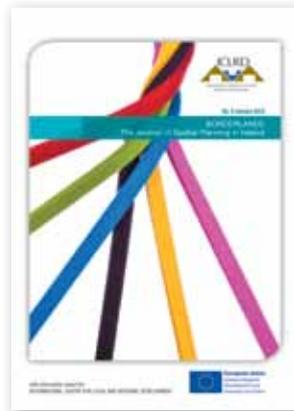


# BORDERLANDS THE JOURNAL OF SPATIAL PLANNING IN IRELAND



Borderlands is the name the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) has chosen for its journal because its work crosses borders in Ireland and abroad, aiming to be cross-border, cross-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary. It is also based in Armagh in the Irish borderlands, and much of its activity takes place in this complex and contested region.

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## Contents

A word from the Chairman - <i>Tim O'Connor</i>	<b>03</b>
Introduction - <i>Frank McDonald</i>	<b>07</b>
Pathways to Managing Regional Growth: Lessons from Portland, Oregon, and Denver, Colorado - <i>Allan Wallis</i>	<b>09</b>
All-Island Deprivation Index: Towards the Development of Consistent Deprivation Measures for the Island of Ireland - <i>Trutz Haase, Jonathan Pratschke and Justin Gleeson</i>	<b>21</b>
New Analytical Methodologies for Evidence-Based Infrastructure Planning in the Public Sector - <i>Martin M. Spollen and Johann Gallagher</i>	<b>39</b>
Reinstating Kids in Planning and Policy - <i>Brendan Gleeson and Caroline Creamer</i>	<b>51</b>
Two Systems – One Island: Examining the Linkages between Housing, Data and Planning on the Island of Ireland - <i>Karen Keaveney</i>	<b>65</b>
Global Perspectives on How Marine Spatial Planning Can Contribute to the Management of Ireland's Ocean Resources - <i>Kate Burns</i>	<b>73</b>
River Basin Management and Spatial Planning: Prospects for Integration and Cross-Border Cooperation? - <i>Cormac Walsh</i>	<b>87</b>
INFORMATION ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<b>93</b>



ICLRD Director John Driscoll (seated, bottom right) with partners, staff, Advisory Board members and friends. Standing (from left to right): Peter Smyth, Peter Roberts, Eimear Donnelly, Declan Curran, Stanley McGreal, Andy Pollak, Neale Blair, Justin Gleeson, Rob Kitchin. Seated (from left to right): Tom Hanney, Jackie Maguire, Pat O'Hara, Greg Lloyd, Karen Keaveney, Deborah Peel, Caroline Creamer, John Driscoll.



### A Word from the Chairman, Dr. Tim O'Connor



In the first edition of *Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland*, I was pleased to write an article on the genesis of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD). This year, it is a great privilege to be part of the second edition of the Journal as Chairman of this dynamic Centre.

From 2006 to 2011, under the leadership of Mr. Feargal McCormack as Chairman, the ICLR has been at the forefront in supporting cooperation in spatial planning and local and regional development between the two Administrations on the island of Ireland, as well as the integration of EU territorial cohesion objectives. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Feargal for the leadership he provided in guiding the ICLR through its formative years. Thank you Feargal.

Within the context of the Belfast / Good Friday and St. Andrews Agreements, the ICLR has helped introduce key concepts and models of strategic collaboration and non-statutory regional cooperation that have been adopted, shaped and supported by both government- and EU-financed programmes. Much of the ICLR's work over the past year has been undertaken as part of the **Cross-Border Spatial Planning Development and Training Network (CroSPiAN)**, an EU INTERREG IVA-funded programme administered by the Special EU Programmes Body. Since 2009, CroSPiAN has been linking applied research, training and workshops in Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties. By strengthening and formalising existing networks and collaborative arrangements, a more holistic and integrated approach can be taken in promoting and shaping regional development policies and practices in the Irish Border region.

The ICLR fulfils a role that the *EU 2020 and Fifth Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion* note are essential for local and regional development. Both reports emphasise the need for a territorial approach when designing, assessing and monitoring programmes, and the importance of good governance in leveraging public investment to boost growth. The local development model is also a strong feature of Cohesion Policy. To this end, the ICLR supports local stakeholders by building capacity, facilitating strong partnerships and mobilising their unique strengths and local knowledge.

- The ICLR's **applied research programmes** have led to the introduction of new cooperation models and the harmonising of cross-border development policies and programmes. For example, the Memorandum of Understanding on cross-border cooperation between Newry and Mourne District Council and Louth Local Authorities is being showcased as a model of good practice for other border regions in the European Union.
- Our **documentation of international and island of Ireland good practices** in inter-jurisdictional and cross-border cooperation have introduced successful approaches and models that can help central, regional and local authorities shape their cross-border programmes. For example, the international case studies in river basin management help inform how local partners can better manage and implement plans for the island's International River Basin Districts.
- Our **professional education programmes**, which target cross-border officials, elected representatives and the private sector, have led to new ways of thinking and organisational models for regional cooperation in a cross-border context.

- Our efforts to support **evidence-based planning** through our sister organisation, the All-island Research Observatory (AIRO), have led to new technical approaches to developing compatible and accessible data for cross-border analysis in housing, access to services and measures of deprivation.
- The ICLRD **conferences and workshops** are well attended and recognised networking events where central, regional and local government, elected representatives, policy-makers, cross-border networks, community activists, academics and representatives of the business community can come together to learn about, discuss and recommend policies, programmes and innovative technical approaches to collaborative spatial planning.
- Our range of **publications**, including briefing papers and conference reports, have created a body of knowledge that are accessible to policy-makers, practitioners and academics.
- Lastly, the ICLRD has been active in supporting cross-border networks and local authorities in adopting new models of cooperation through direct **technical assistance**.

Turning to the future, the on-going fiscal crisis is changing how central and local governments will operate in the future. While considerable progress has been made, the potential for coordinating and leveraging regional development within the border region and among local governments in Ireland and Northern Ireland has not yet been fulfilled. With the forthcoming EU-financed programmes for the period 2014-2020, as well as programmes funded by central and local governments, much can be done to ensure continued progress in the peace process.

I mentioned in last year's article on the origins of the ICLRD that it had been described as 'the answer to a question that has not yet been asked!'. I have always

liked the inherent wisdom of that insight. The journey of new beginnings charted by the Good Friday and St. Andrews Agreements lacked maps and compass points in their early stages. For this reason, there was a particular need for a place where people and practitioners from very different backgrounds and perspectives could come together in an atmosphere of trust and confidence to begin the task of forging new ways forward.

I believe that the ICLRD has played an invaluable role as one such space that has served to break down old barriers and harness the energy of diversity and difference. It has done so without fuss or trumpet – and indeed that has been one of its strengths. Today, almost a decade after those very initial discussions, it has rightly established a reputation as a forum for new thinking and new ways of doing things better on this island we share.

For the past eight years, the ICLRD and its partners – the School of the Built Environment at the University of Ulster, the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at NUI Maynooth, the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh, and the Institute of International Urban Development in Cambridge Massachusetts – have been at the forefront in responding to these challenges and opportunities. Together, they have gained a reputation for thinking strategically, particularly on an all-Island, inter-jurisdictional and cross-network basis; for providing critical analysis to government and communities alike; for being honest brokers in the areas of peace, reconciliation and collaboration; and for offering an independent perspective on social, economic, environmental and sectoral policies and initiatives, including direction on ways in which these can be improved.

The ICLRD remains a strong resource for key stakeholders involved in the development of new approaches to working across borders and we look forward to continuing to pioneer approaches that can influence and support programmes of government,

the border networks, local and regional authorities and indeed practitioners throughout the island.

For this year's journal extra thanks to Linda Shi of the Institute for International Urban Development for coordinating and editing the various contributions, and to Leslie Stannage Design and specifically, Roisin McAuley, for her superb work in preparing the journal for publication.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the great team of dedicated people that drive the ICLRD – the Executive Board, the Advisory Board, and the management team led by the indefatigable John Driscoll and Caroline Creamer.

Dr. Tim O'Connor  
Chairman  
International Centre for Local and Regional  
Development



## Introduction, Mr Frank McDonald



I must confess that I've always been fascinated by borders, ever since I first crossed Carlingford Lough as a child, from Omeath to Warrenpoint, and first saw a red telephone kiosk in the street. Or, much later, seeing the Irish Customs and Excise officers

boarding a Belfast-Dublin Enterprise express at Dundalk while some of my fellow passengers frantically tried to hide giant-sized packets of Daz and God knows what other kind of contraband.

It's all so seamless now. Of course, the Irish Border was never designed as an international frontier; it is delineated merely by pre-existing and rather ragged county boundaries, which is why anyone travelling between Dundalk and Castleblayney passes through Northern Ireland twice – and hardly even notices. The presence of First Minister Peter Robinson at the inauguration of Michael D Higgins as President of Ireland was barely remarked upon; it was just another sign of normality on this island now.

We've also put behind us that appalling spectacle in December 1999, when a cavalcade of ministerial Mercedes Benz cars conveyed Bertie Ahern and members of his Cabinet to Armagh for the inaugural meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council; as the late, great Mary Holland noted at the time, it reminded someone in the *Irish Times* of a Mafia funeral. Things are more discrete now that the vulgar profligacy of the boom period is long since over and the era of austerity has arrived, some would say with a vengeance.

There is much in this latest issue of *Borderlands* that we can learn from, not least the piece by Allan Wallis on how two metropolitan areas in the U.S. – Denver and Portland – have tried to deal with suburban sprawl. I've seen the sprawl of Denver. On the 40km

drive between it and Boulder, Colorado, there was only a handful of fields left that still had cattle or crops in them; the rest of this route was a mish-mash of out-of-town shopping malls, office parks and Holiday Inns (or whatever), usually congregated around motorway interchanges.

In the Republic, we have unwittingly followed the North American sprawl pattern of development, which is why Dublin's commuter belt now extends to a radius of 100km. Planning in Northern Ireland has been more rational and less driven by greedy landowners seeking their pounds of flesh. One wonders, however, what will happen when planning functions are devolved to local authorities. Will their members make the same egregious errors as their counterparts south of the Border?

We need to learn from the mistakes we have made. And the best way to do that is by strengthening dialogue and co-operation across the established frontier, in all of our interests.

**Frank McDonald is Environment Editor of the *Irish Times* and a best-selling author, most recently of *The Builders* (with Kathy Sheridan), a book that put the spotlight on developers and others who led us from boom to bust. He was awarded an honorary DPhil by Dublin Institute of Technology in 2006 and became an honorary member of the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland in 2010. He was recently elected as an honorary fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects.**