for 2021, which was agreed with our core funders, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, set out targets to be achieved across a range of activities. All of those targets were achieved and, in some cases, exceeded. The headline targets are listed below.

TARGET: 1 Annual Conference (75 participants)

TARGET EXCEEDED: 1 Annual Conference (181 participants)

24 Sept: "Testing the health of conditions for post-Brexit cooperation: The evolving social and political contexts"

TARGET: 4 seminars (total 160 participants)

TARGET EXCEEDED: 6 (online) seminars for public representatives, officials and other stakeholders on cross-border policy and practice, including cross-border mobility issues

22 Apr: *First quarterly survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation*

18 May: *"Rights after Brexit"*

22 July: *Second quarterly survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation*

14 Sept: *"'Border-proofing': Do we need to measure cross-border impacts of policy?"*

22 Oct: *Third quarterly survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation*

26 Nov: *"A Truth Recovery Process"*

TARGET: 1 report on postgraduate student flows

TARGET ACHIEVED: Review of paper on Republic of Ireland-domiciled postgraduate students enrolled in Northern Ireland HEIs submitted to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

TARGET: 3 submissions to public policy consultations

TARGET EXCEEDED: 4 written submissions to public policy consultations

Mar: *Submission to the Northern Ireland Executive's consultation on the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework*

Jun: *Submission to the House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland's introductory inquiry into the operation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland*

Jun: *Response to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' call for evidence and views on the Climate Change Bill*

Sept: *Submission to the consultation on Government engagement with business and civil society groups on*

implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

TARGET: 1 research project completed

TARGET EXCEEDED: 2 projects completed

- *Time to measure cross-border impacts: Building sustainable North-South relationships and connections*
- *New Approaches for a New Decade? A scoping study of border communities*

TARGET: 2 applications for research project funding submitted

TARGET EXCEEDED: 6 applications submitted

Proposed project	Funder/ Contracting authority	Outcome
Maintaining the necessary conditions for cooperation and cross-border lives	DFA Reconciliation Fund	Successful
Tender for report on cross-border mobility of workers	EURES Cross-Border Partnership	Successful
BreXimpact (with DCU and QUB)	North-South Research Programme	Unsuccessful
Involving children in a Shared Island (with UCC and QUB)	North-South Research Programme	Unsuccessful
TRAN/S-MAR: Building Sustainable and Resilient Transboundary Cooperation in North-South Marine Policy (with UCD and QUB)	North-South Research Programme	Unsuccessful
Strategic Partnership	DFA Reconciliation Fund	Pending

TARGET: 1 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland

TARGET ACHIEVED: 2021 edition of Journal published

TARGET: 4 Briefing Papers published

TARGET EXCEEDED: 8 Briefing Papers published

Apr: *Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 1st Quarterly Survey (January to March 2021)*

Apr: *The UK Community Renewal Fund*

May: *The future for agri-food in Northern Ireland and on the island of Ireland*

May: *Civic society engagement in maintaining the conditions for North-South cooperation*

Jul: *Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 2nd Quarterly Survey (April to June 2021)*

Aug: *Climate Legislation in Northern Ireland and Cross-Border Cooperation*

Aug: *The recognition of professional qualifications post-Brexit and the Professional Qualifications Bill*

Oct: *Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 3rd Quarterly Survey (July to September 2021)*

TARGET: 1 Sir George Quigley Memorial Lecture

TARGET ACHIEVED: 2021 Sir George Quigley Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr Eoin Magennis, Senior Economist, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre

**TARGET: 12 monthly Border-Zine
electronic newsletters**

TARGET ACHIEVED

**TARGET: 4 Border People Advisory Group
meetings**

TARGET ACHIEVED

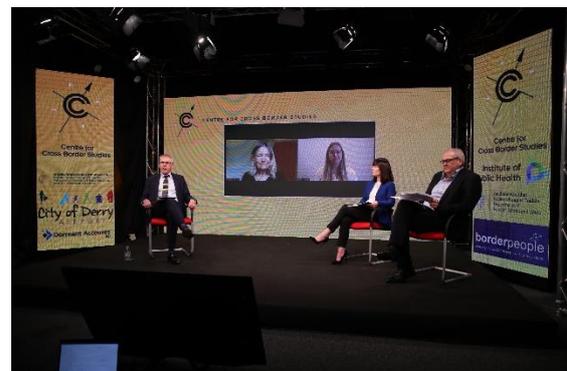
Annual Conference

The Centre for Cross Border Studies' 22nd Annual Conference was held as a “blended” event due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The theme for this year’s conference was “Testing the health of conditions for post-Brexit cooperation: The evolving political and social contexts”, and (as in previous years) the event engaged a range of key decision and policy-makers as well as leading civil society representatives from across the island of Ireland, Great Britain and Europe. The keynote speakers and panel discussions explored how we can maintain and strengthen relations in the challenging context of Brexit.

The conference began with Dr Helen Johnston, Chair of the Centre for Cross Border Studies’ Board, welcoming the virtual audience of over 180 delegates and thanking the continued support of the Centre and its projects offered by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and the Department of Foreign Affairs’ Reconciliation Fund. She also thanked the Dormant Accounts Fund NI, whose grant to the Centre meant some of the technical needs of holding the event in its hybrid form were met, as well as sponsors of the conference, including City of Derry Airport and the Institute of Public Health.



The opening keynote address was delivered by Madeleine Alessandri, Permanent Secretary at the Northern Ireland Office. Joining the conference remotely from London, Madeleine offered her personal reflections on what she saw as being required for good cooperation, drawing on her three decades of experience of working for government both internationally and domestically.



Following the opening keynote address, the first panel session examined the political context for post-Brexit cooperation. Generously sponsored by the City of Derry



Airport, and chaired by CCBS Board member, Sir David Sterling, this panel brought together in the Niavac studio in Belfast the Northern Ireland Minister for Infrastructure, Nichola Mallon MLA, and Professor Peter Shirlow of the Institute of Irish Studies at the University of Liverpool.



Adding their expert insights to the discussion were Jess Sargeant of the Institute for Government, and Professor Brigid Laffan of the European University Institute, both of them joining remotely.



Considering the social context for post-Brexit cooperation, and how civic society organisations and communities were

experiencing the changing conditions being brought about by the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the second panel session was chaired by Tara Farrell, Chief Executive of Longford Women's Link.



With her in the studio were Dr Nicola Brady, who brought her insights from her roles as General Secretary of Irish Council of Churches and Joint Secretary of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, and Kate Clifford, who reflected on the social context informed by her experience as Director of Rural Community Network. The other two panellists made their contributions remotely.



Brian Dougherty MBE, of the North West Cultural Partnership and the Londonderry Bands Forum, focused on the perspectives of unionism and loyalism in his region, and on questions of community leadership.



For his part, Eoin O’Keeffe of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation set out the challenges facing divided communities, but also stressed the positive work taking place both at civic society level and at a political level, particularly in terms of the younger generation of political leaders.



The third panel session was made possible by the Department of Foreign Affairs’ Reconciliation Fund and in its support for the Centre’s “Time to measure cross-border impacts” project. Chaired by the Centre’s Director, Anthony Soares, the contributors to this panel considered how the COVID-19 pandemic had brought into focus the extent to which policies and regulations take into account their cross-border dimensions. In the Belfast studio, Maureen O’Reilly, Senior Research Associate with the Centre for Cross Border Studies, presented the findings of her work into the impact of COVID legislation and policy on cross-border integration, with a

particular focus on the impacts on cross-border workers.



In his role as Co-Chair of the Cross-Border Workers Coalition, Aidan O’Kane also highlighted the experiences of cross-border workers, and particularly on how the compulsory move to remote working had shone a light on the longstanding issue of double taxation of cross-border workers working from home in the Republic of Ireland for employers in Northern Ireland.



Dr Helen McAvoy of the Institute for Public Health and Dr Ann Nolan of the Trinity Centre for Global Health, both joining

remotely, looked at existing forms of North-South and all-island cooperation in the area of health, and how these had approached the pandemic. Another issue highlighted was the work being carried out on health impact assessment, and how this has a cross-border and all-island dimension.



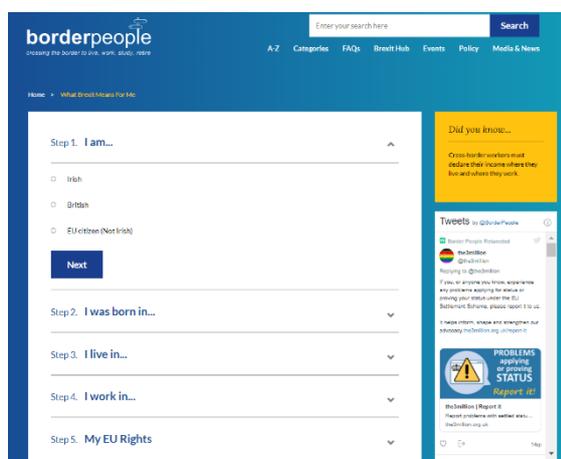
Giving the closing keynote address at the Centre's 22nd Annual Conference was Paul Narain, the United States Consul General to Northern Ireland. Informed by the global dimension, his address set out what the United States hoped for relations within Northern Ireland, between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, as well as between the UK, Ireland, the EU and the United States.

If you would like to look back at the conference, you can access it at <https://crossborder.ie/conferences/centre-for-cross-border-studies-22nd-annual-conference/>.

Research

Research continues to be at the heart of everything the Centre for Cross Border Studies does. Our work on researching and analysing policy and legislation put forward by London, Dublin, Belfast and Brussels allows us to consider what their implications might be for cooperation and relations within and across these islands. The Centre is also continually engaged in research to assess the health of cooperation between civic society organisations and local authorities on the island of Ireland, particularly in the evolving context brought about by the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

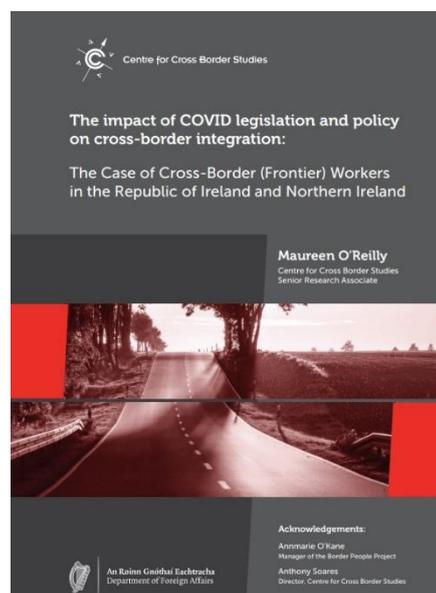
Without this research, we wouldn't be able to provide the vital practical information and advice for those crossing the Ireland-Northern Ireland border to live, work, study or retire. There has been a continued increase in demand for this information and advice as further changes are resulting from Brexit, and this has been particularly reflected in how our research informs our flagship Border People project.



As always, the insights we gain from our research are shared through our reports, Briefing Papers, Policy Seminars and dedicated discussion workshops. However, crucially, they also inform and are informed by our engagements on the island of Ireland, Great Britain and Europe with political representatives and policy-makers, public bodies, business organisations, civil society organisations and communities, as we seek to ensure the conditions are

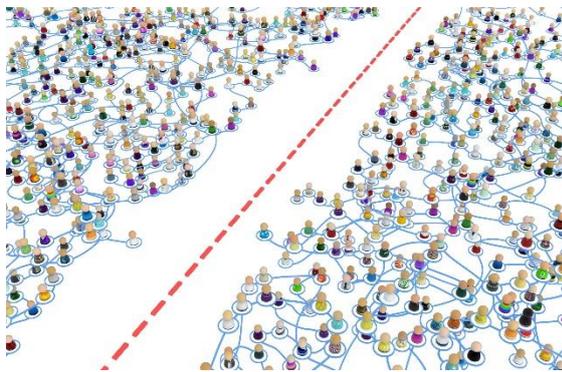
maintained for North-South and East-West cooperation and relations.

In 2021 we completed the [“Time to measure cross-border impacts: Building sustainable North-South relation and connections”](#) project, commenced in 2020 with the support the Department for Foreign Affairs’ Reconciliation Fund. The aim of this project was to highlight the need for impact assessment of proposed policies from a cross-border perspective, using among its very practical examples the introduction of public health measures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the results of the research undertaken as part of this project was the publication of a report by our Senior Research Associate, Maureen O’Reilly.





However, informed by three online workshops involving Women’s TEC (based in Belfast), Longford Women’s Link and TU Dublin, this project also helped in the development of a framework for the application of cross-border impact assessment (or “border-proofing”) by community organisations and policymakers. This work, in terms of promoting “border-proofing” has, and will, continue beyond the lifetime of this project.



Also supported by the Reconciliation Fund was a short-term project, entitled [“New Approaches for a New Decade? A Scoping Study of Border Communities”](#). The overarching purpose of this project, which was informed by a commitment included in the New Decade, New Approach agreement, was to identify challenges facing border communities, with a particular focus on the needs of minorities in border counties. Three reports informed by 16 interviews with PUL (Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist)

organisations or those working in PUL communities, as well as additional interviews with representatives from rural development and migrants’ rights organisations, were completed as a result of this work: a [Summary Report](#) by the Centre for Cross Border Studies; [a report](#) undertaken by Rural Community Network; and another report ([“A Minority View”](#)) carried out by the independent researcher, Peter Lavery.



We also began a new project, [“Maintaining the necessary conditions for cooperation and cross-border lives”](#), again supported by the Reconciliation Fund. This project sets out to provide evidence on the levels and nature of North-South and East-West cooperation and relations among civic society organisations and local authorities on the island of Ireland, with the aim of supporting efforts (principally through the [Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation](#), which the Centre convenes) to engage with relevant policy and decision-makers in order to maintain the necessary conditions for North-South cooperation and to safeguard East-West relations. It is also a means of ensuring the ongoing provision through our Border People project of reliable and clear information aimed at citizens on the island of Ireland with cross-border lives, reflective of the changing circumstances arising from Brexit. One of the activities under this project is the undertaking of Quarterly Surveys on the conditions for North-South

and East-West cooperation. Analysis of the results of three of the four quarterly surveys undertaken in 2021 was published in three Research Briefings, and an overview offered in three online presentations. This project is set to end in September 2022.

Policy Seminars

Once again, 2021 saw the Centre offering a number of online policy seminars, which included two organised in collaboration with other organisations. Whereas those that were entirely the responsibility of the Centre for Cross Border Studies were aimed at disseminating the results of our own research, or to inform ongoing work, seminars organised with others represented our ongoing commitment to collaborate with other organisations on issues relevant to North-South and/or East-West cooperation and relations. Of course, we hope that in 2022 we will be in a position to hold these events in-person, if the public health conditions allow for it.

“Presentation of the results of the 1st Quarterly Survey on the Conditions for North-South and East-West Cooperation”

Thursday 22nd April



Following the fantastic response to the Centre for Cross Border Studies’ 1st Quarterly Survey on the Conditions for North-South and East-West Cooperation, the Centre held a [webinar](#) at 10.30am on Thursday 22nd April to present and discuss the results. The responses, which were received from civic society organisations and local authorities in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, allowed us to begin to assess how the necessary conditions for North-South cooperation are being maintained, and how relations between organisations on the island of Ireland and Great Britain were being safeguarded in the first few months following the end of the Brexit Transition Period and the implementation of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol. The

presentation of the results was made by Ben Rosher, a Centre for Cross Border Studies’ Research Associate and PhD candidate at Queen’s University Belfast, along with the CCBS Director, Dr Anthony Soares.

“Rights after Brexit”

Tuesday 18th May



The ‘[Rights After Brexit](#)’ virtual event, hosted by the Centre for Cross Border Studies, saw the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI), and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) listening to EU exit concerns, relating to human rights and equality, from civil society organisations from both sides of the border.

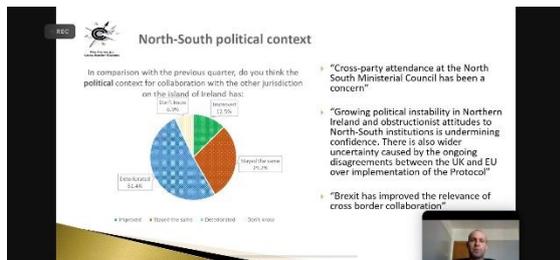
The event began with NIHRC Chief Commissioner, Les Allamby; ECNI Chief Commissioner, Geraldine McGahey, OBE; and IHREC Commissioner, Sinéad Gibney outlining the new roles and responsibilities for each organisation post-Brexit.

The human rights and equality bodies highlighted the ‘no diminution of rights’ commitment in Article 2 of the Ireland /Northern Ireland Protocol and the role of the ‘dedicated mechanism’ in overseeing the commitment. They also spoke about their joint work on all island oversight arrangements relating to rights and equalities issues falling within the scope of the commitment that have an island of Ireland dimension.

The three Commissions discussed the impact of Brexit with a number of cross-border civil society and local community groups, including issues related to rights and equality as a result of the UK’s exit from the European Union.

“Presentation of the results of the 2nd Quarterly Survey on the Conditions for North-South and East-West Cooperation”

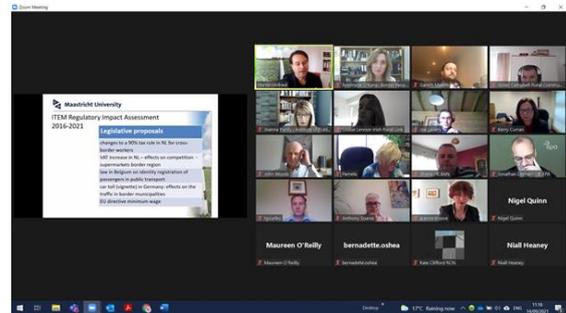
Thursday 22nd July



Through a webinar, Ben Roshier and Dr Anthony Soares presented an overview and analysis of the results of the 2nd Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation. This presentation was able to begin building on the results from the 1st survey, and to draw attention to some potential emerging trends in terms of the principal issues identified by respondents.

“Border-proofing’: Do we need to measure cross-border impacts of policy?”

Tuesday 14th September

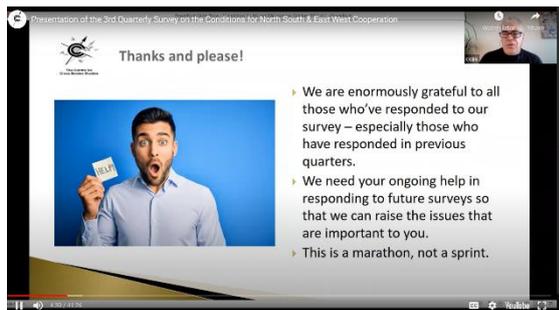


This [seminar](#) brought together an invited group of officials, policy-makers and relevant stakeholders from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to discuss the potential merits and feasibility of embedding cross-border impact assessment – “border-proofing” – in the processes of development of policies and legislation, and the extent to which it may already be taking place or could be integrated into existing forms of assessment. It also had input from Martin Unfried, an expert on cross-border impact assessment from the University of Maastricht with direct knowledge of its application elsewhere in Europe.

It was a unique opportunity for a number of officials and key stakeholders to reflect on the challenges such an initiative might face here, but also to highlight what is already happening at the informal levels.

“Presentation of the results of the 3rd Quarterly Survey on the Conditions for North-South and East-West Cooperation”

Friday 22nd October



CCBS Research Associate, Ben Roshier, and CCBS Director, Dr Anthony Soares, once again came together to [present](#) the results of the 3rd Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation. The results of this particular survey came towards the end of the first year post-transition, at a time where the tensions surrounding the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland had increased markedly, with the fractious relationship between the UK Government and EU seeming to have deteriorated further. The beginning of the period covered by this third quarterly survey saw the UK Government publish (in July) a Command Paper – [“Northern Ireland Protocol: The way forward”](#) – that included a proposal that the UK and EU ‘should agree a “standstill” on existing arrangements, including the operation of grace periods in force, and a freeze on existing legal actions and processes, to ensure there is room to negotiate without further cliff edges, and to provide a genuine signal of good intent to find ways forward’ (paragraph 77). However, among its other proposals, the Command Paper also sought to remove the oversight role of the EU’s Court of Justice that had been accorded to it in the Withdrawal Agreement in relation to the Protocol.

“A truth recovery process”

Friday 26th November



In partnership with the UCD Centre for Ethics in Public Life and the Institute of Irish Studies of the University of Liverpool, the Centre for Cross Border Studies hosted an on-line forum to discuss a proposed [Truth Recovery Process \(TRP\)](#) on Friday, 26th November.

The TRP aims to address some of the ongoing issues of harm, trauma, political intractability and social division left by the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

The forum was chaired by Mr Justice Richard Humphreys. Michael Lynn SC and Céile Varley BL presented legal opinion on the compatibility of the TRP with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and responses were provided by Brice Dickson (Professor Emeritus of International and Comparative Law at Queens University, Belfast), Pat McCartan (a former Judge of the Circuit Court), and Alan McBride (manager of the WAVE Trauma Centre in Belfast).

Contributing to Public Policy & Practice

In 2021 the Centre made four submissions in response to public consultations, two of which were directly related to our continuing efforts to ensure the necessary conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation are maintained in the post-Brexit context. The other two, while focused on Northern Ireland, sought to identify opportunities for improved cross-border cooperation to address common challenges.

March: [*Submission to the Northern Ireland Executive's consultation on the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework*](#)

CCBS submitted a response to the Northern Ireland Executive's consultation on the Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework. Taking into account how the Covid-19 pandemic had affected every part of these islands, the Centre's response highlighted the document's failure to explicitly recognise the importance of cross-jurisdictional cooperation. In the Centre's view, this not only meant that the Northern Ireland Executive was not taking the opportunity to make similar substantive contributions to the North-South policy landscape as the Irish Government, but it was also failing 'to demonstrate leadership by championing and encouraging stakeholders and communities in Northern Ireland to exploit where it is relevant the possibilities offered by collaboration within and across these islands' (p.3).

June: [*Submission to the House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland's introductory inquiry into the operation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland*](#)

Our submission to the introductory inquiry by this newly established House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee focused on two main areas: how the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland was impacting on the social and political landscape in Northern Ireland, and engagement with civic society on the Protocol's implementation. In terms of the first area, the Centre noted:

'there has been a failure to take responsibility for political choices made and to be honest with citizens in regards to the consequences of those choices, therefore making it more difficult to arrive at realistic solutions. In this context, the Protocol has become the scapegoat that must be sacrificed immediately, even in the absence of any viable and agreed alternative in place, and even if this entails unilateral actions that seriously undermine trust in the UK Government's ability to abide by international agreements (of which the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement is one)' (pp.2-3).

In terms of the issue of engagement with civic society, the Centre's submission highlighted the efforts in this regard of the Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation. It stressed how 'it is imperative that channels of engagement are secured between those involved in informal, local and community-level cooperation and those responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the Protocol' (p.4), and how such channels must include

representation from civic society organisations in the Republic of Ireland involved in North-South and/or East-West cooperation.

June: [*Response to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' call for evidence and views on the Climate Change Bill*](#)

Unsurprisingly, given the nature of the challenges posed by climate change, this response stressed the need for legislation in Northern Ireland to be open to a cross-border dimension. Thus, for example, in relation to proposals to require the Executive to produce Climate Action Plans and set targets, the Centre urged that legislation should take explicitly into account Northern Ireland's geographical realities. Also, in terms of where Northern Ireland should look for advice and comparisons, we suggested that 'sufficient scope is given to enable the Irish, European and international dimensions to be included to provide more comprehensive and complete information' (p.3), in order to more effectively assist Northern Ireland in achieving Net Zero. In response to the consultation's question on how the proposed legislation addressed transboundary issues in relation to Climate Change, our response stated the following:

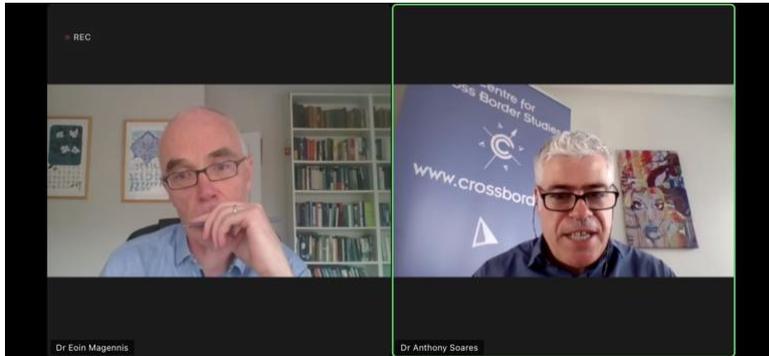
'While there is some isolated evidence of awareness of transboundary issues, the Centre for Cross Border Studies would recommend the Bill be amended to ensure transboundary considerations are made evident and that these are enacted by relevant actors, particularly government departments and public bodies. The island of Ireland has a homogenous topography and insularity, which reinforces the proximity between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The negative effect of climate change and the pollution of air, grounds and sea overstep jurisdictional borders. Thus, the fight against climate change will be effective if and only if it is led on both sides of the border. Both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland are facing the same climate issues such as flooding and coastal erosion. Their environments are very similar – a predominance of agricultural areas and a lack of natural resources such as forests' (p.4).

September: [*Submission to the consultation on Government engagement with business and civil society groups on implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement*](#)

The Centre's submission to this UK Government consultation was driven by our efforts, many of them centred around the Ad-Hoc Group for North-South and East-West Cooperation, to ensure formal and effective structures for engagement with civic society organisations on issues relating to cross-border cooperation. Therefore, as the structures for engagement with civic society on the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement were being established, which meant the creation of the UK's Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) and the Civil Society Forum that would bring together the UK DAG and the EU DAG, the Centre highlighted the need for these to include a space to discuss East-West cooperation and how the TCA and the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland might interact.

Annual Sir George Quigley Memorial Lecture

The [6th Annual Sir George Quigley Memorial Lecture](#) took place online on the 11th of June. It was delivered by Dr Eoin Magennis, Senior Economist at Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre, with the title of the lecture being **"Is it time (once again) to revisit the idea of a Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor?"**.



Dr Anthony Soares, Director of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, opened the event by underlining how Sir George's vision saw cross-border cooperation as transcending political borders, following a logic of expansive innovation

and creativity that could not only bring mutual prosperity, but also increased understanding between those who engaged in such cooperation. Anthony also noted how Eoin Magennis was one of the team, along with colleagues from Dublin City University, revisiting the potential of the Dublin-Belfast cross-border economic corridor.



Noting his own experience of having worked with Sir George Quigley, Eoin began his lecture by outlining the current profile of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor, as economies were reopening from the COVID-19-related shutdowns, and asking

whether the two cities, and the region in between, are acting as the "growth hormone" Sir George had wanted to see. He also set out the most recent initiative to bring a fresh focus to the Economic Corridor, and some of the opportunities and priorities identified by the local government network behind it. Finally, Eoin's lecture returned to the ideas that lay behind Sir George's original Economic Corridor concept and asked whether all or some of these still remain relevant 30 years on or need to be overhauled and replaced.

Briefing Papers

April: [Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 1st Quarterly Survey \(January to March 2021\)](#)

Authored by Ben Roshier (Research Associate, Centre for Cross Border Studies) and Dr Anthony Soares (Director, Centre for Cross Border Studies), this Briefing Paper set out the results of the Centre's first quarterly survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation. Aimed at civic society organisations and local authorities on the island of Ireland, the survey and the results outlined in this paper focused on how organisations involved in cooperation were experiencing four core contexts that shape the landscape for cooperation: the political, social, material and regulatory contexts.

April: [The UK Community Renewal Fund](#)

The UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF) was launched by the UK government on 3 March 2021 as part of Chancellor Rishi Sunak's budget. It was presented in a Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) press release as forming part of a wider package of fiscal measures the Government is taking to "support our economic recovery from the pandemic, level up communities, and help vulnerable people". The Community Renewal Fund has an allocation of £220m and will run between 2021-22. This Briefing Paper sought to examine this new funding stream and its potential for cross-border initiatives.

May: [The future for agri-food in Northern Ireland and on the island of Ireland](#)

This paper was authored by CCBS Senior Research Associate, Michael D'Arcy, and examines the future of the Agri-food sector in Northern Ireland and on the island of Ireland. Using strong examples from the dairy industry, Michael's paper explores the importance of all-island integrated supply chains to the agri-food sector, and how the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, and now the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol, ensure that these all-island links continue to operate. However, "the scale of the challenge to respond, adapt and succeed for the sector and the farmers who supply milk and/or other farmed food products must not be underestimated as they are multiple, complex and largely externally driven." Given the importance of the Agri-food sector to the economies in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland, the paper stresses how the value of an all-island approach should be explored.

May: [Civic society engagement in maintaining the conditions for North-South cooperation](#)

Authored by CCBS Director, Anthony Soares, this Briefing Paper considered the extent to which the mechanisms established by the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland as part of the Withdrawal Agreement that formalised the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union are open to engagement by civic society. More specifically, the objective is to assess

how civic society organisations involved in North-South cooperation are able to inform those responsible for the implementation of the Protocol as to whether it is hampering their ability to collaborate cross-border.

July: [Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 2nd Quarterly Survey \(April to June 2021\)](#)

This Briefing Paper, authored by Ben Rosher and Anthony Soares, set out and analysed the results of the 2nd Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation. The analysis includes comparisons with the results of the first survey.

August: [Climate Legislation in Northern Ireland and Cross-Border Cooperation](#)

Authored by Jean-Christophe Chang and Anna Puchot, both interns at the Centre for Cross Border Studies, this Briefing paper examined the extent to which environmental legislation addressing climate change developed by the two jurisdictions on the island of Ireland encourages North-South cooperation.

August: [The recognition of professional qualifications post-Brexit and the Professional Qualifications Bill](#)

Written by John McStravick, a CCBS Research Associate, this Briefing Paper takes into account new obstacles emerging in the post-Brexit context for those wishing to provide services cross-border between the UK and EU, including between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The particular focus of this paper is the uncertainty about the validity of professional qualifications for actors to practice outside of their own jurisdiction, and how the UK's Professional Qualifications Bill would impact on this situation.

October: [Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation: Briefing on the findings from the 3rd Quarterly Survey \(July to September 2021\)](#)

Offering a comparison with the previous quarterly surveys undertaken in 2021, this Briefing Paper, authored by Ben Rosher and Anthony Soares, presents an overview and analysis of the results of the 3rd Quarterly Survey on the conditions for North-South and East-West cooperation, as experienced by civic society organisations and local authorities on the island of Ireland.

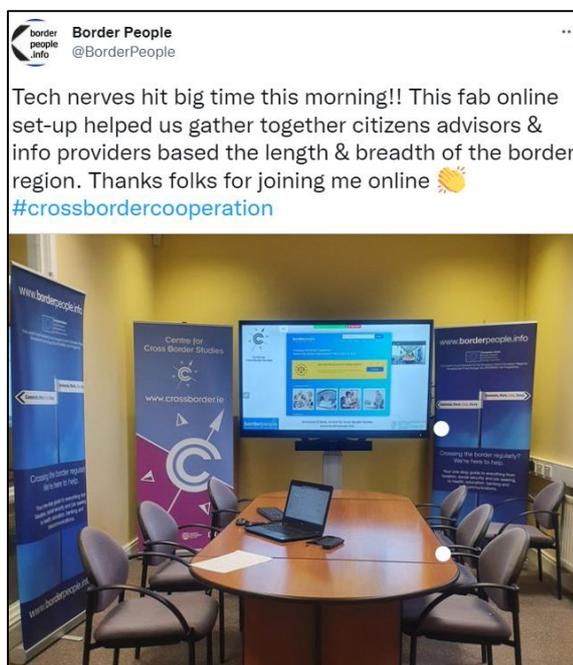
Border People

Throughout 2021 the Border People project continued to provide online information for citizens who cross the border regularly to work, live, study or retire.

During the year the project website (www.borderpeople.info) had over 170,000 visitors, viewing over 300,000 pages. Popular topics included cross-border social security, taxation, healthcare, employment and pensions. The implications of cross-border Covid vaccinations and Covid passports caused a flurry of activity throughout the year, with Brexit related issues also spiking interest; citizens concerned about restrictions to free-movement between the jurisdictions, the implications for their cross-border social security coordination, access to healthcare and education. During 2021 the project continued to also provide an online discussion platform for people from the region to ask questions and share cross-border information with each other - [Border People Discussion Group on Facebook](#).



The project also continued to convene twice monthly meetings of its Cross-border Practitioners' Group which gathered together citizens advice and information providing organisations based in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Each meeting provided an update on general cross-border topics, Brexit and Covid. Meetings often explored complex issues, with members sharing expert knowledge and building important cross-border relationships.



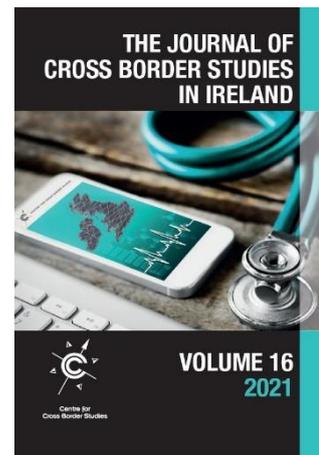
During 2021 the project continued to provide a secondment opportunity to an Information Officer based in Monaghan Citizens Information Service. The Information Officer provided support to the project, to citizens with cross-border enquiries and to colleagues in the border region network and beyond.

Behind the scenes the project's cross-border Advisory Group met each quarter. Membership of the Group did not change during 2021; North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat, Citizens Information Board, Department of Social Protection, Department for Communities, Cross-border Partnership for Employment Services and the Law Centre NI.

During 2021 the project's activities were part-financed by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Reconciliation Fund.

Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland

Contributors to the [2021 edition of *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland*](#) were invited to give their assessment of the extent to which the conditions necessary for cooperation across this island, and across these islands, have been maintained, following the end of the Brexit transition period, and as the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland came into effect. They were asked to assess the relative health of the political, social, material and regulatory contexts for North-South and East-West cooperation and for wider relations.



The 2021 edition of *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland*, then, sought to test the state of health of the conditions for cooperation and relations within and across these islands and beyond, with the first four articles looking at the political conditions.

- Trusting relationships: A necessary political condition for cooperation
- Stuck in the middle with EU (and the UK)? How Ireland navigates its relationships with the EU and UK post-Brexit
- British-Irish relations, Northern Ireland and Europe: An historical perspective on a contemporary political problem
- Scotland-Ireland relations in a European context

Three articles then offered their assessment of the social conditions for cooperation and relations within and across these islands.

- The totality of relationships? Hard truths instead of comfortable lies
- Conditions for cooperation – Whither civil society?
- The UK's withdrawal from the EU: Impact on the political, social and legal conditions for cross-border civil society cooperation

This 2021 edition of *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland* concluded with three articles considering the prevailing material and regulatory conditions for cross-border cooperation and relations.

- Balancing regulation, devolution, and trade: A global issue rendered acute in Northern Ireland
- The business community in Northern Ireland and post-Brexit conditions
- Legal frames for socio-economic cooperation on the island of Ireland
- Incrementalising approximation through using the “Protocol”?

Members of the CCBS Board

Dr Helen Johnston (Chair), Senior Social Policy Analyst, National Economic and Social Council, Dublin [stepped down as Chair and from the Board on 16 December 2021]

Dr Maurice Manning, Chancellor of the National University of Ireland

Colin Stutt, Colin Stutt Consulting

Sir David Sterling, former Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service [joined the Board on 1 March 2021]

Tony Kennedy OBE, Director, John Hewitt Society [stepped down from the Board on 1 March 2021]

Prof Katy Hayward, School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Queen's University Belfast [stepped down from the Board on 14 June 2021]

Dr Elodie Fabre, Lecturer in Politics at Queen's University Belfast [joined the Board on 16 December 2021]

Prof John Doyle, Director of the Institute for International Conflict Resolution and Reconstruction, and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Dublin City University [joined the Board on 14 June 2021]

Philip McDonagh OBE, Independent Economist, Chair of the NI Statistics Advisory Committee and Charity Commissioner for Northern Ireland

Rev Earl Storey, Founder, Topstorey Communications

Dr Walt Kilroy, Associate Director, Institute for International Conflict Resolution and Reconstruction and Assistant Professor, School of Law and Government, Dublin City University

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Emer O'Gorman, Director Economic, Enterprise, Tourism and Cultural Development, Fingal County Council

Clare Guinness, Chief Operating Officer, Montreaux Limited

Peter Osborne, founder Rubicon and former Chair of the Community Relations Council [stepping up as Chair on 16 December 2021]