



The International Centre for Local and Regional Development

## THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**The International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) is a North-South-U.S. partnership established in 2006 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 on the island of Ireland and elsewhere. The partner institutions are: the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at the National University of Ireland Maynooth; the School of the Built Environment at the University of Ulster; the Institute for International Urban Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh. Each partner brings together complementary expertise and networks on both a North-South and East-West basis – creating a unique, all-island and international centre.**

The ICLRDR continues to expand its collaboration with other institutions and has built up close working relationships with individual faculty and researchers from Harvard University, Queens University Belfast and Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. It is very open to involving other academic and research institutions in its activities.

The Director of the ICLRDR is Mr. John Driscoll, the Deputy Director is Ms. Caroline Creamer of NIRSA, NUI Maynooth and the Assistant Director is Dr. Neale Blair of School of the Built Environment, University of Ulster.

In 2011, the ICLRDR was supported by the EU's Interreg IVA Programme through the Special EU Programmes Body and the Irish Government through the Higher Education Authority. Both governments on the island of Ireland have been – and remain – very supportive of the ICLRDR, with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) in Dublin supporting research and the Department for Regional Development (DRD) in Belfast seconding a senior planner (Mr. Jim

Hetherington) to the ICLRDR Management Team. The ICLRDR has, over the years, received funding from the International Fund for Ireland as well as commissioned research from InterTradelreland, the Strategic Investment Board and the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN).

The ICLRDR provides independent, joined-up research and policy advice on cross-border and all-island spatial planning and local and regional development. The Centre plays a proactive role in peace and reconciliation on the island by bringing together policy-makers, practitioners and academics, North and South, to work on common goals in the areas of co-ordinated spatial planning and social and economic development at local, regional and national levels. It does this through research, policy advice and publications; professional education and capacity building programmes that assist local governments and communities to translate policy into 'on the ground' action; and active outreach and networking that includes conferences, workshops and international cooperation and exchanges to identify best practices.

Stimulating economic growth and improving the living conditions to alleviate and prevent social conflict is at the heart of the Centre's mission. The ICLRDR is focused on building the capacity of regional and local authorities, development agencies, border networks and community and voluntary organisations to identify strategic areas of cooperation.

Through its research and professional education programmes, the ICLRDR works with policy-makers and local leaders to improve the environments in which people in Ireland, North and South, live and work, with particular emphasis on the needs of marginalised and divided communities. It combines the promotion of regional planning and development as a tool for competitiveness with local planning and development as a way to remedy the continuing problems of social disadvantage.

## CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

Each year, the ICLRD undertakes *action research* that contributes to an understanding of the complex all-island and cross-border dynamics and drivers of change in Irish towns and rural areas, including cross-border communities. Since its inception, the ICLRD has organised its work around three spatial scales: EU and all-island; sub-regional, which includes cross-border; and local. Through its activities, the ICLRD is facilitating forums to foster the exchange of experience and best practices. It is also supporting North-South / East-West inter-regional cooperation, including on a cross-border basis, along those lines encouraged by the European Union. Its current research projects include:

### **Sustainable Spatial Development: Integrating River Basin Management with Spatial Planning Policy and Practice**

In association with the report, *Responding to the Environmental Challenge? Spatial Planning, Cross-Border Cooperation and River Basin Management*, two international case studies are currently being edited as stand-alone reports:

- The Elbe River Basin District: Integrated Cross-Border Management in Practice, and
- The Connecticut River Basin: Integrating Water Quality Improvements with Regional Land Use Plans.

The resulting two reports focus on international good practice in environmental planning and governance. They illustrate that good river basin management practices have moved towards engagement and negotiation, rather than relying solely on compliance measures or regulatory enforcement. The cases also illustrate that while directives and regulations are set centrally, it is the sub-regional management of the river basin itself that is key to bringing together official and civic, and business and environmental, leadership in a meaningful way. This is especially the case when spatial planning decisions are made at the local level.

### **Shared Services**

This research focuses on the timely issue of shared services and discusses the emerging shared services agenda for both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland. The study describes creative ways in which local governments can work together to more effectively use available resources when delivering services around citizen needs. To aid in this, it draws on international good practices in the adoption of shared service agendas. The four cases are:

- Scotland: Glasgow and the Clyde Valley
- Spain: Mancomunidad Valle del Nalón in Asturias
- Canada: Ontario and its Local Services Realignment Programme
- New York State: Local Government Efficiency Programme and Lancaster County.

These case studies offer insights into the rethinking of public services within geographical areas that may include more than one local authority and how both structured and voluntary associations can be used to provide infrastructure, broadband, waste management, training and local supports. The cases also highlight the associated challenges of multi-level governance in the provision of services and the importance of leadership and trust in paving the way for future cooperation. This research will be of interest to senior management in local government and regional authorities, regional development agencies, cross-border networks and agencies, and national policy-makers.

### **Applying the Functional Territories Concept: Planning Beyond Boundaries**

This study suggests that flexible development strategies are needed when developing policies and plans that can respond to the 'functional territories' that often cut cross administrative boundaries. These functional territories are defined by where residents commute to work, shop, recreate and access different services.

This report demonstrates the application of an evidence-based approach to determining access to retail services by drawing on mapping modules and spatial analysis tools developed by the All-Island

Research Observatory (AIRO – see [www.airo.ie](http://www.airo.ie) for further information). Using retail development in the Sligo-Enniskillen area as an example, the research team illustrates how retail functions in Enniskillen and Sligo do not overlap and that the average distance to the nearest grocery retail store in the study area is just under ten minutes. The study shows, for example, the gap in access to retail markets for the elderly living alone and in rural areas. Using retail as a prototype, this research has broader implications by demonstrating how planners in regional and local authorities can use existing web-based tools to analyse access to different types of services.

#### ADVOCACY AND DEMONSTRATION: EVIDENCE-BASED PLANNING

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

The ICLRD, together with its sister organisation AIRO, are currently involved in four applied research activities to support evidence-based planning as part of CroSPlaN.

- The ***Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool***, launched in May 2011, provides an interactive mapping and querying tool for housing market indicators, combining for the first time data from both Ireland and Northern Ireland. The mapped outputs assist in understanding the spatial implications and outcomes of policy decisions and interventions over time.

- The ***All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool*** will map levels of access to key services across the island in areas such as education, health, transport and emergency services.
- The ***All-Island Deprivation Index*** will facilitate, for the first time, a comparative analysis of deprivation at a regional level within areas such as the Irish border region. This Index can supplement the existing indices used within Ireland and Northern Ireland that are incompatible with each other and help researchers, communities and programmes to better understand the spatial distribution of deprivation. Both AIRO and ICLRD hope to further test this methodology with the 2011 Census data for Ireland and Northern Ireland.

- ***Towards a Spatial Monitoring Framework for the Island of Ireland: A Scoping Study*** will provide recommendations regarding the development of common indicators and monitoring frameworks set out in the *Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland: Framework for Collaboration* report.



It draws on international experience at European level and elsewhere in the UK. The emergence of multiple spatial planning initiatives from within the cross-border region further reinforces the need for a coordinated approach, informed by good practice internationally. The study will provide a valuable source of expert advice for policy-makers and practitioners at national and regional government level.

## ICLRD JOURNAL



*Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland* is published on an annual basis and covers a range of topics of interest to academics, practitioners and policy-makers involved in spatial planning and local and regional development. The January 2012 edition of the Journal, launched by Frank

McDonald, Environment Editor of *The Irish Times*, at the seventh annual ICLR conference, includes articles on: cross-border river basins, pathways to managing regional growth, modelling infrastructure investments, the development of a cross-border deprivation index, marine spatial planning, reinstating 'kids' into planning policy and practice, and the key links between spatial planning, data and housing policies.



The inaugural issue of *Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland* was launched at the sixth annual ICLR conference in Sligo on 20th January 2011. The first issue included articles on the challenges of planning and governance reform on both sides of the Irish border; planning for

sustainable communities; balancing private sector interests with the 'common good' in planning; cross-border planning in the greater Basel region between Switzerland, France and Germany; and how NGOs and academics in the Boston region have pioneered new methods of evidence-informed planning. Contributors to the inaugural issue included Professor Peter Roberts (Homes and Communities Agency), Professor Greg Lloyd (University of Ulster), Charlotte Kahn (Boston Indicators Project), Holly St Clair (Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Boston) and ICLR partners. The journal was launched by

Mary Bunting and Anne Barrington, Joint Secretaries of the North South Ministerial Council.

## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Under the CroSPlaN initiative, the ICLR has been rolling out a professional education programme that has, to date, included three executive training programmes for council officials, elected representatives and the private sector in the Irish border region:

- Irish Central Border Area Network Region (ICBAN)
- The North West Region
- Newry/Dundalk Twin City Region.

Each programme was tailored to help local governments and the business community to engage with the spatial planning agenda and build an awareness of the benefits of regional cooperation among local governments and other key stakeholders in the border region. Each programme introduced carefully selected case studies of international good practices, external speakers and facilitated working groups to help participants to: assess their current level of cross-border cooperation; develop suggestions for improvement; and propose institutional mechanisms to promote future collaboration.

### ICBAN Region Training Programme: October 2011 – December 2011

This six-module training programme, *Harnessing diversity in a shared future*, was developed in association with the ten councils that make up the Irish Central Border Area – five North and five South. As with the previous programmes, the modules were delivered through a mix of invited speakers – all with recognised expertise in their field, facilitated working group discussions and wider networking opportunities through additional seminars and workshops. Unlike the previous programmes, this training programme engaged with senior management only from the ten Councils in the region.



While the programme has just finished, it has already helped local governments in this cross-border region to identify opportunities for potential cooperation in the identified priority areas of shared services; tourism, culture, diaspora and creative industries; and energy and renewables. It provided an intense space (the modules were held at two-week intervals) in which the councils worked together to research and refine local and regional development issues for the area, as well as activities linked to the ongoing ICBAN-led, INTERREG-funded Spatial Planning Initiative. For example, over the coming months, the councils – with the support of both the ICLRD and ICBAN – will feed their conclusions and recommendations into the regional spatial vision plan that has been recently commissioned by ICBAN.

#### **North West Training Programme: October 2010 – June 2011**

This programme focused on the theme of *Fostering Growth through Cooperation in the North West Region*. Donegal County Council, the Derry City Council, the ILEX Regeneration Company and representatives of the Strabane and Limavady District Councils participated in this programme, which aimed to lead to a deeper understanding of the potential of the North West Region and the role of a cross-border Strategic Partnership Board in furthering strategic cooperation in the linked gateway between Letterkenny and Derry/Londonderry.

The materials introduced through the modules and ideas generated through working group discussions were incorporated into the cross-border activities of the Donegal County Development Plan, the North West Partnership Board, and the 'One Plan for Derry/Londonderry'. Having won the designation as the UK's first Capital of Culture for 2013, potential thematic areas for cooperation for Derry/Londonderry include tourism, creative industries and cultural programming. Other priority cross-border themes include: enterprise development, vocational training and job creation; and the green economy

and sustainable energy. There are also important cross-cutting themes such as greater accessibility to the North West region, transportation and spatial planning.

#### **Newry/Dundalk Twin City Region Training Programme: November 2009 – May 2010**

Building on a previous ICLRD initiative, *The Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region: Supporting the Implementation of Cross-Border Collaborative Frameworks* (January 2009), the ICLRD organised a training programme, *Shaping and Managing Cross-Border Development*, for council officials, councillors and private sector representatives from Newry and Mourne District Council, Louth Local Authorities and Down District Council. The training raised awareness of the challenges and opportunities that the region faces, as well as the need for collaborative action, including the creation of stronger links between the communities in the wider Newry-Dundalk Twin-City region, such as Drogheda and Banbridge.

As a follow-up, the two Councils requested ICLRD assistance to develop a cooperation agreement that builds on their existing areas of cooperation, and opens up further opportunities for the sharing of services and joint management of key resources. The ICLRD outlined different types of instruments and institutional structures that could be used to facilitate cross-border cooperation and worked with the councils to draft the Memorandum of Understanding that identifies the initial areas of cooperation. These include: emergency planning; renewable energy and green technology; tourism and recreation; and sustainable economic growth and job creation. Cooperative structures are also outlined and include: a Joint Committee of Elected Members; a Joint Senior Management Group; an Advisory Forum; and Project Teams for implementation. The agreement was approved by the respective councils in November 2010 and launched in Brussels in March 2011.

## COMPLETED RESEARCH REPORTS



### **Responding to the Environmental Challenge? Spatial Planning, Cross-Border Cooperation and River Basin Management (2011)**

This study examines the key role that spatial planning should play in the implementation of River Basin Management Plans

(RBMP) under the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). The study takes an all-island and cross-border perspective and draws key insights through 'good practice' case studies from Germany and the United States.

The study sets out strategic options regarding the governance of RBMP and WFD implementation in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. These options, drawing on research and interviews with key stakeholders, can inform discussions among government departments, environmental agencies and other public sector bodies on both sides of the Irish border. The case studies pay particular attention to the benefits of joint management of International River Basin Districts. The study raises important questions regarding the role of spatial planning in environmental management and sets out seven key requirements for effective coordination between river basin management and spatial planning. These requirements include recommendations in relation to communication, development of expertise, leadership capacity, allocation of resources and inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

### **Governance and Planning: An International Perspective (2010)**

The ICLRD published a series of international case studies in inter-jurisdictional and cross-boundary governance and planning to complement the recently concluded study *All Change But Any Alignment?* (see below). This research presents examples of

innovative practice in collaboration in the following areas:

- *Basel Metropolitan Area* – spanning Germany, France and Switzerland, this case study highlights emerging cross-border cooperation in spatial planning at the sub-regional level;
- *Mancomunidades in Spain* – focuses on provision of services through inter-municipal collaboration at the level of the micro-region; and
- *Boston Metropolitan Area* – provides examples of how to promote regional development through cooperation among local governments, metropolitan planning organisations, the business community and research organisations.



Together, the three case studies provide practical examples of how cooperation in local and regional development can be shaped by collaborative efforts. They highlight how territorial cooperation, particularly in the EU, is moving towards 'placed-based strategies' as promoted in the *EU 2020 Strategy*.

### **All Change But Any Alignment? The Impact of the Proposed Governance and Planning Reforms Across the Island of Ireland on Inter-Jurisdictional Planning (2010)**

Completed in June 2010, this report focuses on inter-jurisdictional planning and multi-level governance and was published on the ICLRD website. The study considers:

- The various iterations of, and processes involved in, the Review of Public Administration, specifically as it relates to the reform of local government;



- If and/or how inter-jurisdictional spatial planning policies and operations will be more closely aligned following the various reforms to governance and planning on the island of Ireland; and
- Whether, in the context of the current economic downturn, there is greater political and community support for the alignment of spatial planning policies.

**Developing a Strategic Alliance between Newry and Mourne District Council and the Louth Local Authorities: Background Report (2010)**

Louth Local Authorities and Newry and Mourne District Council took a major step in the promotion of cross-border partnership in the border region with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in May



2011 to cooperate in a number of thematic areas, including: emergency planning, renewable energy and green technology, tourism and recreation, sustainable economic growth and job creation.

In support of this development, the ICLRD report considers a variety of legal instruments to facilitate cross-border cooperation including: Euro-regions, European Groupings for Territorial Cooperation, European Economic Interest Groupings and ad-hoc agreements. It recommends that the cross-border local authorities adopt a legally non-binding Memorandum of Understanding as the basis for cooperation; the agreement can be expanded to include other regional stakeholders in the future.

Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding, a new Louth/Newry and Mourne Joint Council Committee was established to progress joint initiatives and the two Councils are now sharing council officers and staff in a common office to implement the MOU.



*Representatives of the Louth Local Authorities and Newry and Mourne District Council sign the Memorandum of Understanding in 2011.*





### **Delineating Functional Territories Across the Island of Ireland: An Initial Scoping (2010)**

Published in October 2010, this report considers the various options for mapping functional territories across the island of Ireland. In undertaking a preliminary analysis of Functional

Urban Areas (FUAs) of the Irish / Northern Irish urban systems, this study includes maps of natural catchments, travel-to-work catchments, origin-destination data, gravity models and urban functional specialisations. The focus of Phase I was to explore the various possibilities of mapping functional territories to produce a set of outputs based on datasets that were available to the research team. The resulting report illustrates the contribution that dynamic spatial analysis of urban functions can make in the profiling of the relational status, performance and potential of urban centres across the island. The research has been carried out by a multi-disciplinary team within ICLRD and funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA).



### **Living Together – An Investigation of Case Studies and Strategies for Promoting Safe, Integrated and Sustainable Communities (2009)**

This research project investigates initiatives and policies in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to improve and

build subsidised housing in mixed communities through the lens of six case studies, namely Springfarm (Antrim), the Irish Street and Gobnascale interface (Londonderry/Derry) and Carran Crescent (Enniskillen) in Northern Ireland, and Cranmore (Sligo), Mahon (Cork) and Adamstown (Dublin) in the Republic of Ireland. Together, they provide a cross-

section of the challenges faced by communities working to promote or provide mixed housing, the strategies that have helped address these challenges and opportunities to create and maintain housing that is safe, prosperous and open to all. The six case studies were published in association with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in Belfast and the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency in Dublin.

### **Rural Restructuring: Local Sustainable Solutions to the Rural Challenge (2009)**

On the 19th June 2009, this report was launched by Minister Michelle Gildernew, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and Andy Pollak, Centre for Cross Border Studies (CCBS). The



culmination of a 12-month research project, the research considers the role of rural restructuring and economic diversification, together with the growing importance of the urban-rural interface, in the achievement of balanced spatial development. The programme of research focused on three rural areas, namely Draperstown, Magherafelt District, Emyvale-Truagh-Aughnacloy on the Monaghan-Tyrone border and Duhallow spanning the Cork-Kerry border.

Both Draperstown and Duhallow have been engaged in the process of rural restructuring for the past 25 years and have built up a wealth of experience over this time. For Emyvale-Truagh-Aughnacloy, the challenges facing this rural community have been further exacerbated by its cross-border location and the impact of decades of back-to-back policy development across both administrations (North and South). Building on over 80 interviews, as well as a wealth of secondary data, the research team also developed a series of working papers on each area and held a one-day conference on the issue of rural restructuring in May 2009 (see below).



**Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region: Supporting the Implementation of Cross-Border Collaborative Frameworks (2009)**

The ICLRD undertook this research initiative in cooperation with Louth County Council, Newry and Mourne District Council, Dundalk Town Council and InterTradelreland.

Its objective was to identify (a) potential projects that can bring long-term benefits to the Twin City Region of Newry-Dundalk and (b) models of cooperation to assist in their implementation.

The resulting report was launched on 27th February 2009 by Conor Murphy, MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development in Northern Ireland, and John Gormley, TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in the Republic of Ireland, at a special event at the Carrickdale Hotel, Ravensdale, Dundalk, County Louth. The report brings together recent and current research on how to realise the benefits of cross-border collaboration in the Newry-Dundalk Sub Region through integrated planning and development strategies.



**Fostering Mutual Benefits in Cross-Border Areas: The Challenges and Opportunities in Connecting Irish Border Towns and Villages (2008)**

This 18-month research programme focussed on the inter-relationships between cross-border towns and villages in the

Irish border region. The final report was launched in Blacklion, County Cavan on the 21 November 2008 by renowned journalist and author, Colm Toibin. The research considers the relationship and connectivity that exist between five cross-border settlement groupings and identifies and examines the challenges facing and opportunities within

these micro-regions. The Border towns and villages included in the study were:

- Lifford-Strabane
- Kiltyclogher-Cashel/Scribbagh-Garrison-Rossinver
- Blacklion-Belcoo-Glenfarne
- Clones-Rosslea-Newtownbutler-Lisnaskea
- Castleblayney-Crossmaglen

The key objective of this study was to identify good practices in joined-up planning and regeneration for inter-connected, cross-border areas with a particular emphasis on collaborative efforts that have supported local economic development, social cohesion and mutual benefits. In addition, the study sought to identify factors associated with successful collaboration through review of projects with a history of successful interaction and outcomes including institutional frameworks for collaboration.

**The Atlas of the Island of Ireland – Mapping Social and Economic Change (2008)**



On the occasion of the ICLRD Third Annual Conference on 17 January, 2008, the ICLRD and AIRO launched *The Atlas of the Island of Ireland*, a set of detailed full colour maps and cartograms of varied socio-economic indicators across the island. *The Atlas*, co-authored by Justin Gleeson, Rob Kitchin, Brendan Bartley, John Driscoll, Ronan Foley, Stewart Fotheringham and Chris Lloyd, was launched by Tommie Gorman, Northern Editor of Radio Telefis Eireann (RTE).

**Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland: Development of a Framework for Collaborative Action (2006)**

This report was prepared by the ICLRD and commissioned by InterTradelreland on behalf of the Department of



the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in the Republic of Ireland and the Department for Regional Development in Northern Ireland. The report outlines measures to better align spatial planning, infrastructure and cross-border projects to support long-term economic competitiveness, and has been endorsed by the Joint Communiqué of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. Both Governments became committed to developing a framework for collaborative action between the two existing spatial strategies on the Island; and in early 2011, a joint consultation document was published by the Department for Regional Development and Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

## CONFERENCES

### **Sixth Annual Conference: The Changing Business, Community and Spatial Planning Landscape: Doing More with Less**

20-21 January 2011,  
Radisson BLU Hotel,  
Ballinacra, Sligo



Attended by 110 people representing central, regional and local government, elected representatives, policy-makers, cross-border networks, community activists, academics and representatives of the business community, this two-day conference was sponsored by the Special EU Programmes Body. The conference was organised around four sessions:

- Planning for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Growth
- Planning for Homes and People: New Challenges, New Agendas
- Planning for Shared Innovation: Infrastructure to Support Innovation-Led Recovery
- A Changing Landscape: Networking, Collaborating and Achieving Greater Efficiencies.

Recognising that the past twelve months had represented a time of significant change for the island of Ireland, the conference focused on the changing budgetary, legislative and policy landscape, and the practical realities of reduced budgets. It debated the need for implementing a period of austerity and the opportunities this can create for renaissance and resurgence.

Speakers and session chairs included: Nicholas Retsinas, Harvard Business School; Shaun Henry, Special EU Programmes Body; Greg Lloyd, University of Ulster; David Walsh, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; Jenny Pyper, Department for Regional Development; Eddy Curtis, Newry and Mourne District Council; Pádraig Maguire, Border Regional Authority; Brian Rowntree, Northern Ireland Housing Executive; Justin Gleeson, All-Island Research Observatory; Joe Frey, Northern Ireland Housing Executive; Rob Kitchin, National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis; Grainia Long, Chartered Institute of Housing Northern Ireland; Aidan Gough, InterTradelreland; Dermot Byrne, Eirgrid; Frank McDonald, *The Irish Times*; Gary McDarby, University College Dublin; Tracy Meharg, Invest Northern Ireland; Feargal McCormack, FPM Accountants; Patricia O'Hara, National Statistics Board; James Cunningham, Centre for Innovation and Structural Change; and Tim O'Connor, former Secretary-General to President McAleese's Office.

### **Fifth Annual Conference: Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of Recession**

21-22 January 2010,  
Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen,  
Co. Fermanagh



Over 130 people attended this two-day event, which was sponsored by the Special EU Programmes Body under CroSPiAN. Pat Colgan, the Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body, opened the conference; Professor John FitzGerald of the Economic and Social Research

Institute gave the opening keynote address; and Declan Kelly, the U.S. Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland gave the closing. The conference was organised around four sessions:

- Health Check on Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure
- Planning and Economic Recovery – The Social and Community Dimension
- Building the Platform for Economic Recovery
- Recovery through Collaborative Spatial Planning.

The conference addressed questions on how spatial planning can contribute to the process of economic recovery across the island of Ireland in a balanced and sustainable manner. The presentations and discussions over the two days considered: who we should be planning for; how to ensure that the right places receive the right investment and therefore jobs; why we need to ensure that residential development takes place in places where people will want to live; and the role of infrastructure in improving accessibility and, in the case of broadband, employment opportunities and quality of life.

Keynote speakers from overseas included: Charlotte Kahn, Director of the Boston indicators Project at the Boston Foundation, and Holly St. Clair, Director of Data Services at the Boston-region Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Other speakers and commentators who provided insights into the role of spatial planning in the process of economic recovery included Pat McArdle, Economist and *Irish Times* correspondent; Conor Skehan, Head Environment and Planning Department, Dublin Institute of Technology; Wesley Shannon, Director Local Government Policy Division, Department of Environment; Hubert Kearns, Manager, Sligo County Council; Patricia Potter, Director of the Dublin Regional Authority; Dr. Celine McHugh, Senior Policy Advisor with Forfás; and Brian Murray, Chief Executive of The Workspace Group.

### **Rural Restructuring: Local Sustainable Solutions to the Rural Challenge**

8 May 2009, Blackwater Learning Centre, Knockconan, Emyvale, Co. Monaghan

A one-day conference on rural restructuring and development organised by the ICLRD, this event was attended by over 110 delegates from community and local development agencies, local government officials, businesses and business networks, practitioners, policy-makers and academics. Speakers of note included Roger Turner of the Commission for Rural Communities; Geoff Brown of the Carnegie UK Trust; Dr. Kevin Heanue of Teagasc; and Maura Walsh of IRD Duhallow. The event, chaired by Michael Kenny of NUI Maynooth, was an opportunity to present emerging findings from the ICLRD study, and participants addressed and debated a wide range of rural development issues.

### **Fourth Annual Conference: Achieving Balanced Regional Development: Dynamic Regions, Spatial Strategies and Collaboration.**

22-23 January 2009, Radisson Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal



The conference focused on issues of strategic territorial planning and balanced regional development. This was achieved through a focus on specific EU territorial policies and a number of the designated gateways on the island of Ireland, including those that cross borders and jurisdictions: namely the North West Gateway, the Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region, the Atlantic Gateway and the Cork Gateway. Furthermore, presentations from the Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland and the Department of the Environment,



Heritage and Local Government, Ireland discussed the opportunities that are emerging for inter-jurisdictional cooperation and the role of gateways and regions within and between the respective spatial strategies. The conference was attended by over 130 delegates, speakers and chairs from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, England, Hungary, Germany, the Skane Region in Sweden, and the states of Massachusetts, Maryland and Virginia in the United States.

Keynote speakers from overseas included Steve Quartermain, Chief Planning Officer in the Department for Communities and Local Government in London; Jim MacKinnon, Director for the Built Environment in the Scottish Government; Grant Duncan, Head of the Sustainable Futures Division in the Welsh Assembly Government; Dr. Gabor Novotny, from the European Commission's DG Regio (Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion); Dr. Rupert Kawka from the German Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning; and Professor Gerrit Knapp, Director, National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education, University of Maryland.



**Third Annual Conference:  
Fostering Cooperation  
for Local and Regional  
Development through  
Cross-Border Spatial  
Planning**

17 January 2008, Armagh  
City Hotel

Held in collaboration with InterTradeIreland, the ICLRD Third Annual Conference focused on how long-term economic success, coupled with high quality of life on the island of Ireland, can be achieved by harnessing the potential of sustainable communities which transcend the border. Opened jointly by Batt O'Keeffe TD, Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal

and Developing Areas, and Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development, the conference was attended by over 140 delegates representing local and central government, cross-border agencies, the private sector and community organisations.

Among the key issues and research papers presented at the all-day conference were how to implement and finance a collaborative spatial framework, proposals and project areas that can deliver on a cross-border sub-regional strategy for Newry-Dundalk, research and recommendations on how cross-border towns can be reconnected and revitalised; and the role of housing in building sustainable communities.

**Supporting Evidence-Informed Spatial Planning  
and Analysis: Towards the Development of All-  
Island Spatial Databases**

15 November 2007, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk

Organised jointly by the ICLRD, the Regional Studies Association, the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, the National Centre for Geocomputation and AIRO, this one-day event was attended by over a 100 delegates. The conference presented the findings of two earlier seminars on the kind of spatial indicators needed to assist in high quality analysis for evidence-based planning and policy. The seminars were held in the National University of Ireland Maynooth and the University of Ulster.

Presentations by leading academics and researchers were made on all-island indicators, data applications, maps and key issues around the type, scale and form of potential all-island datasets. Senior policy-makers offered comments on how these initiatives can support both policies and specific projects to foster cross-border cooperation in the areas of spatial planning, service delivery, economic competitiveness and investment strategies.



**Second Annual Conference: Implementing a Framework for Collaborative Action: Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland**

9 November 2006, The Canal Court Hotel, Newry, Co. Down

A key focus of the conference was an examination of (a) the range of regional and local spatial planning initiatives for key development areas identified in the existing spatial strategies and (b) the role of the business community and private sector in inter-jurisdictional development.

The opening speakers were Mr. Dick Roche TD, Irish Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and Mr. Gerry McGinn, Permanent Secretary of the Northern Ireland Department for Regional Development. Other speakers included the prominent Dublin architect Mr. Sean O'Laoire, the property developer Mr. Gerard O'Hare, and senior planning officials from both Irish jurisdictions and from the European Commission.

**First Annual Conference: Regional and Local Development Strategies on the Island of Ireland – Addressing Key Issues and Building Capacity**

27 May 2004, Radisson Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

This one-day event was opened by the Irish Minister for Education and Science, Mr. Noel Dempsey TD, and was attended by 160 senior figures from central and local government, higher education institutions and the private sector in both jurisdictions. As well as investigating if there was a role for a research centre such as the ICLRD on the island of Ireland, the conference debated whether the many planning and development issues, North and South, were similar in nature. As to the establishment of the ICLRD, there was overall feedback from participants that the Centre should be established.

As well as organising its own conferences, the ICLRD has been invited to present its work at a number of events hosted by other agencies. These have included:

- *Data Capture: Information Rich, Insight Poor?*, ICBAN Spatial Planning Conference, Hotel Kilmore, Cavan, 1 December 2011 (Prof. Rob Kitchin and Justin Gleeson)
- *The International Centre for Local and Regional Development: Purpose, Principles and Process*, Presentation on the ICLRD to a South African Delegation from Cadadu Municipality, Armagh City Hotel, 22 November 2011 (Caroline Creamer and Neale Blair)
- *Cross-Border Local Authority Training Across the Island of Ireland*, INICCO International Conference on Cross-Border Training and Impact Assessment, Radisson Blu Hotel, Cavan, 27 October 2011 (Caroline Creamer)
- *Indicator Development and Monitoring for the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines*, ESPON Ireland Dublin, 28th September 2011 (Jim Hetherington and Cormac Walsh)
- *What is Spatial Planning?* Irish Central Border Area Network Conference on Spatial Planning, Manor House Hotel, Killadeas, 15 September 2011 (Neale Blair)
- *Fixing 'Broken' Government: Functional Territories as an Impetus for Reform*, Regional Studies Association Conference, University of Manchester, 2 November 2010 (Caroline Creamer, Neale Blair and Justin Gleeson)
- *Combating Rural Poverty and Social Exclusion*, Pobal Conference, Drogheda, 21 October 2010 (Karen Keaveney)
- *Community Building through Growing Leadership: the Challenge of the Border*, Presentation to Eisenhower-Loeb Fellows, The Newman Building, Dublin, 5 May 2010 (Caroline Creamer and Karen Keaveney)
- *Inter-Municipal collaboration across borders: Overcoming Legal and Institutional Differences in the Irish Border Region*, American Association

- of Geographers Annual (AAG) Conference, 14 April 2010 (John Driscoll)
- *Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Regeneration on the Island of Ireland*, UK-Ireland Planning Research Conference, Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, 7-9 April 2010 (Karen Keaveney)
- *Rural Interfaces: Reconciling Perception with Reality*, Sharing Our Space Event Killyhevin Hotel, Enniskillen, 4 March 2010 (Caroline Creamer)
- *Divergence in Policy and Practice: Government and Community Perspectives on Rural Development*, National University of Ireland, Galway, 2 December 2009 (Brendan O'Keeffe and Caroline Creamer)
- *Rural Restructuring: Local Sustainable Solutions to the Rural Challenge*, NSMC Sectoral Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Development, Greenmount College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Antrim, 21 July 2009 (Caroline Creamer, Neale Blair, Karen Keaveney and Brendan O'Keeffe)
- *The Color of Money: The (Changing) Role of Funding in Cross-Border Collaboration*, MOPAN Conference, NUI Maynooth, 18 June 2009 (Caroline Creamer and Neale Blair)
- *Rural Restructuring: an Opportunity within a Challenge*, Conference of Irish Geographers, University College Cork, 16 May 2009 (Caroline Creamer and Brendan O'Keeffe)
- *Understanding and Shaping Regions: Spatial, Social and Economic Futures* Leuven, Belgium in April 2009 (Brendan O'Keeffe)
- *Shaping our Future: Reviewing Northern Ireland's Regional Development Strategy* at the Stormont Hotel in Belfast, 5 November 2008 (Brendan Bartley)
- *Stuck Behind a Tractor! The Celtic Tiger and its Slow Chug towards the Border*, First Irish Social Sciences Platform (ISSP) Conference, Dublin City University, 11 September 2008 (Caroline Creamer and Brendan O'Keeffe)
- *Border Effective: The Economic Competitiveness Challenge Facing Towns and Villages in the Irish Border Region*, ERSA Congress 2008, University of Liverpool, 28 August 2008 (Caroline Creamer)
- *Shared Future – Shaping the Fabric of our Communities*, Cork, 24-25 April 2008 (John Driscoll)
- *Drivers of Connectivity: Understanding the Nature, Challenges and Potentials*, Presentation on ICLRD to Croatian Delegation, Armagh City Hotel, 2 April 2008 (Caroline Creamer)
- *Northern Europe, Planning Together for a Sustainable Future* in Inverness, Scotland, 11-15 November 2007 (Brendan Bartley)
- *Cooperation in the Twin-City Region*, Dundalk Chamber's Annual Conference Border Vision Gateway, Ballymascanlon House, Dundalk, 1 November 2007, (John Driscoll).

## SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

### Planning and Local Government on the Island of Ireland

30 September 2011, Dundalk

Organised in association with Cooperation Ireland and Queen's University Belfast, this well-attended seminar drew delegates from Ireland and Northern Ireland. The emphasis of this event was threefold: looking at the growing territorial agenda and the opportunities this creates for enhanced cross-border cooperation across the island of Ireland as demonstrated by the experiences of others in Europe; focusing on the potential role of elected members in the planning and governance processes of each jurisdiction on the island of Ireland; and considering the role of planners and councillors in decision-making and the extent to which evidence should lie at the heart of decision-making. Delegates commented on the importance of sharing experiences, which was further noted in the contributions from both jurisdictions regarding the impact of new planning legislation and the reform of public administration in Northern Ireland.

**Land Banking and Housing Development: The (New) Role of the Planning System** 28 April 2011, NUI Maynooth

A jointly hosted NIRSA-ICLRD-Border Regional Authority event, this one-day roundtable discussion focused on *Land Banking and Housing Development: The (New) Role of the Planning System*. Speakers and contributors considered the state of housing development and the potential of land banking across the island of Ireland with respect to housing need, unfinished estates, the property market, the planning system and emerging programmes of both the Housing and Sustainable Communities Agency (HSCA) and the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA). It examined international experiences of asset disposal and public land development, and explored possibilities and opportunities in the island of Ireland context. Delegates debated the role of local authorities, HSCA, NAMA, housing associations, private developers and other actors in addressing present issues and creating a more sustainable system of development that serves public and private interests. Attended by over 30 people, this event created a space in which key stakeholder agencies were provided with the opportunity to share and learn from each other.

**Developing Core Strategies: Adopting a Bottom-up Approach**

9 March 2011, Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone

Jointly hosted by NIRSA-ICLRD-Border Regional Authority, this one-day event brought together over 120 local authority planners, elected representatives, private sector delegates and policy-makers to exchange experiences and lessons in adopting core strategies as required by new planning legislation in Ireland. The case of how Aberdeen City and Shire produced the Aberdeen strategic plan with the support of elected representatives highlighted the key role that elected councillors have in adopting longer-term planning policies. Other key issues considered during the day included data and evidenced-based decision-making, annual monitoring, density and appropriate scale

development, and the need for integrated planning policy and practice.

**The Functionality of Place: Determining and Mapping Functional Territories**

16 June 2010, Armagh City Hotel

Funded by the Higher Education Authority, the ICLRDRD hosted a half-day workshop on the topic of functional territories. This workshop was organised as part of the ICLRDRD's ongoing commitment to presenting cutting-edge research into issues of all-island spatial planning and regional development, and AIRO's long-term objective of providing data-users in both policy and practice with an open source 'hub' for spatial data analysis and mapping. Together with ICLRDRD colleagues, the 50 participants from central and local government departments and cross-border organisations discussed how the functional territories research can be used by planners and policy-makers in their own work. The workshop also considered the issue of data availability and the need for more accessible and relevant datasets to support evidenced-informed planning and the identification of functional territories that can, for example, lead to maintaining or improving the delivery of services.

**Evidence-Informed Planning: Making Information Accessible to build Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation**

21 January 2010, Killyhevin Hotel, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh

Organised under the auspices of the CroSPiAn initiative, this half-day technical workshop was attended by other 40 people from both the public and private sectors with an interest in evidence-based policy and practice. Best practices from Boston were presented to demonstrate how the Boston Foundation and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council use data and outreach events to shape regional change. The presentations from Boston highlighted the role of various technologies (3D visualisations, highly interactive web visualisations and scenario modelling) in helping stakeholders involved in spatial planning processes



better understand the impacts and tradeoffs of development decisions. The discussions concluded that a challenge in the Irish context, both North and South, is to make data and evidence on spatial planning available in a format that is accessible to a wide range of users.

### **An Introduction to Smart Growth**

22 January 2009, Radisson Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

This half-day event kick-started a debate on the inter-relationship between spatial planning, economic development and the 'common good', both at a regional and local level. Attended by over 30 delegates including central government representatives from the island of Ireland and the UK, local government officials, academics, community activists, this seminar considered the experience of 'Smart Growth' in the State of Maryland and catalytic urban development initiatives from Virginia and the relevance of these initiatives to the Irish context. The programmes from Maryland and Virginia were presented by Prof. Gerrit-Jan Knapp, Executive Director, National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education; and Prof. Judith Meaney, Adjunct Professor and Director Real Estate Development Concentration, The Catholic University of America, Washington.

### **Supporting Evidence-Based Spatial Planning and Analysis in Ireland: Towards the Development of All-Island Spatial Databases**

15 February 2007 in NUI Maynooth; and 20 June 2007 in University of Ulster

The Regional Studies Association together with the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, the National Centre for Geocomputation, and the ICLRD hosted two workshops during 2007 on the importance of all-Ireland datasets on key thematic issues in spatial development. The workshops addressed a number of key issues, namely:

- Identifying existing common datasets for the island of Ireland;

- Building on what already exists and considering the type, scale and form of future key all-island datasets; and
- Agreeing on a list of indicators to assist in good quality analysis of evidence-based planning and policy, and the roll-out of a planning research programme.

These workshops were open to those with an interest in spatial analysis and planning data, in particular policy-makers, representatives from regional and local government, state agencies, planning consultancies, and academics.

### **Exploring the Economic and Social Implications of the National Spatial Strategy**

15 April 2005, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

The seminar was organised jointly by the Athlone Institute of Technology and the National University of Ireland Maynooth. The objective of this event was to present and discuss spatial strategies from European, national, regional and local perspectives; with particular reference to economic and social aspects.

## **OUTREACH**

### **Irish Central Border Region and North West Region Cross Border Groups (2011)**

The ICLRD has been closely involved in providing guidance to the Irish Central Border Area Network's (ICBAN's) cross-border spatial planning activities. The Central Border Region Spatial Planning Initiative, which has been partly financed by the EU's INTERREG IVA Programme and is worth over £1.5 million, is a drive by ICBAN to give the region distinctiveness, translating key national plans into local and regional actions. Through a suite of projects, the Spatial Planning Initiative is developing the necessary skills and capacity of its constituent Councils to enable them to engage positively and progressively with central government, North and South. The ICLRD provided technical assistance during the setup period on how the work programme should be shaped and managed to achieve the aims

and objectives of the Initiative while also promoting collaborative activity and skill transfer amongst council and community groupings. The ICLRD continues to advise and support this programme through its membership of the Spatial Planning Action Steering Group.

The ICLRD's sister organisation, AIRO, also provides advice regarding evidence-based planning and sits on the steering committee for the Northwest Region Cross-Border Group SPACeial data capture project.

#### **Truagh-Aughnacloy Community Planning (2010/2011)**

Since May 2010, the ICLRD has been providing technical assistance to a number of community development associations along the North Monaghan / South Tyrone border. The development associations from Truagh, Aughnacloy, Aghaloo, the Bawn, Loughans, Clara and Carrickroe are working together on a community business and social economy plan. This is the first time that these neighbouring associations have formally worked together.

The groups have been working with a consultant on social enterprise development. Initial activities included a household perceptions study of 150 households, a survey of 63 businesses, community-based meetings with civil society and public sector bodies on both sides of the border and focus groups with younger and older residents. Taking a longer-term perspective, the consultation process has led to the development of a North Monaghan Development Framework study based on a vision of the sub-region as an economically sustainable and outward looking border catchment area where people and communities are empowered to achieve their best.

The next phase of the groups' work will examine the feasibility of:

- A Blackwater Valley branded Business Development and Marketing Initiative;
- An Independent Living Project providing support services to lone dwellers and older people,

in addition to community-based employment opportunities, especially for women; and

- The Implementation of a Youth Employment, Entrepreneurship and Leadership Programme.

#### **Harvard Joint Centre for Housing (2009)**

Within the housing sector on the island of Ireland, there is currently no systematic process or structure for examining and understanding the inter-jurisdictional implications of housing policies and markets on the island of Ireland. To explore potential means of building cooperation around housing indicators, the ICLRD facilitated academic exchanges for Justin Gleeson, Manager of AIRO, and Karen Keaveney, Lecturer at Queens University Belfast to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing and the Institute for International Urban Development in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Their meetings and research in Boston, and subsequent meetings with senior officials in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in Dublin, has led to increased cooperation on the identification of common data which can be incorporated into an accessible web-based data base available on the AIRO website. The ICLRD is also exploring the potential demand and interest for an annual report on key housing trends, issues and markets for the island of Ireland.

#### **Reconstruction and Resettlement Council, Cyprus (2008)**

In October 2008, John Driscoll joined a delegation from the island of Ireland that presented at a conference on 'Integrating Transport in a Reunified Cyprus' in Nicosia, Cyprus, the 'last divided capital in Europe'. The conference was organised by the Reconstruction and Resettlement Council (RRC) of Cyprus and Kate Burns (formerly of ICBAN) who was working with the RRC at the time on the lessons that could be learned from cross-border development in Ireland to promote peace and reconciliation in Cyprus between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities. This event was the beginning of an ongoing discussion between the ICLRD and RRC.

In July 2009, for example, a two-person delegation from the RRC met with John and Andy Pollak to discuss if there are potential areas where ICLRD and the Centre for Cross Border Studies could assist the Council in Cyprus.

### BRIEFING PAPER SERIES

In November 2009, the ICLRD launched its Briefing Paper Series. This involves the publication of short, timely articles that explore how various forms of planning, enacted at different spatial scales, can contribute to better collaboration on the pressing issues facing both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. By considering both jurisdictions on the island and the potential synergies and efficiencies that can be realised through cooperation, the series aims to provide a more rounded view than considering each jurisdiction in isolation. Articles available to date include:

- *Reflections on the Boom: A Time for Reform* by Dr. Patricia O'Hara, Chairperson of the National Statistics Board and Adjunct Professor at the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA), NUI Maynooth (August 2011);
- *Innovation: The Challenge of Building an Adaptive and Innovative Society* by Dr. James Cunningham, Director of the Centre for Innovation and Structural Change (CISC) and Senior Lecturer at the J.E. Cairnes School of Business & Economics at NUI Galway (May 2011);
- *Doing More with Less: A Business Perspective* by Feargal McCormack, FPM Chartered Accountants (January 2011);
- *Recovery Scenarios for the Two Irish Economies* by Prof. John FitzGerald, The Economic and Social Research Institute (July 2010);
- *Evidence-Informed Spatial Planning: A Metro Boston Perspective* by Holly St Clair, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Boston (May 2010);
- *ESPON – A New Practical European Research Agenda for Territorial Development* by Cliff Hague, ESPON Contact Point UK and Brendan Bartley, ESPON Contact Point Republic of Ireland (Feb. 2010);
- *The Conditions Necessary for Gateway Development and The Role of Smaller Gateways in Economic Development* by Prof. Jim Walsh, NUI Maynooth and Cormac Walsh, Urban Institute, University College Dublin (Jan, 2010);
- *Linking Spatial Planning with Public Investment: Perspectives from the Island of Ireland* by David Counsell, Planner & Prof. Greg Lloyd, University of Ulster (Dec. 2009);
- *Good Planning: Key to Future Success* by Prof. Rob Kitchin, NUI Maynooth & Prof. Alastair Adair, University of Ulster (Nov. 2009).

Further articles will be added on a regular basis.