



Report looks at cross-border links

A RESEARCH report has been launched which considers the challenges and opportunities in connecting Irish border towns and villages.

It focuses on a number of cross-border towns with close links, including Glenfarne, Blacklion and Belcoo, but the organisers feel it could impact all border counties, including Sligo and Leitrim.

The report takes an in-depth focus on a number of cross-border towns and villages including Kiltyclogher-Cashel/Scribbagh-Garrison-Rossinver, Glenfarne-Blacklion-Belcoo, Clones-Rosslea-Newtownbutler-Lisnaskea, Lifford-Strabane and Castleblayney-Crossmaglen.

The report, co-funded by the International Fund for Ireland and the Higher Education Authority, was launched in Blacklion last week.

It also identifies frequent cases where problems exist not only on a North-South national basis but also on an East-West regional basis, and that this 'disconnect' leads to many local well-intentioned projects not achieving their full potential.

The report provides recommendations on local governance arrangements, local responses to border conditions and experiences, and how the mutual benefits derived through innovations and good practice can be incorporated into future partnerships.

To ensure that cross border and regional cooperation can become more effective, the report recommends a number of processes including the preparation of cross-border integrated plans, the establishment of a civil society forum, the establishment of a cross border councillors forum and the development of business networks at a sub-regional level.

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