

# Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland

Development of a Framework for Collaborative Action



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

InterTradelreland would like to thank the following: the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) for undertaking this research: the Steering Group which consisted of representatives from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin; the Department for Regional Development, Belfast; the North/South Ministerial Council, Armagh; and the Joint Business Council for their assistance, advice and guidance throughout the course of the research.

Finally, we would convey our appreciation to the numerous interviewees from Northern Ireland and Ireland who were consulted during the course of the research. The views and opinions of the various stakeholders groups from central government; local government; representative bodies and statutory agencies; research organisations and the private sector contributed significantly to this work.

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# Executive Summary

## **Strategic Planning and Infrastructure: why should we collaborate?**

In the context of globalisation, the challenges faced by the economies of Northern Ireland and Ireland in maintaining and enhancing their competitiveness are similar. Around the world, strategic planning and carefully targeted investments in infrastructure are being used to better position economies. The creation of a competitive and high quality environment for economic development through collaboration on strategic planning and investment in infrastructure are key areas where Northern Ireland and Ireland share opportunities and challenges. International evidence shows that collaboration between separate countries on spatial development and infrastructure co-ordination can increase their competitiveness while maintaining the integrity of individual jurisdictions.

## **What we are doing at present?**

There are two spatial strategies on the island of Ireland – the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) for Ireland and the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland. There are also separate programmes for investment in infrastructure. Moreover the economies of Northern Ireland and Ireland have distinct characteristics and performances. However the two spatial strategies on the island have many mutually interdependent characteristics such as the recognition of the potential of the Dublin/Belfast corridor and Letterkenny/Derry/Londonderry area in the North West. Much practical and day-to-day co-operation is occurring in areas such as investment in energy and transportation networks.

Much of this co-operation in investment is focused on tackling historical infrastructure deficits e.g. in the road networks.

Looking at the two spatial strategies, there is a sense that given the pace of change internationally, the rate of economic and population growth on the island of Ireland and the dividends from the peace process, much more could be done to take forward innovative aspects of both spatial strategies within a framework for collaboration. Examples would include:

- Accelerating the development of key corridors between core cities, towns and intervening rural areas, and
- Strategic infrastructure interventions to improve access to the North West.

## **We need to make a step change...**

There are three options for advancing a more collaborative and strategic approach to planning and infrastructure investment.

*Option 1: To continue existing informal arrangements on a business as usual basis;*

*Option 2: To consider the potential for a new all-island spatial planning initiative, with associated new structures;*

*Option 3: To establish a new framework for collaborative action on spatial planning and infrastructure co-ordination, building upon existing arrangements.*

The key finding from this report is that the two governments should adopt Option 3 above and declare their commitment to the development of an ambitious collaborative planning framework for the island of Ireland. Building upon the two existing spatial strategies, this option combines the benefits of a more pro-active approach, without having to take on the complexities and challenges involved in considering and establishing new structures.

### **A framework for collaboration – what would be in it?**

Taken together, the two spatial strategies in place within the two jurisdictions on the island and the ambitious capital infrastructure spend over the next 10 years - estimated to be of the order of €100 billion over the whole of the island - present an unprecedented opportunity. This opportunity centres on creating enhanced, globally competitive and dynamic economic conditions on the island of Ireland, supported by the co-ordinated implementation of strategic, forward looking planning frameworks and investment in infrastructure of the type and scale necessary to sustain these conditions. A framework for collaboration to co-ordinate the implementation of the two spatial strategies and infrastructure investment plans on the island will form a key part of realising this opportunity.

Building on proposals in the NSS and RDS for co-operation and co-ordination of the respective spatial strategies, the framework for collaboration should take a high level and non-statutory view, to be shared by both Governments, of how to co-ordinate spatial

planning and development on the island of Ireland. The framework should address how the mutually interdependent aspects of the two spatial strategies will be taken forward, particularly through identifying the targeted infrastructure investment programmes which will support both strategies and their complementary regional and local planning initiatives.

Government Departments, with the support of existing cross-border institutions established under the Belfast Agreement will ultimately have to drive the preparation of the framework within an agreed action agenda. As this action agenda is progressed further consideration will need to be given to the most appropriate arrangements to drive the process.

The framework should initially take an overview of the key spatial planning issues and the main mutual interdependencies between the NSS and RDS, and should subsequently set out proposals around three key themes:

- (1) Initiation of a focused range of **regional and local spatial planning initiatives** for key development areas identified in both spatial strategies. For example, the Letterkenny – Derry/Londonderry area and other key cross-border interfaces;
- (2) A prioritised programme of **highly strategic and targeted investments** to support key aspects of both spatial strategies. For example, improved accessibility to areas identified for accelerated growth in the strategies;

(3) A programme of **spatial planning research** to deepen our understanding of development patterns, trends and their drivers on an all-island basis including the development of a comprehensive all-island statistical database.

The framework must also work to support a better alignment between the strategic planning and business decision-making processes. It must harness and facilitate existing structures by providing new collaborative working arrangements that energise stakeholders in the business and planning sectors.

### **Towards an action agenda...**

It is beyond the scope of this report to specify the precise content of the framework. That is a matter for the two Governments to consider and develop. However, the action agenda for government will require:

- Endorsement by both Governments of the role and value of a collaborative framework;
- Specification, by the Governments, of the content of the above, building on this report and drawing upon the advice of national experts and key stakeholders such as the business community; and
- Highlighting the key responsibilities and tasks for stakeholder groups engaged in the process of preparing the framework including the most appropriate arrangements to drive the process forward.

### **Conclusion**

The rapidly growing population, continuing improvement in economic conditions and the ongoing dividends of the peace process are generating the resources needed by the two Governments to invest in the productive capacity and development potential of the island of Ireland. This substantial capacity for investment now demands in turn a high level framework for collaboration on spatial and strategic infrastructure planning to:

- inform future investment programmes,
- maximise synergies between different aspects of investment programmes,
- underpin balanced regional competitiveness, and
- reposition and re-image the island in general as a globally innovative and competitive location.

Implementing the recommendations of this report will produce a collaborative framework that can inform the National Development Plan 2007-2013 in Ireland, and the three-year rolling Government Programme Spending and Priorities in Northern Ireland.

## 1.0 CURRENT POSITION

*A challenge for an Island Economy*

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Terms of Reference

1.3 European Cross-border Co-operation

1.4 Economic Case for a Collaborative Framework

1.5 Conclusions





# 1.0 CURRENT POSITION

## *A Challenge for an Island Economy*

### **Key messages**

- The challenges faced by Northern Ireland and Ireland are similar in the context of globalisation. Both need a world-class infrastructure and both need to make more efficient utilisation of services and facilities. This can be best achieved by a collaborative and integrated approach to planning.
- Other countries/regions throughout the world already collaborate on a cross-border basis.
- It is the responsibility of government to link and build upon the synergies between economic competitiveness and strategic planning.
- While the two economies operate at different scales and have different economic profiles, opportunities exist to achieve mutual benefit through a collaborative approach to planning.
- The prize of enhanced collaboration is mutual benefit to both parts of the island, and in particular to border localities.
- Better linkages are required between the respective spatial strategies to enable the island of Ireland to achieve improved economic competitiveness and balanced sustainable growth.
- There is a need to inject urgency into the process.

# 1.1 Introduction

**The 21st Century offers the prospect of a new era for the strategic positioning of the all-island economy in a manner that respects national frontiers. Rapid economic growth in Ireland over the last 15 years, in parallel with the dividends of the peace process in Northern Ireland, provides new opportunities for collaborative action.**

The relationship between places is changing dramatically in an age of accelerating globalisation and the rapid emergence of global regional systems. The accompanying re-organisation of space (or the spatial) is becoming increasingly relevant as the traditional barriers of distance are replaced by improved interconnectedness between places and peoples across the globe. All places including the island of Ireland are confronted with a constantly changing, competitive and open future which requires a balance to be achieved between local autonomy and a recognition of wider interdependencies.

The challenges faced by both jurisdictions in responding to globalisation and maintaining economic competitiveness are similar. These include the ability to increase productivity, to provide a positive climate for business growth, to innovate through R&D capability, to promote enterprise and entrepreneurship, to build a world class infrastructure and to foster equality and good relations. This is recognised by both Governments and the joint statement in the National Reform Programme (Department of the Taoiseach, 2005), under the Lisbon Agenda,

presents a strong endorsement by both the British and Irish Governments of improved co-operation, North and South, on matters which promote economic growth and employment to achieve wider social and environmental objectives.

Responding to the challenges of globalisation within the island of Ireland context requires stable, consistent macro-economic environments in parallel with flexible, innovative and responsive strategies for implementation and spatial planning. This depends on the provision of world class infrastructure, and mutual sharing of services and facilities across established regions based on better integration of planning at all levels. Co-operation between Northern Ireland and Ireland is an ongoing activity, particularly since the signing of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Many of these areas of co-operation are currently influenced by policies contained in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland (Department for Regional Development, 2001) and the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) in Ireland (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2002). Both Governments have been working together to:

- identify areas and policies for collaboration;
- develop joint approaches designed to realise mutual benefits; and
- assess the potential for lessons to be learnt from each other.

## NETWORK CATEGORIES

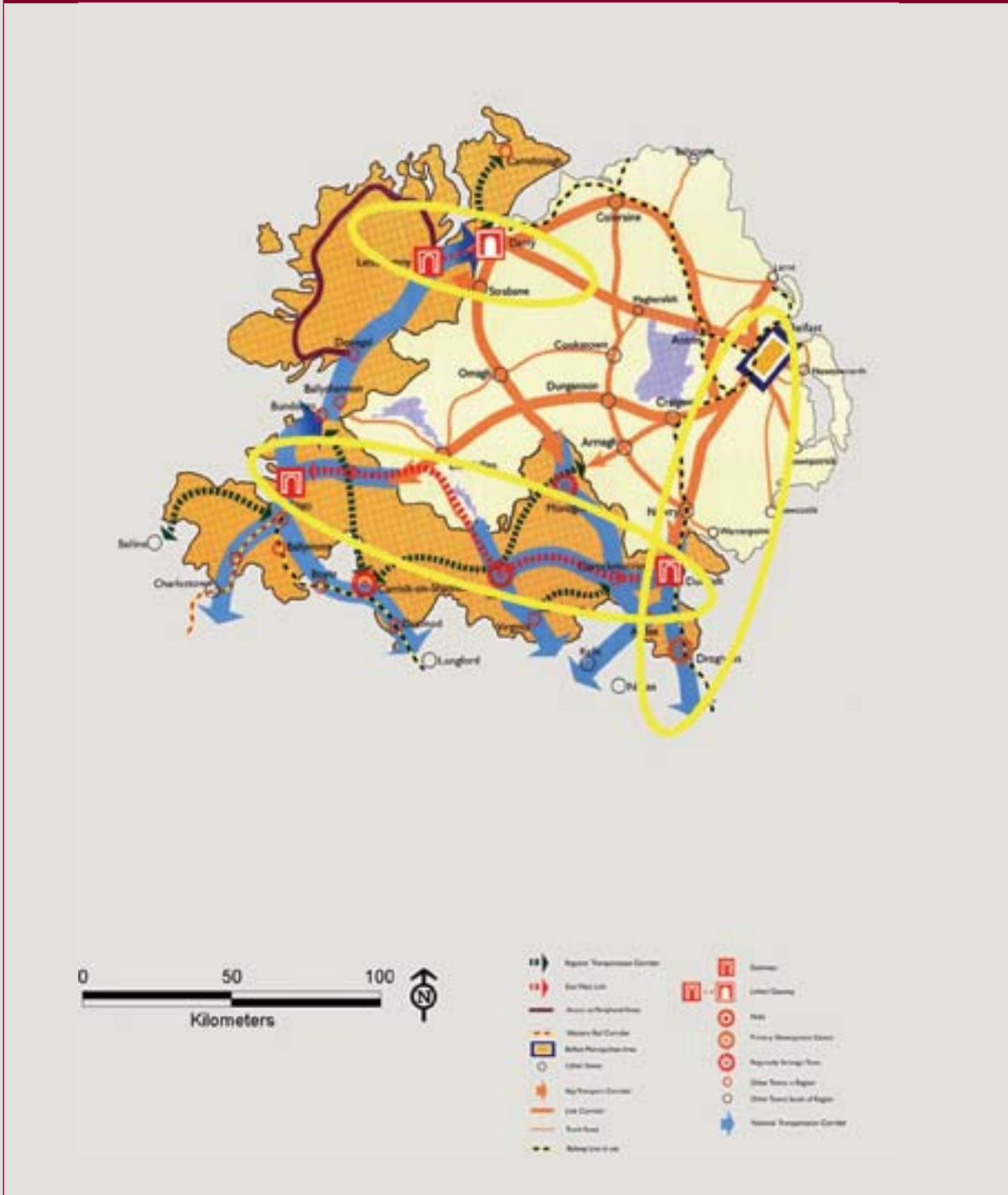
### **Spatial Planning – NSS and RDS**

The NSS seeks to consolidate the physical size of the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), and its associated transport system, in order to maintain the international competitiveness of the region and contribute to the overall development of Ireland. Beyond the GDA, it is proposed that the potential of urban centres be strengthened, reinforced and revitalised through the implementation of spatial planning strategies driving the development of wider regions. These potential growth centres include a number of urban nodes that can serve as gateways for cross-border regional development. Three of the nine designated gateways are located in the Border Region. The NSS anticipates enhanced planning co-operation to facilitate the critical mass necessary for the success of the gateways in border areas. This would require planning for development corridors straddling the border such as Letterkenny-Derry and Dundalk-Newry corridors (see Figure 1).

The RDS seeks to consolidate the Belfast Metropolitan Area and its eastern hinterland and to support the balanced development of the region by promoting Derry/Londonderry as a gateway for the North West (including Donegal). The strategy also identifies the border city of Newry as one of three other key urban centres with a major inter-regional development role – the others being the border town of Enniskillen and the gateway seaport town of Larne.

Both spatial strategies draw upon the methodology and policy options agreed in Europe and demonstrated by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) which was agreed in Potsdam in 1999 (European Commission, 1999).

Figure 1.1 Cross-border Planning Corridors



Based on the two spatial strategies and the key border interfaces, three key and distinct zones could potentially benefit from strategic planning cooperation; namely the Dublin/Belfast and Derry/Letterkenny corridors as well as the Dundalk/Sligo corridor including links to Armagh, Cavan, Monaghan, Enniskillen and Omagh.

Source: Border Regional Planning Authority  
Map reproduced (2006) by

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Whilst most of this joint work to date has been informal between the departments responsible for strategic planning, greater collaboration in a more formalised environment would bring further benefits to the development of an all-island economy. Increases in population, consumer spending, service provision, demand for amenities, manufacturing output and housing demand are key drivers of development in urban and rural areas. These drivers of growth are generating higher levels of demand for transport and are also creating many other demand and supply side pressures for infrastructure and service provision. Inter-jurisdictional co-operation will bring added value in addressing these opportunities and challenges by encouraging an integrated spatial approach to economic competitiveness.

Strategic spatial planning is defined as the collective efforts to re-image a city, urban region or wider territory and to translate the results into priorities for investment, strategic infrastructure and principles of land use regulation (Healey, 2004). It is about people and environment and generating a greater awareness of the importance of the spatial dimension in creating successful places for living and working. New strategies for spatial planning and regional development emphasise the importance of urban networks and associated planning corridors to manage the pressure of economic competitiveness in the era of globalisation.

Spatial planning provides a flexible mechanism for managing the changing connections between cities and regions. It also provides a means of unifying vertical (top-down) management with horizontal integration of sectoral activities.

The creation of critical mass at particular locations is recognised for planning purposes as essential in supporting economic opportunity and the delivery of a wide range of services. The role of spatial planning raises many issues and implications for economic competitiveness within an all-island context. The challenge is to provide a framework for co-operation in relation to planning and infrastructural development that will lead to an improvement in economic competitiveness and social cohesion across both parts of the island.

This report considers the potential of a framework for collaborative action for spatial planning to facilitate mutual economic benefit and enhance competitiveness on the island of Ireland. Of its very nature, a collaborative framework for spatial strategies focuses on the island perspective. That is where the main benefits from working together, North and South, on spatial strategies brings the greatest benefits. However, there is also a strong East/West dimension to many of the issues considered in this report. There are clearly important political, economic and social linkages between Northern Ireland and other parts of the UK. There are also important linkages between Ireland and the UK. Examples include transport infrastructure, air and sea routes, ports, telecommunications and energy interconnection and tourism. There are also distinctive regional East/West links that could be further developed on a collaborative basis – for example, between the North East and Scotland and indeed, between Scotland and the North West. The potential for strong economic flows and communication linkages on a North/South and East/West basis highlights the need for a co-ordinated approach to spatial planning.

# 1.2 Terms of Reference

**InterTradelreland commissioned the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD)<sup>1</sup> to undertake research into the spatial planning strategies in Northern Ireland and Ireland and to identify the potential for the development of a framework for collaborative action.**

The research aim is “to reflect upon existing spatial strategies in Northern Ireland and Ireland and to set an agenda exploring a possible framework for collaborative action thereby

creating conditions that will facilitate economic benefit and enhance competitiveness on the island of Ireland”. The research examines the case and explores the scope for achieving enhanced collaboration and co-ordination on spatial planning and development on an all-island basis. Recommendations are drawn from the findings with a view to highlighting the requirements necessary for a collaborative framework to successfully contribute value-added economic and other benefits for both jurisdictions.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 1

# 1.3 European Cross-border Co-operation

**Based on the European experience, there is strong evidence that meaningful mutual benefits can be secured through collaboration on an all-island basis in relation to how the physical and spatial environment is planned to meet the needs of an expanding economy in the 21st Century.**

Under the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas, the Spring 2005 European Council placed a renewed commitment on growth and jobs, targeting investment in knowledge, innovation and research capacities, together with infrastructure support to improve the economic competitiveness of regions and cities (Commission of the European Communities, 2005). Meeting this growth and employment challenge will necessitate

member states extending and deepening key markets such as telecoms, energy and transport; increasing investment to support innovation in R&D; and facilitating the sustainable use of resources in contributing to a strong business base (European Policy Research Centre, 2005).

Several case examples have been identified within the research which are pertinent to the experience of the island of Ireland. They illustrate a diverse range of cross-border initiatives to show that various forms of collaboration are seen as necessary at the national, sub-regional and local levels amongst our European neighbours. Specific proposals for co-operative action in Chapter 4 are based upon this review of European cross-border initiatives and their adaptation to the situation along the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland or within an all-island context.

# 1.4 Economic Case for a Collaborative Framework

**The sustained economic expansion enjoyed by Ireland over the past decade has been characterised by a strong fiscal position, full employment, rising real living standards, targeting inward investment and economic support infrastructure (Enterprise Strategy Group, 2004).**

To enhance competitiveness in the face of increasing globalisation, a subsequent report by Forfás and the National Competitiveness Council (2005), highlights the importance of prioritising investment in areas which will sustain the capacity for long term growth. Noting the increased importance of the services sector and knowledge as drivers of economic development, this latter report identifies areas where Ireland has or can develop a position of competitive strength, differentiation and critical mass through the optimal utilisation of knowledge-based resources.

In promoting a more dynamic and flexible economy, all-island and cross-border innovation networks offer the capacity to link together indigenous and foreign owned companies operating in Ireland with operators in business supply chains. It also affords opportunities to link with research and development institutions thereby creating the conditions for a globally recognised 'innovation hotspot' (Forfás and National Competitiveness Council, 2005). The support infrastructure to deliver greater competitive advantage will include more flexible forms of business organisation, advanced information and communication technology,

a business culture to support entrepreneurial innovation, and speedier decision making at government level to facilitate business development.

The Economic Vision for Northern Ireland focuses on the strengths offered by the relatively youthful population and the high educational attainment levels that have contributed to the performance of the economy. The overarching driver to achieve the vision is improving the province's global position through increased productivity and value-added leading to enhanced market share (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, 2005). Over recent decades, Northern Ireland has made considerable progress in expanding its economy but, in relative terms, has lagged behind the strong growth shown by Ireland.

It is recognised that major challenges face the Northern Ireland economy due to structural weaknesses caused by an over reliance on the public sector which accounts for 62 per cent of GDP compared to 25 per cent in Ireland (Table 1.1). These challenges are also reflected in a relatively lower level of GDP growth and rate of business formation than in Ireland, an infrastructural deficit, and low levels of R&D investment particularly by the private sector. It is important that Northern Ireland improves its competitiveness by shifting from a position that relies less on low costs to compete to one based on higher value added goods and services. Central to a more competitive position is the need to promote greater innovation, creativity and technology-led workplace skills.



**Table 1.1 – GDP Growth, Unemployment and Public Sector Share for Northern Ireland and Ireland (2005)**

		Ireland	Northern Ireland
Real GDP Growth	Percentage change per annum (2005)	4.5	1.8
Unemployment	Percentage of labour force (2005)	4.3	4.6
Share of public sector in GDP	Percentage total GDP	25.0	62.0

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006

These statistics at a national level, however, mask the much weaker performance of the border counties. The adverse consequences of back-to-back development impact most in these locations. This is attested to by many of the maps contained in this report (see Figures 2 to 5) which illustrate the access and infrastructure deficiencies that beset the border areas. Figures 6 and 7 show that lower attainment rates are achieved in the border territories, and it seems likely that some portion of this poor performance can be attributed to the planning and infrastructure gaps in the border zones. The collaborative framework of the two spatial strategies, as advocated in this report, will not only bring significant benefits to the island as a whole but will enhance economic opportunities within the border counties.

The future prospects and opportunities facing the island of Ireland can be addressed most efficiently by working together to enhance economic competitiveness based on all-island trade and business development networks and supporting programmes (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, 2005). The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005/2015 (Strategic Investment Board, 2005) sets out a sustained capital investment programme designed to deliver on the Economic Vision by providing unprecedented levels of investment in infrastructure. This will augment the investment programme already committed in Ireland under the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000-2006 (Government of Ireland, 1999) and the significant level of investment in infrastructure proposed under the new plan for the period 2007-2013.

A recent report by Engineers Ireland considers the island economy in its totality in terms of engineering a knowledge island (Irish Academy of Engineering, 2005). The report projects a vision for a knowledge-based economy which would place the island of Ireland in the forefront of the most advanced economies by 2020. The authors stress that achievement of this goal is dependant on collaboration between both parts of the island so that the economic and skills development potential is fulfilled. It is estimated that the combined economies of the island of Ireland currently rank at 14th in the world measured in per capita income.

Allowing for the forecasted growth of the leading economies it is further estimated that to reach the level of the top 5 economies by 2020 the all-island economy would need to grow by 4.5 per cent per annum. This would place the all-island economy on a par, based on income per head, with the US and Japan by 2020. Moving into the top 5 league for the knowledge economy will necessitate expanding key sectors of the all-island economy particularly manufacturing, services and technology. In each of the growth sectors it is suggested that a greater concentration should be placed on upgrading processes and moving towards smart and adaptive practices.

***'By placing enterprise at the heart of Government and by implementing a co-ordinated approach to enterprise policy, Ireland has the opportunity to outpace competitor countries in the swiftness, efficiency and responsiveness with which it anticipates and meets the requirements of competitiveness.'***

(Forfás, 2004)

***'A better future for all – together we can develop cost effective world class public services to take Northern Ireland through the 21st Century. Co-operation between Northern Ireland and Ireland across a range of issues will be vital in developing an all-island economy.'***

(Strategic Investment Board, 2005)

In considering these various reports, it is increasingly obvious why the economic case for collaboration is so compelling on the grounds of competitiveness, investment return, infrastructure provision, economies of scale, business efficiency and knowledge transfer. These numerous opportunities are possible despite different legislative and administrative regimes (i.e. two currencies with a floating exchange rate, two planning systems, and differences in corporate and personal taxation<sup>2</sup>). Within the context of the EU Single Market, there are a number of other conspicuous advantages contributing to economic competitiveness on a North/South basis. These include the removal of custom duties and formalities on cross-border trade; easier cross-border transport flows; no official restrictions on tendering for cross-border contracts; and no special constraints on North/South labour mobility.

Effective, agile government and improved planning can provide the island of Ireland with yet another competitive advantage. Infrastructure provision is seen as one of the four essential conditions required in achieving competitive advantage – the others are cost competitiveness, innovation and entrepreneurship, and a skilled labour force including management capability. There is already extensive North/South co-operation underway in planning and developing strategic transport networks, and the RDS and NSS both further highlight the need for targeted investment in infrastructure such as transport,

2 Making Ireland a 'single market', Belfast Telegraph, 21st November 2005

electricity, energy, telecommunications, waste management, industry and tourism (See Figures 2 to 5). A possible combined spending on infrastructure of €100 billion over the next decade has been indicated by both governments. The recent launch of Transport 21 by the Department of Transport in Ireland is placing infrastructure as a top priority to advance the productive capacity of the economy and to facilitate regional development and cross-border links over the next decade (Cullen, 2005). In Northern Ireland the Investment Strategy 2005/2015 also highlights the government's intentions to maintain its investment commitments in infrastructure (road, rail and bus) over the next ten years (Strategic Investment Board, 2005). Such investment will ensure that a modern infrastructure capacity is in place to support economic competitiveness, deliver investment returns and promote environmental benefits.

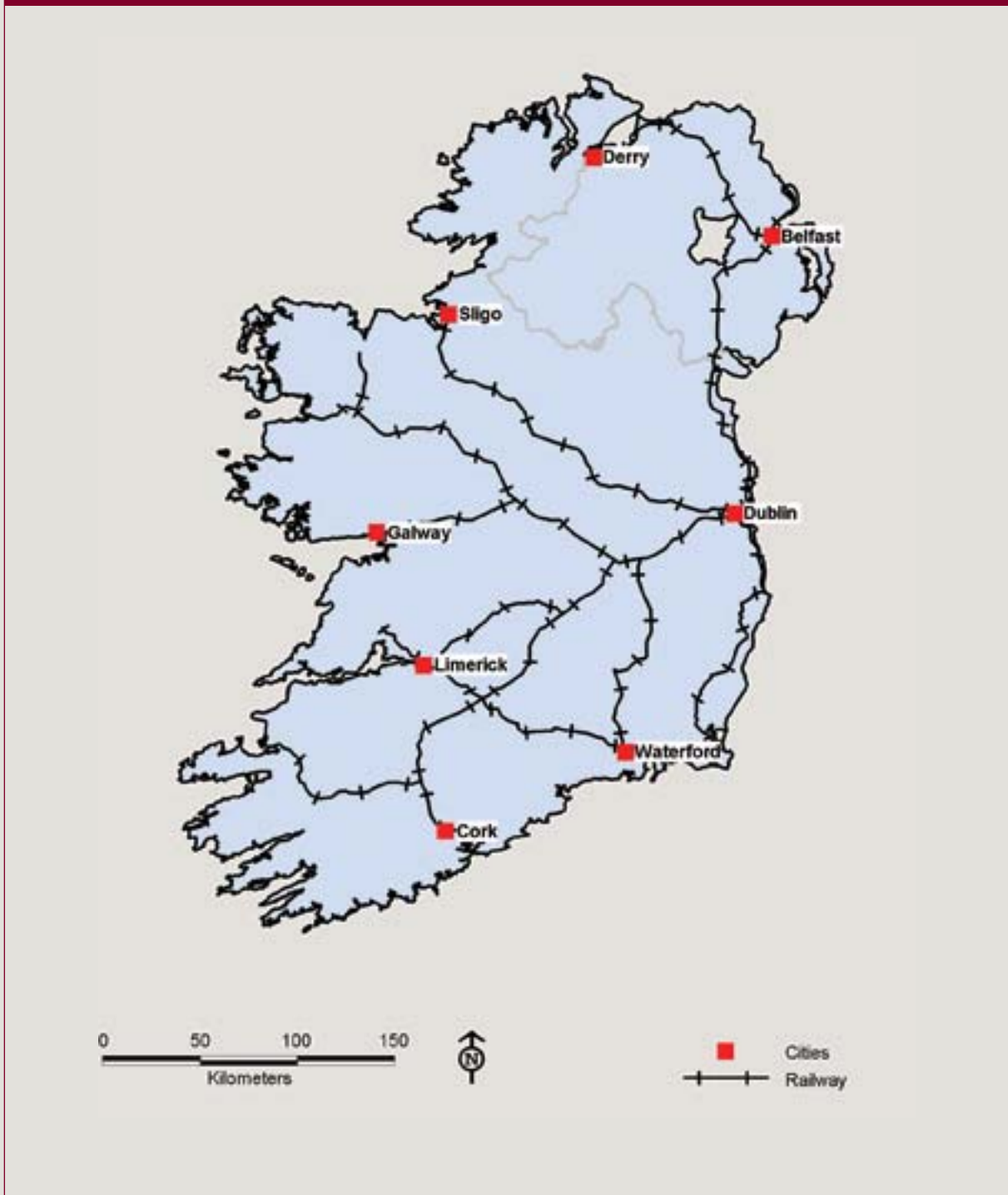
***'Strong enterprise networks are required that will establish the strategic agenda for their areas of activity. These networks will increasingly facilitate knowledge transfer, disseminate market knowledge, foster innovation, inform the research agenda and identify infrastructure needs specific to sectoral development. Increasing focus must be placed on assisting the emergence of such networks to inform the effective orientation of and delivery of state supports.'***

(Forfás, 2004)

***'The challenge for Northern Ireland... specifically we must enhance all-island co-operation through the further development of collaborative, knowledge-intensive, all-island trade and business development networks and supporting programmes.'***

(Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, 2005)

Figure 2 Rail Network on the Island of Ireland 2006



This map illustrates the large gap in the coverage of the rail network throughout the Border Region and western parts of Northern Ireland, and highlights the compensatory dependence of these areas on a good road network.

Source: Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) and Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI)

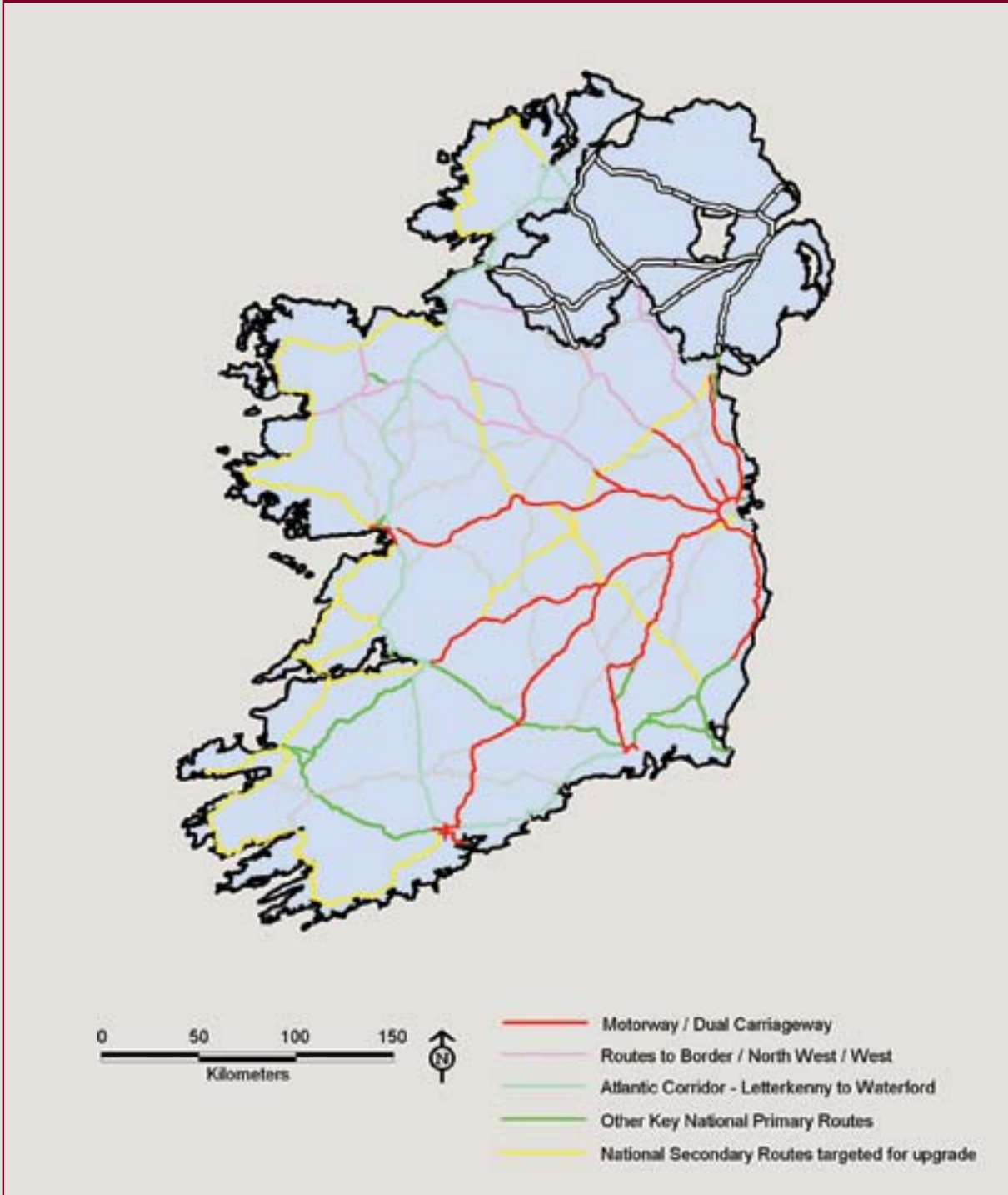
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Figure 3 Transport 21 Road Network for Ireland 2015



The pattern of investment in the road networks in Northern Ireland and Ireland is tending to concentrate the higher capacity and higher speed routes along the corridors between Dublin and the regional cities in the West and South and along the Eastern seaboard. A correspondingly lower level of capacity and lower speeds is being provided outside these areas and to the North West in particular.

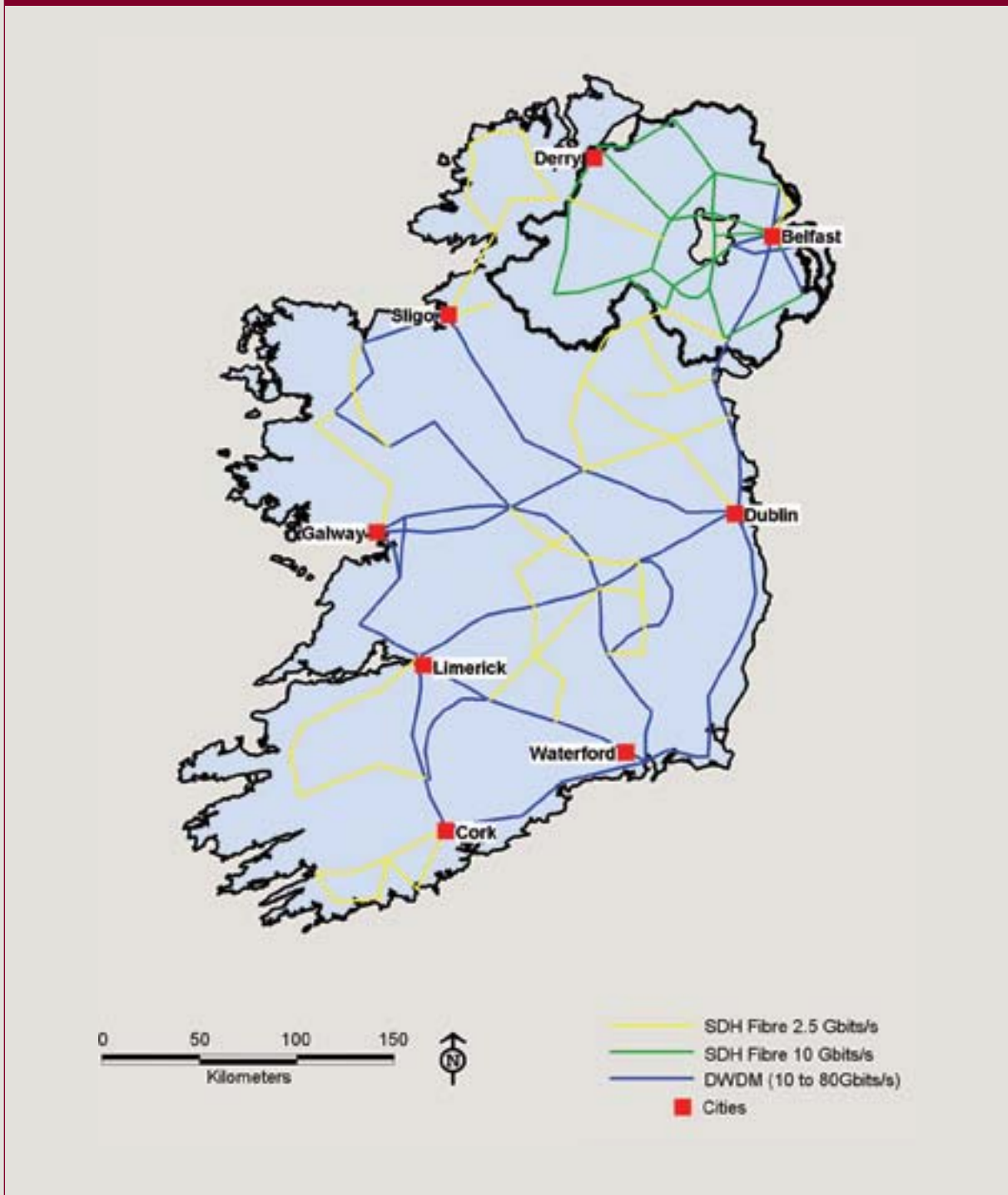
Source: Department of Transport  
Map prepared (2006) by

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Figure 4 Broadband Backbone Infrastructure on the Island of Ireland 2004



This map highlights the developing nature of the broadband networks on the island of Ireland and also the relatively self-contained nature of the networks in Northern Ireland and Ireland with relatively few inter-linkages.

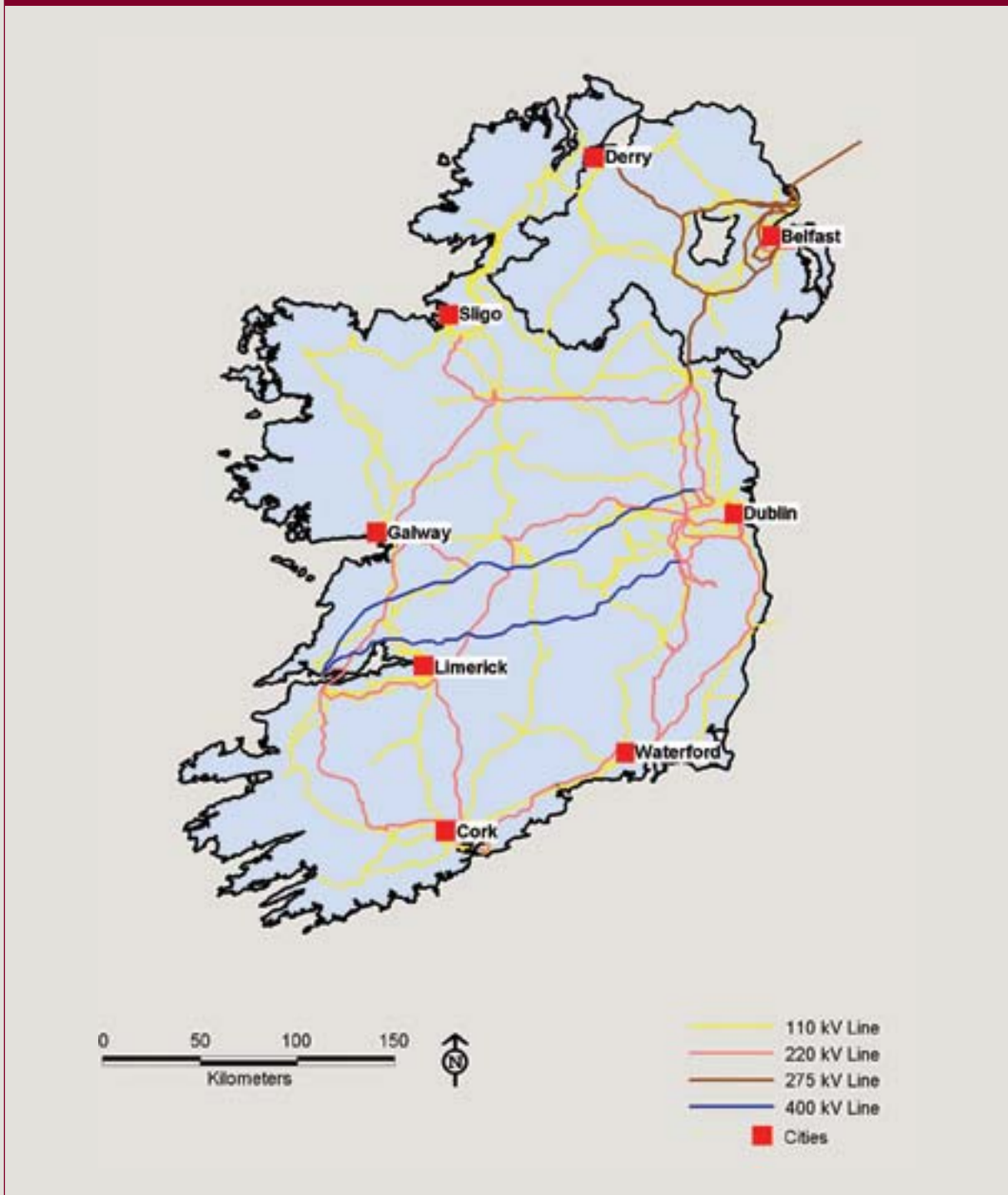
Source: Mason Consultants  
Map prepared (2006) by

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Figure 5 Electricity Network on the Island of Ireland 2005



This map also highlights the relatively self-contained nature of the networks in Northern Ireland and Ireland, particularly in the North West but also the developing links between the two networks.

Source: La Tene Maps (permit 720)  
Map prepared (2006) by

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# 1.5 Conclusions

**Ireland, both North and South, has experienced unprecedented levels of growth and development over the last decade which have generated opportunities and challenges for the spatial planning of our urban and rural areas (Forfás and National Competitiveness Council, 2005).**

The prospects of better transport and more efficient energy and efficient communication technology offer potential for stronger regional economic growth and balanced development across the island of Ireland (See Figures 2 to 5). City regions are increasingly playing a significant role, with their performance measured by their ability to deliver a high value-added economy, knowledge based businesses and advanced telecommunications technology (Parkinson et al, 2004).

This section of the report has provided a perspective of the benefits which collaboration on an all-island basis can create for the roll-out of spatial planning strategies linked to competitiveness within a changing economic landscape. Drawing on the views of key stakeholders interviewed in the course of the research, this report in subsequent chapters identifies:

- The issues, opportunities and key messages for collaboration on spatial planning in Northern Ireland and Ireland.
- The ability of existing institutional arrangements/cross-border networks to facilitate effective implementation of spatial strategies.
- The capacity of action orientated approaches (area-based and sector-based projects) in promoting the collaborative framework.



## 2.0 **KEY STAKEHOLDERS VIEWS**

*Ireland in a changing world economy*

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Stakeholder Views

2.3 Conclusions

2.4 Key Issues Matrix



## 2.0 KEY STAKEHOLDERS VIEWS

### *The Island of Ireland in a changing world economy*

#### **Key messages from the consultative process**

- Collaboration between the spatial strategies will enhance the competitiveness of the island of Ireland without detriment to either jurisdiction.
- It is widely recognised that joint collaboration can deliver mutual benefits. Frameworks for collaborative action can help to overcome the negative effects of existing parallel policies that do not have a strategic all-island vision.
- The development of consistent and comparable datasets and thematic maps on existing conditions and emerging trends in both jurisdictions must be a priority for both Governments; they would greatly enhance the potential for evidence-based collaborative action and spatial planning.
- Existing differences between North and South, such as fiscal regimes, taxation rates, and planning systems are realities that must be taken into account.
- The need for a receptive political landscape is critical to fostering collaboration on spatial development and infrastructural investment on an all-island basis.

# 2.1 Introduction

**This chapter summarises the views and opinions of the key public, private, and voluntary sector stakeholders consulted as the core component of the research methodology.**

The interviewees were selected on the basis of their involvement with and knowledge of strategic planning issues in Northern Ireland and Ireland (Appendix 3). A survey instrument (Appendix 4) was used to steer the discussion with each of the interviewees concerning the existing and potential synergies between the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland and the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) for Ireland.

Outputs from the interviews, with a focus on the potential for a framework of collaborative action on spatial planning, are contained in an addendum to this report.

In this overview, the key messages emerging from the interviews are summarised under five groupings:

1. Central government;
2. Local government (including regional authorities/assemblies in Ireland);
3. Representative bodies and statutory agencies;
4. Research organisations; and
5. The private sector.

The Key Issues Matrix at the end of this chapter summarises the main issues identified within each of the 12 themes that were used to guide the discussions with the stakeholders. The matrix also provides concluding points in the form of key messages for each of the themes.

## 2.2 Stakeholder Views

### 2.2.1 Central Government

Both spatial strategies are strongly influenced by the EU planning concepts noted in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (European Commission, 1999). As some respondents pointed out, the two strategies, taken together, could be considered as “the equivalent of an all-island plan.” That this is not the case is due to the official remit of the departments responsible for spatial planning to “stop at the border.” While there are examples of informal project-driven co-operation, there is not sufficient formal and strategic co-operation to allow the formulation of more systematic and strategic levels of collaboration to meet the longer-term challenges of ensuring the economic competitiveness of the Island of Ireland.

There is general consensus among central government officials, North and South, that there are numerous advantages to collaboration on spatial strategies. Transport and tourism are two such examples which illustrate the potential synergies and benefits that co-operation can bring. It is widely recognised that a joint analysis leading to a complementary approach to spatial planning, followed by a carefully selected number of common initiatives, would facilitate balanced economic growth.

***“An all-island framework that facilitates more effective planning and delivery of infrastructure, whether it be physical access infrastructure or telecommunications infrastructure, will facilitate a higher degree of contact, interaction and exchange of information between economic actors North and South.”***

Representative, Central Government, Ireland

Most respondents identified a series of impediments to joined-up action. The most frequently cited obstacle was the lack of consistent and comparable data on existing conditions and emerging trends on the respective sides of the border. The availability of common data sets to aid in planning decision-making is critical to sound analysis and the development of informed policy options and should be given a high priority on both sides of the border. Their availability will:

- Facilitate the co-ordination of the future infrastructure investments needed to lever private sector investment, create economies of scale and accommodate growth.
- Enhance access to EU funding opportunities, where the planning and funding of strategic all-island/cross-border initiatives is given priority.

Officials in both jurisdictions agree that thematic mapping would allow them to better understand the potential impacts of economic trends and demographic movements (see Figures 6 to 8). The combination of co-ordinated data collection and thematic mapping “would provide a factual platform upon which to build a realistic all-island framework” and will provide a better understanding of key drivers influencing cross-border markets, including labour movements and housing markets.

Another consistent message derived from the interviews is that all-island strategies, programmes and projects must be based on practical and pragmatic initiatives that demonstrate the added value of joined-up approaches.

Proposed areas for all-island collaboration include:

- Transport,
- Health,
- Waste management and other shared services,
- Education,
- Telecommunications,
- Energy, and
- Tourism.

Within each of the respective spatial strategies, officials noted the importance of linking to community-based initiatives and informing local government and community groups regarding the objectives of the RDS and the NSS.

***“The potential impact derived from a framework of collaborative action will be dependent on the ability of all stakeholders on both sides of the border to work together in an integrated manner.”***

Representative, Regional Government, Northern Ireland

There is also agreement on the potential role of strategic planning in developing stronger linkages between spatial planning initiatives and various sectors and funding sources,

including centrally financed infrastructure and service delivery programmes. More proactive efforts were cited, for example “putting in delivery mechanisms between the National Development Plan and the Regional Planning Guidelines to facilitate the delivery of strategic spatial planning initiatives on a joint North/South basis”. Similar references were made to the need for linkages between the RDS and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) in Northern Ireland. The proposed framework for co-operation suggested in Chapter 4 can help to address these issues.

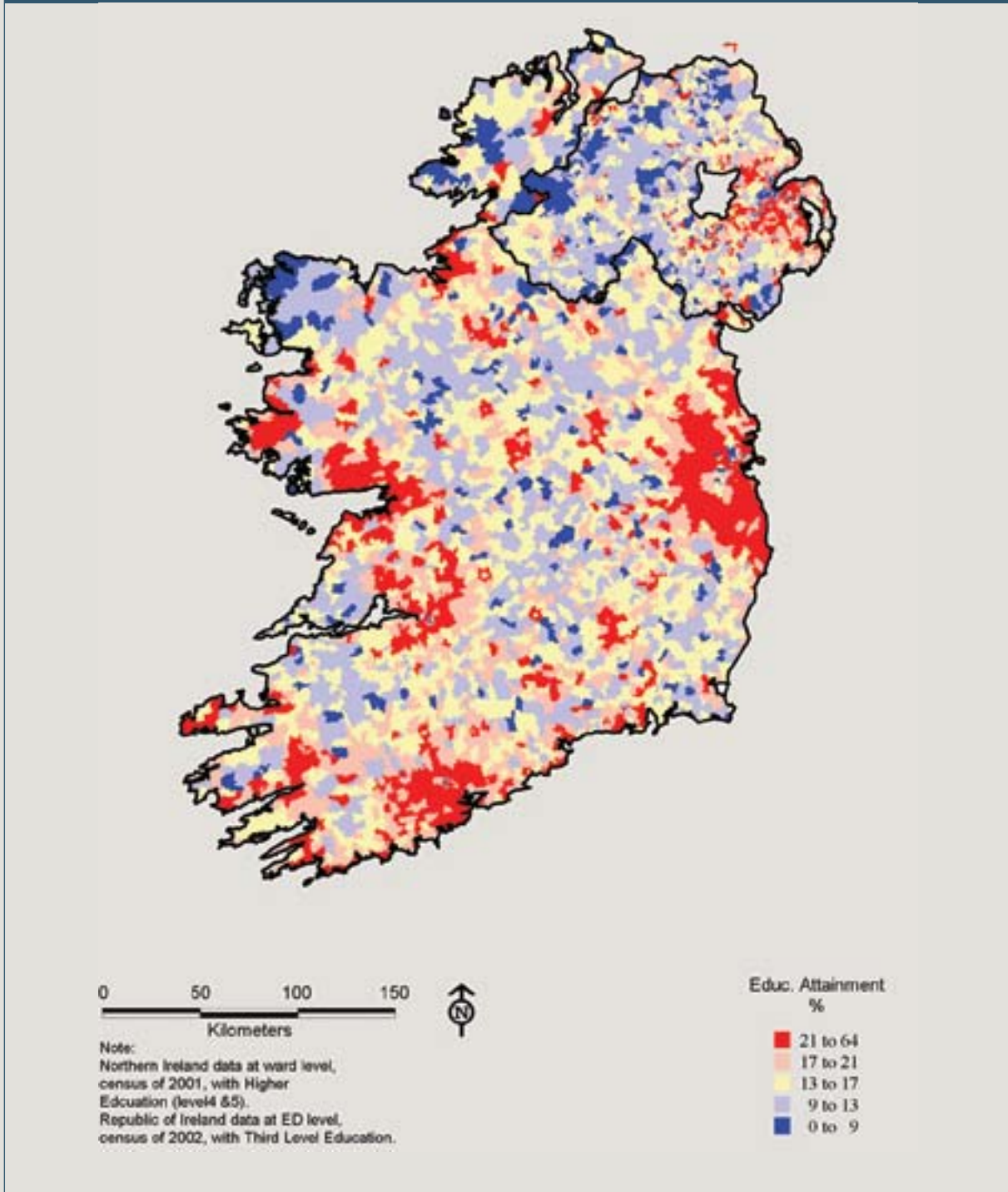
### **2.2.2 Local Government**

A key message among local government officials, North and South, is that the respective spatial strategies possess sufficient flexibility to engage in joint collaboration. Such flexibility would strengthen their impact. However, differences in regulatory regimes will have an impact on the effectiveness of cross-border collaboration. But these differences are not insurmountable and a combination of effective linkages between the two spatial strategies and specific projects can help cross-border economic activities reach their potential. In addition, stronger central government support would ensure that there is an operational link between local planning initiatives and funding streams.

***“The difficulty is that the remit of current government departments stops at the border and, therefore, cross-border ventures are difficult. The global economy, however, demands that we present ourselves as a whole instead of thinking on a small parochial scale.”***

Representative, Local Government, Northern Ireland

Figure 6 Educational Attainment (Higher Level)  
for the Island of Ireland 2001/2002



This map illustrates the concentration of areas where a higher proportion of the population have attained third level education qualifications around the main urban centres on the island of Ireland with notable pockets of lower levels of third level educational attainment in border areas and western parts of Northern Ireland.

Source: NISRA (2001), CSO (2002),  
Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) and  
Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI)

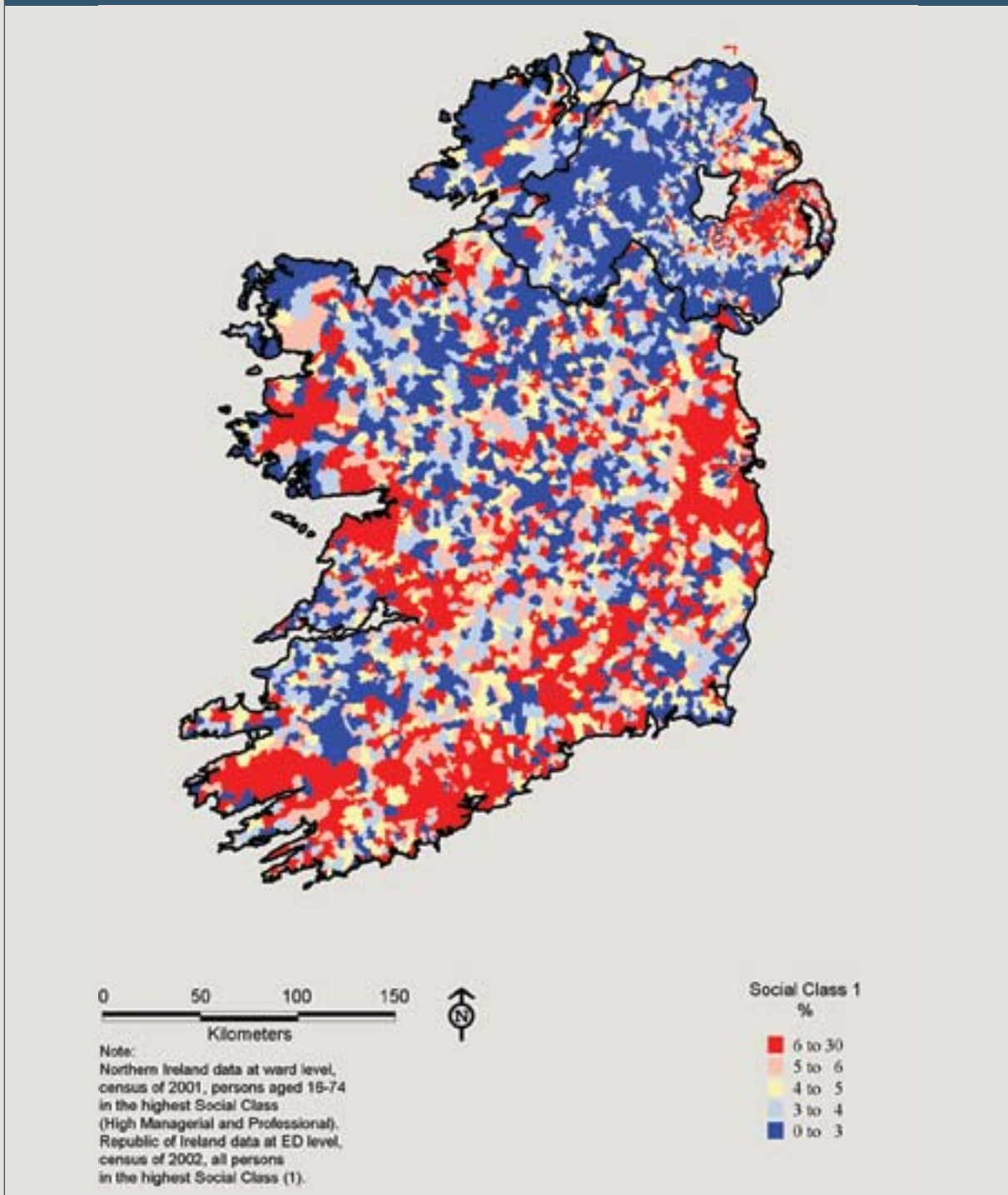
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Figure 7 Higher Earners / Professionals: Island of Ireland 2001/2002



This map illustrates the contrast between the concentration of high earners and professionals in the major urban areas, notably Dublin and a more concentrated cluster around Belfast, and lower levels of such individuals in the border areas and the North West.

Source: NISRA (2001), CSO (2002),  
Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) and  
Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI)

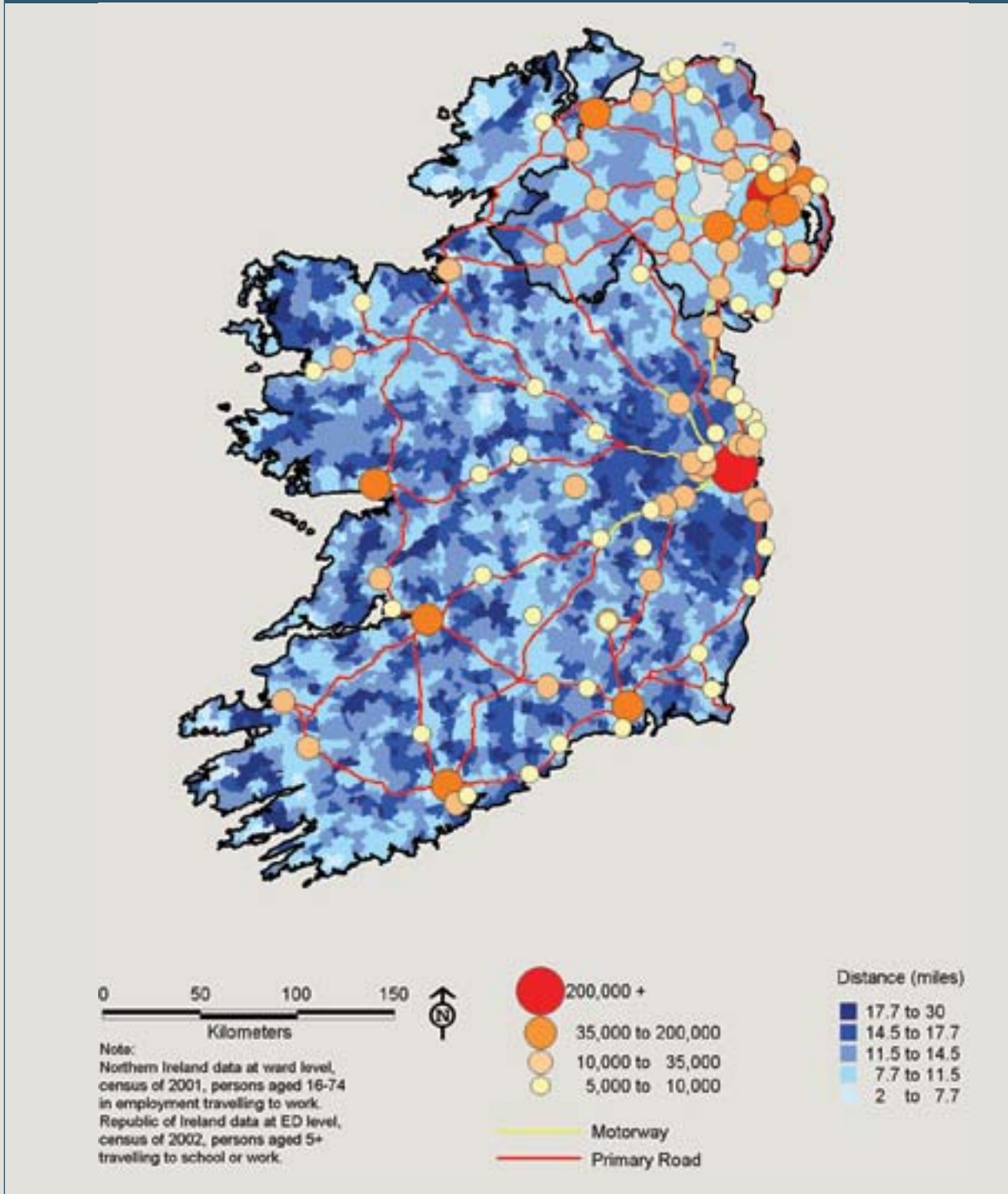
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Figure 8 Travel to Work Distance (Average) for the Island of Ireland 2001/2002



The datasets for travel patterns in Northern Ireland and Ireland are not precisely comparable and further development of these datasets is needed. Nonetheless, comparisons highlight a trend where people seem to be travelling further to work in Ireland than in Northern Ireland. This trend may reflect the influence of the extensive network of large towns and employment centres across Northern Ireland as opposed to the dominance of the Dublin area within the spatial structure of Ireland.

Source: Department of Transport  
 Map prepared (2006) by

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There is also agreement that the current lack of information and compatibility of data limits the potential of defining joint initiatives. Local government officials share the view of their central government colleagues that the lack of common compatible data has impeded the definition of a co-ordinated spatial strategy between North and South. In addition, they believe that there is a need to develop common standard benchmarks for the delivery of public services. For example, comparable education standards were cited.

***“Time will be a key factor in the production of any all-island framework. This will not be a short-term objective; rather, as a process, it will take many years to achieve – this is due to the complexity of issues that will have to be overcome (for example, different currencies, different legislation, different tax regimes).”***

Representative, Local Government, Ireland

Specific areas suggested for future collaboration include:

- Transport as a key to developing new economic activities,
- Telecommunications,
- Tourism,
- Waste management, including recycling and the prevention of illegal dumping,
- Efficiencies of scale by defining cross-border service areas for health care, education and housing, and
- Future growth locations that could be developed collaboratively.

### 2.2.3 Representative Bodies

There is a belief among representative bodies at the all-island level that the development of a common transport policy is the main focus between the RDS and the NSS. However, concern was expressed that spatial planning policy is suffering as a result of the lack of joined-up thinking and action between the two jurisdictions. There is also a sense that only collaboration will allow:

- The revitalisation of the underdeveloped Border Region,
- The achievement of balanced regional development between the east and west and a move away from a north/south competitive perspective,
- The development of Newry/Dundalk and Derry/Letterkenny cross-border initiatives, and
- The implementation of Strategic Employment Locations (SELs) as identified in the RDS.

While there are concerns about the challenges posed by the legal, planning and tax differences in both jurisdictions, the differences are not seen as a major issue, especially if information is readily accessible on the government structures in both jurisdictions. Compatible data sets on travel to work areas and labour mobility were again identified as necessary for more informed decision-making within each jurisdiction and for the development of joint projects.

***“The components necessary to operationalise a collaborative framework is to initially start with discussion and dialogue on a cross-border basis. This is happening in many cases but it needs to be progressed to the sharing of data and building up databases to facilitate better decision-making on issues at local level.”***

Representative Organisation, Northern Ireland

***“In developing collaborative frameworks, it is essential that key infrastructural requirements to facilitate all-island balanced spatial development are examined.”***

Representative Organisation, Ireland

Areas for potential co-operation are similar to those noted by central and local authorities with the addition of addressing the challenges presented by rural depopulation and the need to regenerate rural economies. An interesting concept put forth is that regional specialisation is necessary and will benefit all-island competitiveness. Finally, there is a good understanding that strategic policies in both jurisdictions should follow similar long-term timeframes.

#### **2.2.4 Research Organisations**

The research organisations interviewed emphasised the close relationship between strategic planning and the promotion of economic activity. Therefore, collaborative actions, North and South, must emphasise the integrated and positive role of economic planning on the island of Ireland. Frameworks for collaborative action can help to overcome the negative effects

of existing parallel policies that do not have a strategic all-island vision. These frameworks do not have to be uniform in nature but rather reflect the specificities of each sector, such as waste, telecommunications, energy and transport. Developing and promoting the framework for collaboration should be pragmatic and build upon existing initiatives. Evaluating the impacts of existing evidence of successful collaborations would be a useful methodology of overcoming concerns over working jointly. The Newry-Dundalk road was noted as an excellent example of what can be achieved through collaboration.

***“...the principal element in ensuring effective delivery is the political will, in particular resolving tensions between local and central/upper levels of governance... collaborative approaches are limited unless the political will exists.”***

Representative, Research Organisation, Northern Ireland

There was a clear consensus that significant economic growth and inward investment opportunities can emerge on an all-island basis as a result of increased co-operation. The basis for economic growth will of course differ given the variable drivers influencing the markets and sub-markets in Northern Ireland and Ireland. In Northern Ireland, collaborative efforts will have localised impacts that should be assessed whereas in Ireland, collaboration will harness the significant dynamics that already exist for the mutual benefit of the two jurisdictions.

***“Enhanced co-operation at a policy and service delivery level has the potential to address a range of issues affecting both parts of the island including decentralisation, access to health services, the improvement of transport services and the tackling of social exclusion.”***

Representative, Research Organisation, Ireland

The need for standardised datasets, particularly the date, format and type of information collected, and thematic maps was again cited as a priority. For example, understanding the regional role of towns and cities such as Enniskillen, Derry/Londonderry, Dundalk and Newry and the impact of cross-border catchment areas can be made clearer through using thematic maps.

### **2.2.5 The Private Sector**

The key focus of the private sector is maximising business opportunities, a goal that is often pursued without direct reference to the visions of the future expressed in spatial plans. Yet, the interviews with private sector players showed there is an increasing awareness that a collaborative approach between the two spatial strategies will enhance the efficiency of service delivery and increase commercial opportunities. Again, the need for compatible and accessible data is seen as crucial to promoting more informed development choices.

***“Without such frameworks, a situation will arise where two separate strategies (the NSS and RDS) will influence the development of an area, particularly around the Border, and because of diverging policies, no positive developments will result.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Ireland

***“Decision-makers in the public and private sectors must be able to understand the ‘full-circle’ picture e.g. economic activity in Dundalk has a potential influence on Newry and vice versa. This will be facilitated by comparable datasets.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Northern Ireland

Private sector planning consultants noted that EU legislation and directives in diversity of habitats, energy auditing of housing, and other areas will influence both spatial strategies and joint activities. Therefore, it is best that jurisdictions “take the lead and set out an agenda/programme of action which meets societal needs and provides direction for private sector delivery”.

Private investors believe that a greater enterprise culture is required to sustain and develop the benefits of all-island marketing and that a return to devolved government in Northern Ireland will help secure funding for development initiatives, and thus enhance the role of the private sector in growing the economy. From a private sector point of view, government backing is seen as essential for spatial planning to be successful.

***“A key impact of all-island collaboration would be enhanced efficiency and less duplication of costs (i.e. economies of scale). There are also issues around critical mass and increasing market size – thus making the island more attractive to foreign investment.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Ireland

The need to move to more effective partnerships between the private sector and North/South bodies is vital in building consensus. Reflecting other interviews, there is a concern over regional disparities, the east/west imbalance, cultural differences and the lack of joined-up approaches to labour markets. The regulatory and fiscal effects on location decision-making

are also seen as having the potential to act as short-term barriers to economic development, in particular the differing tax-regimes. However, developing co-operative agreements should not impinge upon the separate legal identities of both jurisdictions but acknowledge the differences that exist.

***“It is considered that certain truths must be articulated to ensure an all-island framework is progressed: Ireland is a small island, there is a definite need for strategic planning, and that such strategic planning should not impinge on the separate legal identity of the two jurisdictions.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Northern Ireland

## 2.3 Conclusions

The interviews with the key stakeholders are informative in so far as they reveal a significant consensus about the need for and potential of all-island collaboration. A convergence of views is evident among the five response groups although they represent different interests and hold various perspectives. The salient points can be summarised as follows.

1. The two spatial strategies are widely seen as providing a credible context for public investments in the coming years. Yet, the fact that they were developed as separate efforts is recognised as being a handicap that could, and should, be overcome with greater collaboration among central government agencies. The synergies that could be achieved would help sustain the economic competitiveness of the island and allow the development of areas that have lagged behind.
2. The differences that exist between North and South are recognised, particularly the different fiscal regimes. However, they are not seen as impediments to collaboration but, rather, realities that have to be taken into account by both the public and private sectors. The reality is that they have not impeded growing cross-border flows, particularly of labour, or prevented all-island collaboration in the tourism sector.
3. The benefits of further collaboration are widely recognised, particularly in the delivery of public services and are seen as favourable to private investment as well as potentially resulting in lower public costs as a result of efficiencies of scale. Defining areas of future co-operation will require building consensus among all key stakeholders, public and private, on specific interventions whose benefits can be realised in the short- to medium-term.
4. At the same time, the need for more ambitious interventions is recognised, particularly in areas that have lagged behind economically. A highly pragmatic attitude towards collaboration must be adopted if the competitiveness of the island of Ireland in a changing world context is to be increased. Potential areas of future collaboration are developed in Chapter 4.
5. Finally, the one area of collaboration over which there is almost universal agreement is, perhaps, the easiest: the creation of a compatible database. The standardisation of datasets will facilitate the analytical and policy tasks of government at all levels and provide the information needed by private investors. This is a task that should clearly be given priority by the respective government departments.

Two points that the respondents did not seem to be sufficiently aware of need to be mentioned:

- The necessity to arrive at a joint environmental policy to protect natural assets that have a cross-border dimension; and
- The harmonisation of development regulations in cross-border areas whose growth is likely to assume a symbiotic relationship.

While the first requires the attention of central government, the second offers opportunities for local government to collaborate on the preparation of common strategies to attract private investment into strategic locations of mutual benefit without competing with each other.

# 2.4 Key Issues Matrix

Theme	Northern Ireland	Ireland	Key Messages
Level of understanding and awareness of strategic planning policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall high awareness of RDS and sister documents and that links with the NSS exist; vague references to the ESDP and a weak understanding of the document's strategic context</li> <li>• Mixed understanding of what strategic planning policy means, with varying conceptualisations across different spatial scales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall high awareness of NSS and RPGs and the link between them; also knowledge of links between RDS and NSS (due to emulation in preparation of the strategies); mixed knowledge on relationship with ESDP</li> <li>• Understanding of strategic planning policy closely tied into economic planning and balanced development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased emphasis on developing the cross-border relationship is required, as well as an understanding of the European spatial context</li> <li>• Need to have a good awareness of the respective strategies, particularly where commonalities already exist</li> <li>• Strategic planning policy, and its operation, needs to be better understood across a range of audiences</li> </ul>
Interactions at different spatial scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall opinion that there is the capacity for greater cross-border co-operation</li> <li>• Both governments tend to focus on measures within their respective jurisdiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that NSS, in emulating the RDS, was not able to prescribe a fully effective spatial growth model for IRL</li> <li>• Interaction taking place across some sectors – generally informal in nature – but scope exists for more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope exists for greater levels of collaboration than is taking place at present</li> <li>• Collaboration can make certain projects more viable due to economies of scale</li> </ul>
Impact dynamics within the key sectors of the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on economies of scale</li> <li>• Distinctiveness of issues faced in NI highlights the need for innovative regional policy making within the broader UK context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economies of scale highlighted as important</li> <li>• Size of island suggests that it makes sense to collaborate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more investment in infrastructure to drive development</li> <li>• Many advantages to be gained from branding island on all-island basis e.g. tourism development</li> <li>• 'Social' needs to be built into equation</li> </ul>

Theme	Northern Ireland	Ireland	Key Messages
Economic competitiveness, growth and investment potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits can be derived from increasing critical mass and generating economies of scale</li> <li>• Growth needs to be progressed around the urban centres already identified for development</li> <li>• Joined-up thinking is a necessity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gateways and hubs identified – now need to promote growth in these areas</li> <li>• Increasing competitiveness on an all-island basis</li> <li>• Economies of scale and critical mass will bring many benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of joined-up thinking has resulted in divergence of development in the border region, which now needs to be addressed</li> <li>• Need to begin co-operating instead of competing with each other</li> </ul>
Drivers influencing market/sub-markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opinion that greater economies of scale and critical mass within an all-island context will result in lower prices</li> <li>• Demand factors impacting on housing sub-markets and travel-to-work-areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour markets not as joined up as should be</li> <li>• Recognition that markets in each jurisdiction are at different evolutionary stages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must develop a win-win scenario for all involved</li> <li>• Need to increase critical mass</li> <li>• Build on existing cross-border links</li> </ul>
Regulatory and fiscal effects on location decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant differences exist between the two jurisdictions – tax, exchange rates, salaries, currency, legislation; this could pose barriers to collaboration but can be overcome through compromise</li> <li>• Decision making, currently perceived as rigid and fixed, needs to become more open &amp; accessible</li> <li>• Understanding required on the drivers influencing cross-border markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different tax systems, currencies, etc but these do not necessarily negate opportunities for monetary gain (e.g. Newry model)</li> <li>• Economies of scale always attractive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature of barriers faced may only emerge when a focus for the framework is determined</li> <li>• Prospect of monetary gains will ensure barriers can be overcome</li> <li>• Cultural differences must be taken into account</li> </ul>

Theme	Northern Ireland	Ireland	Key Messages
Thematic maps on an all-island basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important visual tool; create holistic image to facilitate decision-making</li> <li>• Role in scoping and determining focus of collaborative actions</li> <li>• Warning that maps can go out of date quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important visual tool that helps illustrate patterns</li> <li>• Must be linked to analysis</li> <li>• Can demonstrate the benefits to areas of: travel to work patterns, cross-border trade, skills base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key tool provided used correctly</li> <li>• Boundaries for datasets need to be matched to facilitate mapping</li> <li>• Facilitate evidence-based policy making</li> </ul>
Core information and datasets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency in information is key to creating all-island framework; need for solid information base</li> <li>• Lots of information does exist but is in different formats, which requires action towards standardisation</li> <li>• Not all datasets are available to decision-makers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide variety of datasets exist but many are not widely available or utilised</li> <li>• Datasets are compiled for different audiences/intentions</li> <li>• Compatibility and comparability is key to the usefulness of datasets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for standardisation on an all-island basis (e.g. timeframes, definitions, scales) to enable full analysis across both jurisdictions, and compare like-with-like</li> <li>• Good information base will underpin a framework of collaborative actions</li> <li>• Framework should develop on the foundation of evidence-based policy</li> </ul>
Information sharing arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tends to be informal</li> <li>• Need for improved communication at all levels to support information sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing is not yet happening to the extent that might be anticipated given the island context</li> <li>• Core areas for information sharing include travel to work, labour mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance efficiency and economies of scale</li> <li>• Currently no guarantee that information shared is compatible</li> <li>• Need for up-to-date information sets to facilitate joint planning</li> </ul>



Theme	Northern Ireland	Ireland	Key Messages
Cross-border networks/initiatives	<p>Proposed areas for cross-border networks/initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Shared services</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Telecommunications</li> <li>• Waste management</li> <li>• Housing, economic development &amp; cross-border mobility also noted</li> </ul>	<p>Proposed areas for cross-border networks/initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Shared services</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Telecommunications</li> <li>• Waste management</li> <li>• Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role in increasing efficiencies and economies of scale thus making island more attractive for inward investment</li> <li>• Key areas for collaboration from NI perspective are: education, tourism, transport, health and waste management.</li> <li>• Key areas for collaboration in IRL are: transport, education, energy and waste management</li> </ul>
Funding and delivery mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must have political backing; preferable to have devolved government</li> <li>• Business and community sectors should also be involved</li> <li>• Necessary that jurisdictions willing to collaborate rather than compete</li> <li>• Securing funding will be an issue as each government has their own priorities</li> <li>• Need to work with existing organisations that promote North/South co-operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for central government support; also catalyst for private investment</li> <li>• May be necessary to keep low-key and informal</li> <li>• Key role exists for local authorities in roll-out of a framework</li> <li>• May need to consider rolling-out on pilot basis to build up support</li> <li>• European funding should be applied for on whole-island basis as this will give more weight in the allocation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any all-island framework must be pragmatic and logical, with a long-term focus</li> <li>• A common approach to a framework, and the issues to be addressed, is required from both jurisdictions</li> <li>• Must be mutual benefits: to develop a win-win scenario</li> </ul>
Measures to enhance collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border areas must be Euro-friendly/ Sterling-friendly</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Keep on small scale with small number of players</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-operation rather than competition key</li> <li>• Methodology of the framework will be central to enhancing collaboration</li> <li>• Vertical and horizontal integration in place</li> <li>• Keep low-key and informal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger all-island image necessary in key areas of collaboration</li> <li>• Opportunities to grow regional specialisms</li> <li>• Mindsets must be changed from competition to collaboration</li> <li>• Collaboration to be evidence-based</li> </ul>

## 3.0 EMULATING SUCCESS

*The European experience in cross-border co-operation*

### 3.1 Introduction

### 3.2 Cross-border Co-operation and Spatial Planning

### 3.3 Economic Competitiveness

### 3.4 Fostering Sustainable Development

### 3.5 Achieving Economies of Scale

### 3.6 Conclusions



## 3.0 EMULATING SUCCESS

### *The European experience in cross-border co-operation*

#### Key messages

- Successful cross-border co operation is ongoing in Europe.
- Experience shows that government leadership is required to optimise the benefits of cross-border co operation.
- Examples demonstrate an understanding of the strategic approach to, and pragmatic benefits of, cross-border co operation.
- Cross-border co operation is a necessity for regions and nations to compete in the global economy.
- Action must now be taken to reciprocate co operation on the island of Ireland to ensure continuing positive economic development.
- Local identity is not diluted as a result of participation in cross-border co operation.

# 3.1 Introduction

**This chapter considers the results of collaborative frameworks, which have been operating elsewhere in Europe, and draws out potential learning outcomes for the development of a collaborative framework in an all-island context. The growing importance given to strategic regional planning in the European Union has had major effects on the preparation of spatial plans at the larger than local level and on the delivery of public services.**

The increasing involvement of lower levels of government in the process has taken various forms, depending on the institutional structures within respective countries. In a federal system like Germany for example, spatial planning is the responsibility of the 16 states and the preparation of regional plans became their responsibility. In more centralised states such as France, the national government created new institutions at the regional scale and at the metropolitan level and provided fiscal incentives for voluntary associations of contiguous local governments (Communautés de Communes) willing to share responsibility for the provision of public services. Generally, major progress has been made in delineating regions sharing common development trends and establishing institutions to address them more efficiently.

Cross-border co-operation presents complex issues, given that the intervention of two or more national governments is normally required to establish a common institutional and legal structure. The preamble to the European Charter of Border and Cross-Border Regions (1981, 1995) states that:

*Borders are “scars of history”. Cross-border co-operation helps to reduce the disadvantages of these borders, overcome the outlying national location and improve living conditions for the population. It should include all areas of life (cultural, social, economic, infrastructural). Knowledge of and understanding towards one’s neighbour are as important as the development of trust.*

The Charter goes on to state that the “empty spaces” created by relatively impervious historical borders that still exist within the EU “are often obstacles between the national areas of a coalescing Europe.” Generally, EU policy, including INTERREG and PHARE, has attempted to remove “economic and infrastructural obstacles and imbalances” in border and cross-border regions to promote a more balanced and competitive social and economic environment for populations whose standard of living is often markedly lower than in the rest of the Union. The recommended approach stresses collaboration among various units of government and a focus on specific practical areas which emphasise the benefits of a co-operative approach.

## 3.2 Cross-Border Co-operation and Spatial Planning

**The European experience with promoting cross-border co-operation and planning dates back to the immediate post-War period when a series of bilateral agreements were entered into affecting specific regions, including, inter alia, the Rhine valley, the Franco-Belgian border and part of the Franco-Swiss border. Since then, and particularly with the evolution of INTERREG, numerous initiatives at various scales have taken place, particularly in the past three to four years.**

The momentum for such initiatives was the spatial consequences of a European economic and legal system where historical barriers fell one by one. As a result, border regions that had historically been peripheral to their national development trends became the nexus of new bi-national economic clusters created by the cross-border spill over of development.

For example, the growing importance of international organisations located in Geneva generated massive residential and commercial development in the formerly rural areas on the French side of the border. Similarly, the economic transformation of the Lille-Tournai area from a textile-manufacturing region to a tertiary service centre resulted in the creation of a continuous urbanised area with no visible national boundary.

A major impetus for cross-border co-operation in spatial planning has thus been the necessity to manage spatial development in order to achieve a greater efficiency in the use of land and ensuring the safeguard of fragile natural environments. This was generally achieved by bilateral agreements either at the national or regional levels, and more rarely at the local level, which led to:

- The formulation of a common policy for an entire functional development region;
- The harmonisation of development regulations on either side of the border; and
- Jointly providing the necessary infrastructure and, in some instances, public services.

In many instances, cross-border collaboration has also been seen as an effective way to increase a region's economic competitiveness.

Other forms of cross-border co-operation have been more limited in scope but have had a significant impact. These range from simply the sharing of information of common interest – between France and the UK and in the Baltic region (Table 3.1 - Cases 1 and 2) – to the adoption of integrated bi-national policies to preserve and enhance natural and man-made assets to promote tourism-based economic growth, to the common delivery of public services (solid waste management, public transportation, health and education). Even though both the spatial dimension and the scope of European cross-border initiatives vary greatly, in all instances an enabling agreement was required between the national governments concerned. Yet, the variety of cross-border initiatives taking place is indicative of the importance that this new form of co-operation is taking as an integral part of European spatial planning.

A review of the documentation of specific initiatives provided in the European Spatial Planning Research and Information Database and the more specialised Espaces Transfrontaliers web site ([www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org](http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org)) provided information on a series of eight European initiatives listed in Table 3.1<sup>3</sup>.

3 A summary of their key components is provided in Appendix 3.

They were selected because their context or approach seemed relevant to the situation on the island of Ireland. They are also of interest insofar as they range in specificity from simply the provision of information, both quantitative and geographic, to highly specific interventions to address common problems. Similarly, they illustrate collaborative approaches at the national, sub-regional and local levels or some combination of them.

The projects selected as relevant to the island of Ireland context (Table 3.1) have been classified according to the levels of collaboration they required at the national, regional/sub-regional and local levels. These illustrate a broad and complex range of cross-border initiatives with different benefits that, regardless of the scale of their spatial impact, have necessitated either empowering legislation or the support of higher levels of government.

**Table 3.1 – Selected European Examples of Cross-border Co-operation**

Activity	EU Example	Collaborative Framework Level		
		National	Sub-regional	Local
Case 1. Data base and mapping of cross-border activities	France and UK: Kent-Pas de Calais Cross-border Atlas, 2002			
Case 2. Facilitating the exchange of information	Nordic Council of Ministers: Baltic and North West Russia			
Case 3. Valorisation and preservation of natural and cultural assets.	Italian-Swiss Border Region			
Case 4. Waste management	France and Spain: Basque Eurocity			
Case 5. Transborder spatial planning: health, environment, transportation, education, economic development	France, Germany, and Switzerland: Basel Tri-national Conurbation			
Case 6. Transborder spatial planning: transportation (regional airport, high speed rail), natural resources, cost sharing	France and Switzerland: Greater Geneva Region			
Case 7. Transborder spatial planning: waste treatment plant, urban transportation, industrial park, GIS	Belgium and France: Lille Metropolitan Area			
Case 8. Enabling framework to allow bi- or multi-lateral local government co-operative agreements	France and Germany: Rhine Valley			

For example, even though the benefits of the Solid Waste Management initiative in the Basque region (Case 4) are of purely local concern, the organisation of the public entity responsible for the collection and treatment of solid waste required a bi-national agreement and the consultation and participation of localities not served by the initiative for the location of treatment facilities and sanitary landfills. Similarly, even though the Franco-German initiative along parts of the Rhine Valley (Case 8) consists primarily of inter-municipal agreements, they were made possible by an enabling framework agreed upon by the French and German governments.

In other instances, the success of a primarily local initiative has clearly depended on investment and regulatory frameworks that can only be provided at a higher level, national or regional. Trans-national planning in the Greater Geneva region (Case 6) was made possible by two underlying interventions requiring bi-national agreements: the development of Cointrain Airport as a special entity with direct access to both the French and Swiss sides of the border, including passport and customs controls, and the co-financing of the extension of the French TGV high-speed rail link. The success of this truly cross-border region is demonstrated by the complete fluidity of movement, with people choosing where they live and work according to market opportunities. Of considerable interest is the more recent agreement to share the cost of providing public services with a net transfer from the Swiss to the French side where extensive residential growth has occurred because the cost of living, including housing, is lower.

On the island of Ireland, the RDS and the NSS provide a comprehensive vision of development strategies intended to increase economic competitiveness and improve the delivery of essential public services. Each also recognises that development trends on one side of the border will generate spill over effects on the other side, generally indicated by arrows symbolising largely unspecified needs for concerted cross-border action. As shown in the views of most of the key stakeholders interviewed as part of this research there is general agreement on the need to better understand the intent of the two spatial strategies and harmonise their components by developing further their cross-border elements. This is viewed as necessary to sustain the vitality of the all-island economy and its competitiveness on the global stage while the lack of joined-up thinking is considered to result in divergent development strategies in border areas. The need for co-operation in building cross-border links is seen as an indispensable first step to achieving successful competitiveness.

European cross-border planning has become more comprehensive as national, regional and local authorities came to realise its benefits. It generally evolved from relatively specific purposes to address practical issues to more ambitious attempts to define spatial and economic development strategies to: (1) address the challenge of adapting older areas to enable them to take advantage of the new economy; (2) foster sustainable development; and (3) achieve economies of scale. The first two options require an active participation of national governments while the third depends primarily on voluntary co-operation at the local level, even though national support is necessary to create enabling institutional frameworks.

## 3.3 Economic Competitiveness

Two European examples stand out in economic competitiveness terms: the Lille Metropolitan Area (Belgium and France – Case 7) and the Basel Tri-national Conurbation, also known as Agglomération Trinationale de Bâle (Germany, France and Switzerland – Case 5). In relation to Case 7, co-operation was initiated in 1991 in the 1.8 million-population Lille region, a sprawling area of continuous urbanisation that, in the recent past, has sprawled over the border. It was prompted by the need to transform a 19th Century textile-base into a new economy by adopting a common development strategy focused on improving the residents' living conditions, promoting economic development, preserving the natural environment, and encouraging a trans-border dialogue with the goal of creating a framework for regional governance. The 2002 Strategy for a Cross-border Metropolitan Area proposed a series of specific interventions, including:

- The construction of a common waste management centre;
- The common extension of bus lines;
- The creation of a cross-border industrial park; and
- The preparation of a cross-border atlas to provide information to potential investors.

The concept of a trans-border governing body is currently being explored in Brussels and Paris.

Regarding Case 5, Basel is Switzerland's most dynamic city and is one of the anchors of the tri-national 'Bio-Valley' that extends from Basel to Strasbourg, one of the world's most important biotechnology centres. The tri-national region has a combined population of about 600,000 characterised by strong cross-commuting flows. Inter-communal co-operation began under INTERREG II in the 1990s with a planning initiative designed to provide a deeper understanding of the geographic, economic and demographic characteristics of the three areas.

In 2001 the three regions created a formal Association of the Basel Tri-national Conurbation with over 50 partners representing various governmental and civil society components from each of the communities. The Association is now responsible for cross-border spatial planning. It is active in the following areas:

- Land management and sustainable development;
- Urbanisation and land use;
- Transportation;
- Economic growth;
- Nature and the environment;
- Large-scale projects and infrastructure; and
- The creation of appropriate new institutional structures.



The success of these two initiatives (Cases 5 & 7) rests in part upon the fact that cross-border development had occurred spontaneously and that inter-communal co-operation was seen as the most effective way to manage growth and deliver common services. Although existing development in the Irish border context tends to still be separated by undeveloped land, there are

three instances of cross-border development corridors recognised in the NSS and the RDS: Derry-Letterkenny, Enniskillen-Sligo and Dundalk-Newry. As they gain the economic importance assigned to them by the two strategies, cross-border spill over will happen and much is to be gained from a co-ordinated spatial strategy to pre-empt uncontrolled sprawl.

## 3.4 Fostering Sustainable Development

The growing necessity to preserve natural and cultural assets is starting to be recognised in European cross-border initiatives. The approach selected along the 706 kilometres Italian-Swiss Alpine Region (Case 3) is of particular interest as it combines the protection of natural resources and their sustainable utilisation for tourism, the main economic asset of the region. Initially started in 2002 as a co-operative effort between the Valais Canton in Switzerland and the Italian Autonomous Territory of Valle d'Aosta, this initiative was extended under INTERREG IIIA to include three Swiss cantons and five Italian provinces in order to:

- Promote economic growth through joint infrastructure investment.
- Enhance natural resources, with special attention to high-altitude areas.
- Protect the natural heritage, including rural agriculture.
- Promote tourism.

A joint analysis of the existing situation in the regions on either side of the border led to the selection of specific areas for intergovernmental co-operation at the national, regional and local levels.

1. Developing compatible data sets to identify common intervention strategies.
2. Adopting common measures to safeguard and enhance the natural, cultural and architectural heritage.
3. Integrating transportation infrastructure investment programmes.
4. Facilitating cross-border labour movements (citizens without borders).

The implementation of this cross-border co-operative strategy is estimated to require a total investment of €84.5 million of which the Italian contribution will be €74.4 million and the Swiss contribution €10 million. The breakdown of the Italian share is €25.6 million from central and regional levels, an equal amount from local governments, and €23.2 million from other sources, including the private sector. Half of the Swiss contribution is from the central government and the balance from an unspecified combination of cantonal, local and private sources.

The interest of this intervention lies in the fact that it started as a well-defined small-scale effort to address specific environmental and tourism issues in two contiguous, high-altitude areas. The demonstration of the advantages of co-operation – and a better understanding of the spatial characteristics of the economic interdependencies along the border – led to the adoption of a much more ambitious common strategy. This required the allocation of national resources that extended the cross-border area to include the hinterland to the alpine range, particularly on the Italian side. The key lesson from this example is that defining territories appropriate for cross-border co-operation requires an understanding of natural, as well as economic, characteristics to define the scope of a co-operative intervention. The Green Box Tourism Project in the North Western part of the island of Ireland (Appendix 6, Box 7) might well form the kernel of a more ambitious cross-border co-operation initiative that would include common development regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas whose natural features are key to their ecotourism value.

## 3.5 Achieving Economies of Scale

Growing bi-national economic and functional interdependencies is the salient characteristic of recent development in the European Union. It has given rise to comprehensive cross-border spatial responses such as those illustrated in Section 3.3 but also to more specific responses intended to improve the efficiency of delivering key public services. Given the consensus expressed in the interviews of key stakeholders (Section 2.2) on the pressing need to improve waste management procedures on both sides of the border, the Basque Eurocity offers an interesting example of the benefits of co-operation.

This cross-border region has a population of around 970,000, 72 per cent of whom live on the Spanish side. By 2010 the population is estimated to reach over one million. The rapid growth of the area has created increasingly complex waste management problems for its municipalities as sanitary landfills reached their capacity and increasingly rigorous European treatment norms have been implemented. The two regions undertook a feasibility study in 2002 to develop a common management plan for the nearly 610,000 tons per annum generated in the area. The study concluded that common waste treatment stations and sanitary fills would result in a more efficient and higher standard of waste treatment. The resulting savings are on the order of €5 per ton on the French side and €1 per ton on the Spanish side. These net benefits include the capital costs of required facilities. Additional benefits would be gained with the sale of electricity as a by-product of incineration.

Legally, no significant obstacles have impeded the implementation of the project although there are different national and local permitting standards for the construction of treatment facilities and the selection of new sanitary landfills.

The cross-border development corridors defined by the NSS and the RDS are already generating development which are creating waste management problems at local government level, and will exacerbate as increasingly seamless growth occurs. This is a recurring theme in the interviews of public officials on both sides of the border. The example of the Basque Eurocity is, therefore, pertinent as it is based on the voluntary co-operation of individual local governments to address more efficiently a specific shared problem. Project-based co-operation has the clear advantage of sharing in both the cost and benefits of an intervention without yielding local autonomy. If successful, it often leads to further areas of common action where each party finds a clear benefit: the planning and operation of public transportation and the delivery of health services, for example. The following chapter explores in more detail potential areas/projects for cross-border co-operation and collaboration on the island of Ireland.

## 3.6 Conclusions

The European cross-border experience provides a number of key messages applicable to the development of a collaborative spatial planning framework on the island of Ireland. The RDS and the NSS respectively set out challenging agendas that will guide the development of their jurisdictions and provide the context within which investments will occur. Increasingly economic competitiveness and efficient delivery of essential infrastructure and public service provision are demanding economies of scale solutions.

The interview evidence which underpins this research suggests a need to understand how the intent of the two spatial strategies will enhance the economic competitiveness of the island to the benefit of the whole community. The European experiences indicates that developing and sharing a common set of information (Cases 1 and 2) will both allow a more harmonious and efficient spatial development and help to sustain the vitality of cross jurisdictional economies and their competitiveness. Similarly, greater collaboration in formulating a common environmental policy will simultaneously allow for the protection of sensitive natural areas and allow for their proper utilisation for tourism and local economic development (Case 3).

The population growth in the urban centres and in the key cross-border transportation corridors defined by the NSS and the RDS is already creating waste management problems for local government. As development continues to increase in these areas the solution will demand an integrated response by both jurisdictions. The example of the Basque Eurocity (Case 4) is pertinent as it is based on the voluntary co-operation of individual local governments to address more efficiently a specific shared problem on waste management.

Similarly, the development of comprehensive cross-border development strategies (Cases 5, 6 and 7) has demonstrated at the European level that economic competitiveness can be furthered through co-operation. While the Basel, Geneva and Lille examples are the result of many years of increasingly close co-operation, it should be stressed that they started as relatively modest, well-defined interventions that grew into the formulation of comprehensive planning as confidence increased and the advantages of collaboration became evident.

European collaboration has ranged from the desire to achieve economies of scale in the delivery of a specific public service (Case 4) to the enabling of local governments to collaborate on mutually defined topics (Case 8). In all instances, collaboration was voluntary and occurs within an institutional framework provided by the central governments in recognition of the fact that market-driven development would spill across historic borders once their traditional role weakened within the European Union.

Project-based co-operation has the clear advantage of sharing in both the cost and benefits of an intervention without losing local autonomy. If successful, it often leads to further areas of common action where each party finds a clear benefit. Examples in Europe, reflecting the latter, have included the planning and operation of public transportation and the delivery of health services. The following chapter of this report considers the potential for developing a collaborative framework, and suggests possible criteria for presenting an action orientated approach to the selection of projects with potential to advance economic competitiveness and improve infrastructure/ service provision on an all-island basis.

## 4.0 **RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES**

*Development of a framework for collaborative action*

### 4.1 Introduction

### 4.2 A Collaborative Framework for a Competitive Economy

### 4.3 Requirement for an Effective Collaborative Framework

### 4.4 Objectives of the Multi-level Collaborative Framework

### 4.5 Priorities for the Collaborative Framework

### 4.6 Criteria for Operationalising the Collaborative Framework

### 4.7 Elaborating Potential Projects

### 4.8 Targeting Projects with the Collaborative Framework

### 4.9 Conclusions



## 4.0 RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES

### *Development of a framework for collaborative action*

#### **Key messages**

- In the face of intensifying global competition every opportunity for competitive advantage must be grasped – on the island of Ireland collaboration is one such advantage.
- The two governments on the island have a responsibility to respond clearly and creatively to the emerging challenges of ultra-competitive globalisation by adopting a focused and combined competitive stance to promoting and supporting the all-island economy.
- Strategic advances are being achieved in Europe via collaborative frameworks for integrated spatial planning and economic development. While a degree of collaboration is already in place, the two governments should make a step change by declaring their commitment to the application of a more ambitious collaborative planning framework for the island of Ireland.
- The collaborative framework must align spatial planning on both parts of the island in order to leverage the contribution that all-island business can contribute to the international competitiveness of the island economy.
- The collaborative framework must also work to align the planning and business decision-making processes across the whole island. It must therefore augment existing administrative structures by providing new collaborative working arrangements that energise the contributions of stakeholders in the business and planning sectors.
- New arrangements are needed urgently to more effectively harness the joint resources and contributions of the planning and business sectors to the island's economic competitiveness.
- A collaborative framework will provide the working template for identifying and supporting potential projects that will yield value-added contributions to, and stepped-change in the, competitiveness of the all-Island economy.

# 4.1 Introduction

**The island of Ireland is on a clear and irrevocable path of growth. Its demographic trajectory indicates a population growth to almost 7 million people by 2021, rising to 8 million by 2031.**

This will present major challenges in terms of determining settlement distribution and employment location, managing mobility and providing appropriate service infrastructure. The pragmatic realities of competition from other fast growing countries, including the new EU member states, for inward investment present additional daunting challenges. The response is to anticipate and address them in a timely and pre-emptive manner through joint planning initiatives. Indeed, examples of successful collaborative planning from Europe and existing initiatives across Ireland provide reassuring evidence that these challenges are not insurmountable.

A positive re-positioning and re-imaging of the island of Ireland is needed to confront and harness the processes of change; to enable both jurisdictions in Ireland to draw upon their mutual and combined assets so that the competitiveness and welfare of the island, North and South is maintained and enhanced in the context of the global economy. This re-orientation requires a collaborative framework to guide a results-oriented action agenda based on selected projects which facilitate existing and potential development opportunities. Such projects can include sectoral and area-based initiatives selected for appropriateness by relevant criteria. The selection criteria must have a clear spatial planning dimension, leading to projects that capture and reinforce the competitive advantage and

mutual benefits for the island that flow from a holistic strategy focused on sustainability. The projects will thus have enduring capacity to leverage additional synergies and benefits through spatial collaboration and to thereby consolidate and expand the enterprise potential, quality of life and environmental wellbeing of the islands inhabitants.

***“The development of an all-island framework offers the potential to market the island of Ireland as a whole. This would bring huge benefits – by increasing the critical mass, the all-island market becomes more attractive to inward investors.”***

Representative, Research Organisation, Ireland

The views and proposals described here take account of the interview outcomes and the review of European cross-border initiatives. The need for a collaborative framework for the island of Ireland is substantiated by the results of the interviews of government officials, representative bodies, research organisations and the private sector in both jurisdictions, summarised in Chapter 2. They indicate broad support for a better fit between the NSS and the RDS and a belief that, taken together, the two strategies (a) provide matching visions for the island and (b) that a complementary approach to their implementation, particularly in the border regions, would enhance the competitiveness of economic activities on an island-wide basis. In short, the proposals for a collaborative framework provide a means for progressing the spirit and intent of the British-Irish Inter-Governmental Conference communiqué of 19th October 2005, which underlined “the significant potential for effective



co-operation for mutual benefit on strategic issues such as infrastructure development and spatial planning”.

***“Enhancing international competitiveness is considered to be the core focus of a collaborative approach.”***

Representative Organisation, Northern Ireland

The rationale is to enhance strategic linkages, to promote economic competitiveness, to address the changes brought about within the developing EU markets in response to the challenges of a globalising economy, and to maximise trans-boundary investment opportunities. This is set within the policy framework that has developed over the past decade, culminating in the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) (European Commission, 1999) and its application across the European territories. Building upon the concept of the ESDP, the objective of the proposals presented here is to facilitate strategic co-operation between and within regions on a North/South and East/West basis to:

- Facilitate joined-up spatial planning and correlate development standards on each side of the border to support and expedite economic activities.
- Enable innovation and creative ventures that flow from co-operation to flourish and contribute to the development of a knowledge-based enterprise society.

- Maximise the benefits and returns from prioritised public expenditure programmes and minimise wasteful duplication and overlap of service and infrastructure provision.
- Advance the concept of balanced regional development, as embedded in the respective spatial strategies.

It is not within the remit of this report to specify the content of the action agenda or programme for collaboration to be pursued by the two governments and other stakeholders in both jurisdictions. However, it is feasible and necessary to set out the structure and operating logic within which an action agenda can be pursued. Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter provides a schematic account of the collaborative framework required to operationalise an action agenda to meet the challenges of achieving competitive, cohesive and sustainable development on the island. Firstly, the likely shape of a credible collaborative framework is considered. This is followed by a brief discussion of the criteria that can be used to select appropriate projects. An indication of the type of projects that would be feasible for the all-island economy is presented through consideration of the priorities identified by the survey respondents interviewed for this research and the experience of collaborative projects that have been successful elsewhere in Europe. This material provides the platform for the recommendations set out in Chapter 5.

## 4.2 A Collaborative Framework for a Competitive Economy

**In recent decades, increased global economic activities and capital flows have triggered a wave of intensified competition among places seeking to maintain or improve their attractiveness and ranking as investment destinations for international firms and finance.**

Urgent action is required across the political, business and civic domains to enable the island of Ireland to confront the challenges presented by this new ultra-competitive environment. The island economy has a global reach by virtue of its strong linkages to Britain, the EU and the United States. This confers a powerful potential that has been exploited to such positive effect in producing the 'Celtic Tiger' phenomenon. However, as one of the world's most open economies the island is also increasingly exposed to the threat of external competition from powerful existing and newly emerging competitors.

The European examples of successful cross-border and international collaborative endeavour outlined in Chapter 3 provide good examples of what must be emulated by the island economy in an increasingly competitive international context. Every possible effort must be made to promote and support the competitive position of the island so that it can maintain and enhance its competitive position. To enable the island economy to capitalise upon its potential, it is imperative that closer alignment is delivered between the strategic planning strategies in both jurisdictions, and between spatial planning and the business sector across the whole island. A collaborative planning framework is key to promoting the capacity of the business sector across the island of Ireland and enabling it to confront the global challenges that threaten the island economy. The two governments must, therefore, clearly indicate their joint support for an effective collaborative framework as the essential first step to integrate the two spatial strategies.

## THE COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK

The collaborative framework should be a high-level agenda agreed by both Governments, North and South. The framework will be responsible for the implementation of the mutually interdependent aspects of the two spatial strategies and will be supported by targeted infrastructure investment programmes.

The collaborative framework should consist of the following key elements:

- A focused range of regional and local spatial planning initiatives for key development areas identified in both spatial strategies. For example, the Letterkenny – Derry/Londonderry area and other key cross-border interfaces.
- An enhanced programme of highly strategic and targeted investments in key enabling aspects of both spatial strategies. For example, improved accessibility to areas identified for accelerated growth in the strategies.
- A programme of spatial planning research to further deepen understanding of development patterns, trends and their drivers on an all-island basis including the development of a comprehensive all-island statistical database.

The collaborative framework must also work to support a better alignment between the strategic planning and business decision-making processes. It must also be about harnessing and facilitating existing structures by providing new collaborative working arrangements that energise stakeholders in the business and planning sectors.

The bi-lateral approach to spatial planning and the economy which has up to now prevailed between the two parts of the island has yielded notable benefits and successes. However, globalisation has reached a new plateau and it is imperative that the extent and intensity of collaboration be ratcheted-up to a new level if the island is to move ahead of its competitors in the modern ultra-competitive era.

The cautious back-to-back status of the current spatial strategies for the two jurisdictions (RDS and NSS) must be replaced by a more ambitious forward moving, hand-in-hand approach to planning that leads to the realisation of common goals and mutual advantage. Spatial planning must press forward in tandem with, and at the same urgent pace as, the all-island business sector in advancing the competitive position of the island economy.

## 4.3 Requirement for an Effective Collaborative Framework

**The procedural challenge for the island of Ireland of achieving higher competitive performance within existing administration structures is evident from the international examples and case studies indicated in Chapter 3.**

The emergence of new forms of multi-level governance framework arrangements is part of the new approach being applied in Europe and elsewhere to promote economic competitiveness and offset the adverse effects of restructuring that has unfolded in recent times. In the European context, this move to responsive and forward-looking governance is linked to the aim of harnessing the hitherto untapped energy and visions available in wider society. The new and adaptive approach to governance involves broadening participatory democracy and seeks the inclusion of more stakeholders in progressive and transparent decision-making structures. This is most evident in the flexible frameworks being provided for wider and deeper involvement by the business sector and civil society in the spheres of economic development and planning. Collaborative frameworks have been applied, refined and extended at all spatial and political levels across the range of new governance structures and vary according to prevailing conditions. However, even though frameworks across the EU differ in relation to their remit, composition and degree of integration into representative democratic systems, they invariably represent multi-stakeholder interests.

As elsewhere, all stakeholders on the island of Ireland, including government representatives and officials, have a part to play in the endeavours necessary to achieve competitive success for the island. In the contemporary era of competitive places, economic prosperity cannot be attained by government agencies or the business sector alone; successful places are those with appropriate high-quality infrastructure and which best combine contributions from across the spectrum of sectoral and other interests to create conditions for success. The traditional government approaches based on top-down organised policy-making driven entirely from within the formal statutory administrative systems needs to be augmented by more ambitious governance. The new enterprise approach must include the participation of business representatives and other stakeholders from civil society in a multitude of inter-institutional and inter-organisational links, networks, forums, partnerships and round-table structures with a mandate to co-ordinate activities around functional problems that cut across administrative levels and territorial scales.

## 4.4 Objectives of the Multi-level Collaborative Framework

**Frameworks involving multi-level governance arrangements are designed to achieve greater vertical and horizontal integration across a wide range of stakeholders in order to secure more responsible and better decision-making through proactive and democratic forms of empowerment and collaboration.**

In this regard the new collaborative framework for the island of Ireland should enable the two Government Departments with responsibility for strategic spatial planning to drive the island economy with the support as appropriate of the existing North/South body or bodies by:

- fostering processes of negotiation, lobbying and brokerage that facilitate competitiveness through more efficient and effective implementation of all-island infrastructure, business activities and better service delivery; and
- accommodating a complex variety of agencies and interests at various spatial scales ranging from the local to the all-island.

The collaborative framework approach advocated here is consonant with these objectives and with the aim of achieving the best international performance rating for the island whilst retaining as much autonomy as possible for the two jurisdictions. The provision of the proposed collaborative framework incorporating more dynamic interfacing with key stakeholders on the island of Ireland will, therefore, work to:

- promote active involvement and co-operation;
- overcome systemic policy blockages and enhance institutional capacity to progress towards the implementation of agreed objectives;
- deliver more effective infrastructure provision and service delivery; and
- advance entrepreneurial spirit and generate greater prosperity in an increasingly competitive global environment.

The proposed framework is designed to harness the development potential of the diverse regions across the island and simultaneously promote territorial cohesion (or regional balance). To achieve these objectives, the framework must extend and enhance existing co-operation on strategic spatial planning beyond governmental level to include the business sector and other stakeholders in order to take an all-island approach to such co-operation. It will also involve promoting greater recognition by all government agencies and business sector interests of their roles in delivering on the implementation of spatial planning policy and the RDS and NSS on a co-ordinated basis relating to the mutual benefits for the whole of the island of Ireland.

## 4.5 Priorities for the Collaborative Framework

**A better understanding of, and focus on, the wider spatial planning consequences of decisions by individual government departments and agencies in the respective jurisdictions could create opportunities for:**

- improved co-ordination of government spending programmes,
- more efficient and effective provision of infrastructure, and
- the future evolution of all-island dimensions to spatial policy co-ordination in parallel with the development of a competitive island economy.

There is on-going co-operation between government departments and agencies on both sides of the border in areas such as health, education and roads. This type of co-operation, while welcome and practically based, currently operates within the respective sectors concerned and needs to be better integrated horizontally so that decisions around transport, communications, healthcare, education and other sectors take cognisance of wider spatial planning issues. Enhanced collaboration and horizontal integration will in turn create opportunities for better implementation of the NSS and RDS in their own right. The proposed mechanism for achieving this outcome is to expand and augment the working relationships of stakeholders in the planning and business sectors. To date opportunities for regular interaction have been limited and informal but they have the capacity to become more formalised through the collaborative framework.

***“Collaboration between government agencies, and also with local government, is... required to operationalise a framework of all-island action.”***

Representative, Local Government, Northern Ireland

The collaborative framework will also facilitate and enhance the supportive role of trans-boundary networks in relation to strategic spatial planning. Such networks comprise the existing public, private and voluntary sector cross-border networks<sup>4</sup>, and other networks on the island dealing with economic development and planning at the strategic level. The framework will enable them to:

- link more effectively to central government departments and official regional bodies at the all-island level;
- interface with other representative agencies (e.g. IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council, InterTradeIreland, Construction Employers Federation, Construction Industry Federation); and
- be more supportive of joined-up development by facilitating enhanced information and co-ordination assistance in preparing and delivering collaboration on spatial planning policies.

***“Spatial planning needs to have an awareness of social capital and to support the ability of communities to mobilise through social partnerships.”***

Representative, Regional Government, Northern Ireland

<sup>4</sup> Existing cross-border networks are: East Border Region (EBR), Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG).

***“The potential exists for areas to be supportive of each others’ development rather than in competition; there must be mutual benefit.”***

Representative Organisation, Ireland

***“...there is a need to widen the stakeholders and interests in terms of collaborative activity. Much of the current collaboration is informal, ad hoc in nature, and undertaken in isolation, whereas there is a need to bring more stakeholders into collaborative action.”***

Representative Organisation, Northern Ireland

Collaboration across the networks would integrate the networks’ priorities with mainstream thinking, strengthen horizontal linkages and provide the additional critical mass needed to justify funding in a co-ordinated manner for strategic projects.

***“Co-operation and co-learning needs to be vertical as well as horizontal.”***

Representative, Research Organisation, Ireland

In addition to the high-level and network co-operation outlined above, the framework will further provide an overarching tool to promote conformity between local development plans and their respective spatial strategies. It will also enable local authorities and agencies to identify and exchange compatible data where appropriate, and identify and pursue bilateral and multi-lateral projects and service agreements.

***“The development of holistic all-island strategies around a number of sectors could pay dividends – after all, it must be remembered that the island of Ireland is***

***small in size with a small population and the achievement, through collaboration, of a larger critical mass can only be positive.”***

Representation, Regional Agency, Ireland

***“The drivers of growth need to be identified, understood and translated into planning policy measures.”***

Representative Organisation, Northern Ireland

Currently, high-level inter and intra-sectoral analysis is inhibited by data deficiencies caused by differences in data capture and by gaps in databases, particularly on a cross-border basis. Local government, working in partnership at the local level with central government and other agencies can most feasibly address the deficits in data collection, recording and analysis.

***“Consistency in information is essential for creating an all-island framework. Data-sets need to be gathered on an all-island basis to avoid discrepancies and to facilitate accurate comparisons and scenario modelling between the two jurisdictions.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Northern Ireland

The opportunity to proactively create new collaborative initiatives will do much to advance the general aim of harmonising the two spatial strategies. This has particular relevance for local markets and service provision including retail catchment zones, travel-to-work areas, housing sub-markets, and waste collection and management.

## 4.6 Criteria for Operationalising the Collaborative Framework

Having a collaborative framework in place is the first of two stages required to address the challenges of change and competition faced by the two planning systems in Ireland. The other major requirement is to identify and implement a programme of collaborative actions that respond to the challenges in a proactive and realistic way. Clearly, on-going successful initiatives will continue to be pursued but new projects will have to be developed and implemented in a systematic manner. Whilst the actual selection of initiatives that fit such a framework is a matter for political mandate and is, therefore, beyond the remit of this report, it is possible to:

- Produce an illustrative catalogue of prospective projects based on the research undertaken in this report.
- Advocate the principles and criteria needed to guide the identification of candidate projects for a more programmatic approach.

***“...identifying a small number of visionary projects and sharing the positive advantages of collaborative action is the way forward.”***

Representative, Regional Government, Northern Ireland

The projects must have potential for improving economic competitiveness as well as social and environmental well-being within an all-island and wider context. The criteria suggested in this report for the selection of potential projects for inclusion in a collaborative framework are based upon:

- The principles which underpin the two spatial strategies for both parts of the island (the NSS and RDS) as well as the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP).
- The need to promote economic competitiveness on an all-island basis as indicated in Chapter 1.
- The empirical interview material summarised in Chapter 2.
- Relevant case study examples of best international cross-border practice outlined in Chapter 3.
- Additional discussion with leading policy makers in both jurisdictions which highlighted in particular the importance of taking into account the conditions likely to guide funding for EU projects under the INTERREG Programmes during the period 2007-2013.
- Consistency with the guidelines of the funding programmes for both Northern Ireland and Ireland as they relate to the delivery of the spatial strategies for the two jurisdictions.

In relation to the latter point, the intermediate to long-term capital investment programmes are contained in the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) and Ireland’s National Development Plan (NDP). These serve to direct the content of the rolling annualised spending respectively of the Programme for Government (Northern Ireland) and the Department of Finance budgets (Ireland). Consistency with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is likely to be a standard precondition of securing funding for relevant major infrastructure proposals.



The logic for systematic selection of potential projects is set out in Table 4.1 below. Column A refers to the general principles (competitiveness, balance, etc.) from which the selection criteria identified in column B are derived.

Column C can then be filled with projects that conform to the criteria specified in column B. The criteria in column B are based on the content of the relevant Irish and European spatial strategies.

**Table 4.1 Generic Guidelines for Selection of Potential Projects**

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES	
<p><b>Support collaborative activities or arrangements that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the emerging <b>spatial challenges of globalisation and competitiveness</b></li> <li>• Promote <b>sustainable territorial development</b> (economic, social and environmental) by strengthening co-operation in the field of spatial development</li> <li>• Consolidate or improve <b>economic competitiveness, quality of life or environmental sustainability</b> and which are capable of extending beyond cross-border concerns to all-island issues</li> <li>• Contribute to, build upon, or establish the <b>development potential</b> (economic, social and environmental) of the regions and island of Ireland</li> <li>• Secure <b>balanced regional / all-island development</b> through reduction of spatial disparities within and between regions</li> <li>• Provide or enhance <b>data and management information</b> required to support evidence-based policy formulation and implementation arrangements in relation to actions for cross-border collaboration and transnational co-operation</li> </ul>	
B. Criteria	C. Potential Project Areas
<p><b>Drawn from priorities identified in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Spatial Strategy (NSS)</li> <li>• Regional Development Strategy (RDS)</li> <li>• European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)</li> <li>• Lisbon Gothenburg Agenda</li> <li>• INTERREG and other Funding Programmes and Priorities (including NDP and ISNI)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Illustrative examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island of Ireland (Table 4.2)</li> <li>• Europe (Appendix 5)</li> </ul>

The illustrative project examples outlined for Ireland in Table 4.2 are based on current initiatives that conform to the specified criteria. An additional table containing a more detailed directory of illustrative examples from Europe is at Appendix 5. It is clear from these illustrative listings of ‘criteria-based potential projects’ that there is considerable scope for more and improved planning co-operation to facilitate the successful delivery of island-wide or cross-border initiatives that are necessary,

urgent, beneficial and sustainable. This is a particularly important challenge and priority for action in the context of EU integration and globalisation.

**“There are enough core issues around which an all-island framework could be developed: tourism, transport, energy, waste management, etc. Such frameworks are not only practical but also doable and needed.”**

Representative, Private Sector, Ireland

Table 4.2 Illustrative Irish Projects Using Guidelines

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES	
B. Selection Criteria (Category & Purpose)	C. Illustrative Irish Projects (Example Boxes in Appendix 6)
<p><b>Socio-economic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harness Development Potential</li> <li>• Diffusion of Innovation and Knowledge</li> <li>• Balanced Spatial Development</li> <li>• Dynamic, Attractive &amp; Competitive Cities / Urbanised Regions based on New Urban-Rural Relationship</li> <li>• Polycentric Development Model: A Basis for Mutual Benefits through Better Economic Leverage and Accessibility</li> </ul>	<p>Confederation of British Industry – Irish Business and Employers Confederation &amp; InterTradeIreland Initiatives <b>(Box 4)</b></p> <p>Single all-island energy market on the island of Ireland <b>(Box 5)</b></p> <p>INTERREG supported capacity building and exchange initiatives involving cross-border networks</p> <p>Derry-Letterkenny Virtual Business Park <b>(Box 6)</b></p> <p>Regional Planning Guidelines (IRL) &amp; Strategic Planning Guidelines (NI)</p> <p>Regional Transportation Strategy (NI) and Transport 21 (IRL)</p> <p>Cross-border Planning Corridors (Dundalk-Newry; Derry-Letterkenny) <b>(Box 6)</b></p>

B. Selection Criteria (Category & Purpose)	C. Illustrative Irish Projects (Example Boxes in Appendix 6)
<p>...continued</p> <p><b>Infrastructure/Service Provision &amp; Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient and Sustainable Use of Infrastructure</li> <li>• Integrated Approach to Infrastructure and Knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>...continued</p> <p>TENS Rail and Road Networks and City of Derry Airport <b>(Boxes 1, 2 &amp; 6)</b></p> <p>Telecommunications, Energy and Waste Management Co-operation. <b>(Box 3 &amp; 5)</b></p> <p>MOLAND, North West Data Capture, Regional Research Observatory Project <b>(Box 8 and 9)</b></p>
<p><b>Natural and Cultural Landscapes/Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural and Cultural Heritage as a Development Asset</li> <li>• Preservation &amp; Development of Natural Heritage (including Water Resource Management)</li> <li>• Creative Management &amp; Cultural Landscapes/Heritage</li> </ul>	<p>Shannon-Erne Waterway <b>(Box 7)</b></p> <p>N/S SHARE-INTERREG IIIA, EU Water Framework Directive</p> <p>Integration of Tourism Development with Environment Cultural Heritage <b>(Box 7)</b></p> <p>EHS/DoEHLG Collaboration on Landscapes and Species</p>

Again, it is important to point out that the selection guidelines presented here are meant to serve as an aid to the collaborative framework stakeholders in the identification and implementation of potential collaborative projects. The guidelines are a flexible tool rather than an end product.

The schematic structure and content is not fixed and can be expected to evolve and be refined in accordance with the needs of the collaborative framework participants. In short, the ultimate decisions about choices and elaboration of projects for implementation is a matter for the participants in the final instance.

## 4.7 Elaborating Potential Projects

The stakeholders involved in the collaborative framework suggested in this chapter will have a crucial role to play in elaborating and advancing the action programme. Where potential initiatives satisfy the selection criteria, successful implementation will require detailed identification of specific interventions that build confidence and demonstrate the advantages of joint action. To be successful, they will have to be precisely defined and yield results in both the short and long terms. This will apply even where there is a positive attitude toward cross-border co-operation or evidence from elsewhere of the viability of such projects. A proactive but vigilant approach is required from the stakeholders to secure successful outcomes for selected projects.

Based on the interview responses, case studies and the selection criteria, the main areas identified at this point as having strengths and potential to benefit from better sharing or connectivity between the spatial strategies include:

- Transport infrastructure – roads and rail connections and City of Derry airport (**Appendix 6 – Boxes 1, 2 and 6**)
- Telecommunications – particularly improved connectivity for broadband and mobile telephone services (**Appendix 6 – Box 3**) and all-island electronic customs system (**Appendix 6 – Box 4**)
- Energy – all-island electricity grid and gas distribution (**Appendix 6 – Box 5**)
- Cross-border planning corridor initiatives - Newry/Dundalk; Derry-Letterkenny; Enniskillen/Sligo; Omagh/Cavan-Monaghan (**Appendix 6 – Box 6**)

- Tourism initiatives – particularly innovative schemes (**Appendix 6 – Box 7**)
- Waste Management co-operation
- Information databases – such as the MOLAND Project, North West Region Data Capture Project (RDGP) and the Regional Research Observatory (RRO) Project (**Appendix 6 – Box 8**)
- Third Level Education
- Health and Wellbeing (**Appendix 6 – Box 9**)

This list is not exclusive or exhaustive and is developed further below. Its compilation has been heavily influenced by the perception of the interview respondents about what constitutes priority issues and projects at this time. Additional prospective projects can be identified from the illustrative inventory of potential projects at Appendix 5 which is based on spatial strategy priorities in Europe.

Based on the identification of priority issues highlighted by the interview respondents as suitable for cross-border collaboration, the following matters stand out as potential constraints in the selection of specific projects for the island of Ireland:

- The challenge of reconciling legislative and administrative regimes on either side of the border (particularly development regulations and corporation taxation).
- The need for greater certainty in the scheduling and spatial dimension of public investments, particularly in transportation, housing and health policies.

- The requirement for harmonisation in cross-border economic and spatial development.
- The need for comparable databases to provide cross-border information on development.

Again, it is important to remember that these obstacles are not insuperable as the examples of good practice from Europe demonstrate. It is clear from these European examples and the findings of the interviews conducted for this research that a collaborative framework can provide a positive support structure to facilitate cross-border initiatives and co-ordinated planning across the island.

Based on the interviews conducted for this study, the working of the framework should include a clear and proactive focus on key action areas for inter-governmental co-operation and the facilitation of appropriate cross-border initiatives through joint-planning and parallel business co-operation. Examples of such actions include:

- Providing complementary policies to better encourage, structure and guide future development towards locations that will drive wider balanced and sustainable development such as the Dublin-Belfast corridor including the Newry-Dundalk corridor, Derry-Letterkenny and other strategically located areas.
- Proposing specific activities for cross-border co-operation to complement the implementation of the Six Areas for Co-operation agreed upon by the North/South Ministerial Council at its Inaugural Plenary Meeting on 13 December 1999.

- Creating a compatible all-island database where the development and sharing of common information is widely seen by the agencies interviewed as indispensable to the formulation of common spatial strategies and cross-border collaboration.

***“Comparable and compatible data-sets are essential to any piece of collaborative work. There is a need for broader networks around collection of datasets to be established. There is a lot of data in existence which is not widely available or utilised. This needs to be addressed.”***

Representative, Private Sector, Ireland

The research interviews and European experience also suggest that priority should be given to:

- Targeting joint major infrastructure projects where complementary all-island public investments can promote sustainable and balanced development consistent with the NSS and RDS at the sub-regional and local levels.
- Encouraging and facilitating progress by the relevant regional and local authorities towards a more integrated and consistent approach to planning policy along key development and transport corridors between Ireland and Northern Ireland.
- Evaluating the potential for enhanced collaboration in the delivery of services to cross-border regions: health, education, and job placement.
- Identifying ecosystems whose protection requires a co-ordinated cross-border action.

## 4.8 Targeting Projects with the Collaborative Framework

**An integrated high-quality roads infrastructure is an essential prerequisite for the development of a modern competitive economy. Future economic growth is dependent on good transportation infrastructure, whether by rail, road, sea, or air.**

However, with over 90 per cent of transportation of goods currently taking place by road, this would indicate that priority must be given to having good road infrastructure linking key regional centres. Under the auspices of the Cross-border Roads Steering Group, progress is being made on the delivery of a roads network that effectively connects all regions on the island and links them though the main gateway centres with other thriving economic regions in the UK and Europe (**Appendix 6 – Box 1**). The Cross-border Roads Steering Group is comprised of representatives from the National Roads Authority (NRA) and Department of Transport (DoT) in Ireland, and the Department for Regional Development (DRD) including the Roads Service in Northern Ireland. The Group holds regular meetings each year to monitor the Dundalk-Newry project and consider other relevant cross-border schemes. It is ideally positioned to contribute to and benefit from any scaled-up activities relating to information, planning and delivery of roads infrastructure with an all-island dimension.

The TENS Rail Project for Cork-Dublin-Belfast is a clear illustration of a necessary collaborative project on public transport infrastructure (**Appendix 6 – Box 2**). One of its main aims is to contribute to the economic competitiveness of Ireland by offsetting the potential marginalisation of the island in the EU and integrating it into the wider and developing commercial and labour markets of Europe.

The construction of the trans-European transport network is a major element in achieving economic competitiveness and balanced and sustainable development in the European Union. Articles 154-156 of the Amsterdam Treaty (previously Articles 129b-129d of the Maastricht Treaty) provide for the development of Trans-European Networks (TENS) in the transport, telecommunications and energy sectors to “enable people of the European Union to derive full benefit from the setting up of an area without internal frontiers.”

To be competitive in the global era of the knowledge society Irish business needs an extensive high-quality telecommunications infrastructure as a basic platform for wider and faster connections to customers, suppliers and other support facilities. To this end the provision of integrated, high-grade broadband facilities across the island is essential to maintain and grow competitiveness by better links with existing and wider markets (**Appendix 6 – Box 3**). The provision of leading edge information telecommunications technologies (ICT) infrastructure will both allow and require companies and customers throughout the island to adapt more competitively to changing conditions in the marketplace.

The competitiveness challenges must also be met by innovative developments in the private sector that respond to and anticipate the competitive needs of business. This is recognised in the work of IBEC–CBI in developing and promoting island-wide collaborations that advance the prospects of both parts of the island in the context of an expanding Europe and competitive world economy. The recently proposed All-island Logistics Chain Security

Project is a clear example of this foresight by the private sector (**Appendix 6 – Box 4**). This project is designed to pave the way for an all-island electronic customs system and has been initiated to satisfy the new EU requirements<sup>5</sup>. The proposed system is being designed to be ultra-secure and to meet the following objectives: facilitate import and export procedures; reduce compliance and administrative costs and improve clearance times; co-ordinate a common approach to the control of goods and the interception of dangerous and illicit goods; ensure the proper collection of all appropriate duties and charges; provide rapid and relevant information with regard to the international supply chain; enable the seamless flow of data between exporter and importer countries, allowing data entered in the system to be re-used.

Generating economic development within the context of the respective spatial strategies requires an efficient energy sector. In this context the forthcoming single wholesale electricity market on the island of Ireland in 2007 will produce keener competition and place pressure on costs through economies and efficiencies of scale (**Appendix 6 – Box 5**). Energy planning-exchange through North/South inter-connectors will be increasingly important in meeting the needs for a competitive economy. Because the island of Ireland is so reliant on energy imports and exposed to potential shortfalls, it is vital to develop adequate infrastructure to secure the availability of reliable capacity to meet existing and future demand. Shared infrastructures and shared services are also relevant because of the economies of scale benefits associated with larger markets. Individually, Ireland and Northern Ireland are too small to sustain

competition for energy but with a collaborative framework in place their combined markets can provide sufficient critical mass and opportunities for competitive and cheaper energy costs. In this way, not only is the 'local' market for energy increased but, in economic terms and security terms, potential is created by tapping into wider offshore markets through the UK.

From the area based perspective the need for an improved infrastructure base across key development corridors is also of major importance to the sub-regions in generating economic development and competitiveness across the island (**Appendix 6 – Box 6**). A major planning study involving the relevant local authorities and other agencies is examining the potential for developing the East Border corridor in an integrated way. Its findings on the ways forward for the 'Newry-Dundalk Metropolis' concept are due to be reported. The North West of the island is an example of a sub-region with potential to be developed on an integrated corridor basis. It provides an interesting case study project where the network approach is taking effect in addressing the important strategic planning issues. Attracting inward investment and fostering the growth of the indigenous small business sector are important elements of advancing the economic growth potential of the North West. The Forfás Report (2004) stresses the importance of achieving a critical mass of leading edge expertise in particular areas or niches by providing support for cluster-led research and innovation partnerships. The respective governments, North and South, realise that real benefits are to be gained by collaborating in a more co-ordinated and concerted way for the practical and mutual benefit of both jurisdictions<sup>6</sup>.

5 In December 2005, the EU published its decision on a paperless environment for customs and trade (COM/2005/609). This decision endorsed the introduction of the single window approach from January 2007. A number of countries have already introduced a single window environment, including New Zealand, Singapore and the Netherlands.

6 Commitment to working together to address the development of the North West Region, Press Release, Northern Ireland Office, 24th November 2005.

Although not mentioned frequently in the interviews, the creative approaches to protecting the natural environment and cultural heritage requires an approach that transcends political boundaries. However, under this priority area the integration of tourism development, mentioned by several respondents, would clearly benefit from a co-operative approach that creates cross-border circuits consisting of both natural and cultural assets. The Green Box initiative is an instructive example of the potential for innovative enterprise that exists in this area (**Appendix 6 – Box 7**).

A clear message is emerging that data collection and analyses are essential to support well-planned regional development and the formulation of evidence-based policy. One of the biggest deficiencies facing decision-makers in relation to all-island spatial and business planning is an information lacuna across many data fields. This is compounded by unhelpful incompatibilities in the inter-sectoral and cross-border collation and organisational features of the available datasets. Economic competitiveness linked to policy-making and strategic planning particularly in cross-border areas would benefit considerably from the sharing and better utilisation of data. Increasingly, geographic information is being used to reveal a better understanding of the baseline situations, trends and patterns at local and regional level. Some of the maps included in this report as illustrative all-island maps have been compiled for this research using GIS. These maps are not definitive products – they are ‘interim productions’ that demonstrate the additional insights and possibilities that may be derived from detailed mapping of the island as a whole.

The census bureaux and ordnance survey offices on both parts of the island have a growing reputation for effective co-operation which can be built upon to provide enhanced compatibility and harmonisation of core information that will support government, community and business sectors in data capture, analysis and spatial planning. Reviews are under way of the data structures and potential overlaps within these organisations and the National Statistics Board is also addressing this issue. More progress is needed to support the efforts under way to improve the collation and use of quantitative and qualitative indicators for proposing, monitoring and implementing projects on an island-wide and cross-border basis.

***“We need to have more shared data between the North and South than we have at the moment. We need this shared data to enable us to develop evidence-based policy across the island.”***

Representative, Central Government, Ireland

A number of additional initiatives are also underway to establish and consolidate a knowledge infrastructure, a good example being the MOLAND Spatial Indicators Project which is likely to be a valuable asset for spatial planning analysis on both sides of the border and offers significant potential to the collaborative framework (**Appendix 6 – Box 8**). The lessons and outputs from this project and similar data and mapping initiatives in other areas such as the health and education sectors can contribute to this increasingly more informed and joined-up planning milieu.



As in other areas of development, the availability of improved and more comprehensive information about the location and usage of health and welfare services across the whole island will enhance the planning and delivery of facilities within and across regions. The preparation and recommendations of the separate reports by Hanly (2003) and Hayes (2001) on the rationalisation and location of hospital facilities for Ireland and Northern Ireland respectively were arrived at without the benefits of such cross-border data analysis or consideration of shared services. This is potentially wasteful of resources and could result in unnecessary overlap of resource outlays in the border areas.

Recent cross-border collaborations in the health sector such as, for example, the provision for cancer patients from the North West to be treated in Belfast, seek to make better use of available expertise and existing capacity. Such collaborations and decisions about location of facilities will benefit from a collaborative approach to spatial planning and the joint data compilation and analysis that is now underway through such projects as the all-island Population Health Observatory **(Appendix 6 – Box 9)**.

## 4.9 Conclusions

**The impacts of globalisation present major challenges for the island of Ireland. The responses to our interviews suggest that these challenges can and should be addressed in a proactive and coherent way.**

There is also widespread support for the deployment of a strategic spatial planning approach that will improve internal and external connections and maximise complementarity between all places on the island and Europe.

Moreover, the findings of the European case studies provide positive evidence of the additional leverage and mutual benefits that flow from collaborative spatial planning. The multi-level spatial strategy approach is a more holistic and integrated process of planning than the ad hoc sectoral planning that currently prevails in Ireland. It helps to minimise wasteful duplication and overlap of resources and costs, and yields additional benefits from the economies of scale and the innovation and synergies achieved through new collaborative efforts.

***“The main issue at the core of a framework for collaborative action is to ensure that one side does not receive a disproportionate amount of the benefits... it will be important to show that there is a win-win benefit for each side in order to secure sustained co-operation.”***

Representative Organisation, Ireland

Enhanced delivery of the proactive agenda requires a viable collaborative framework. This will best be achieved by supplementing the arrangements that are currently in place within the respective jurisdictions with a multi-level collaborative framework. It is worth noting that the existing arrangements operate in a quiet and unobtrusive way and that they have paved the way for significant progress on many fronts in recent times. However, there is no room for complacency and ample scope for endorsement and intensification of the existing efforts based on the comments received in the research interviews and evidence of successful regional collaboration across Europe.

A particular added value of the collaborative framework for government agencies, local authorities, business interests and other stakeholders is the potential to maximise economic and community benefits through enhanced information exchange and analysis. Improved data will allow for more sophisticated and focused forecasting and scenario modelling for a range of strategic policy areas and markets including transport and other infrastructure.

The proposals suggested here for the collaborative framework resemble those operating in similar trans-boundary contexts elsewhere within Europe. The use of European case study examples of collaboration to substantiate proposals for application to the island economy have shown the positive performance outcomes which can be achieved based on competitiveness, value for money and economies of scale. The collaborative framework and project selection guidelines presented in this chapter are designed to satisfy these requirements and contribute to positive outcomes.

## 5.0 WAY FORWARD

5.1 Introduction

5.2 What Government Needs To Do

5.3 Options for Government

5.4 Recommended Action for the Preferred Option

5.5 Action Agenda

5.6 Conclusions



## 5.0 WAY FORWARD

### Key messages

- The economies of the island, North and South, face major challenges on the European and global fronts. Confronting these common challenges demands an urgent response both to offset potential threats and seize the opportunities that they provide.
- Much has been achieved to date on both parts of the island to promote economic competitiveness but it is not enough. To move to the forefront of the global race for economic success, the two parts of the island must combine resources and focus their efforts to achieve positive results. A clear declaration to this effect is required from the two governments which have a responsibility to acknowledge and respond to the global challenges facing the island.
- To maintain and enhance its competitiveness the island needs to
  - Create a high-value, high-skills economy with excellent support infrastructure.
  - Promote a joined-up inward investment strategy.
  - Build a dynamic enterprise culture.
- Closer integration of spatial planning, business and infrastructure provision is imperative for the achievement of these aims and the proposed collaborative framework is a prerequisite for achieving this integration.
- Dynamic leadership is required to develop the collaborative framework and support its implementation.

# 5.1 Introduction

**The island of Ireland is embarking on a new progressive era where increased North/South co-operation is vital in promoting an economy capable of competing on the world stage.**

Many of the global challenges facing the jurisdictions of Northern Ireland and Ireland are similar, and the opportunities afforded by enhanced North/South co-operation for the delivery of a more prosperous all-island economy are compelling.

The future prospects for the economy both North and South depend on building an enterprise culture that is knowledge-based and market-led, supported by a business-led investment strategy. This trajectory for the all-island economy requires the provision of modern infrastructure to support business and consumer demand.

## 5.2 What Government Needs To Do

**In advancing co-operation for mutual advantage, the two Governments are working closely to identify areas and policies for collaboration based on joint approaches.**

The vision for the all-island economy is one where all citizens throughout the island will gain from access to better markets, higher quality public services, economic growth and reductions in regional disparities. An economy with the capability to successfully innovate, compete and adapt to new opportunities will provide win-win outcomes that benefit all people on the island. Scaled-up collaboration between business and planning stakeholders allied to a complementary alignment of strategic planning in the two jurisdictions will yield a joined-up and integrated approach to spatial planning and infrastructure provision. This inter-jurisdictional co-operation is essential to achieve the added value and economic competitiveness necessary for the island to move ahead of its competitors.

It is already recognised that significant mutual benefits can be gained by working together on an all-island basis. The two Governments have consistently stated that the economies of Northern Ireland and Ireland must forge closer links if they are to prosper in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. Both Governments are working in collaboration to advance projects that will deliver positive benefits for citizens both North and South. They now have an opportunity to go further and give an additional impetus to co-operation on spatial planning, infrastructure investment and new opportunities for economic co-operation.

To progress the build-up of the competitive economy, a clear requirement exists to compile a joint audit of existing and potential infrastructure, service delivery and other projects. Infrastructure and service provision must be able to support a critical mass of population and business enterprise - and the respective spatial planning strategies for Northern Ireland and Ireland are strongly positioned to underpin appropriate projects identified by a collaborative audit. Accordingly, they will contribute to the enhanced vibrancy and competitiveness of the all-island economy based on joint economic and planning co-operation in relation to those agreed projects that offer immediate and longer-term opportunities for mutual advantage. Priority should be given to infrastructural projects which promote competitiveness through sustainable and balanced development at the regional and local level and which enhance service delivery to cross-border areas.

## 5.3 Options for Government

**This report strongly recommends that the two Governments pursue as a matter of urgency suitable options for collaborative action in order to facilitate sustainable economic advancement and competitiveness on the island of Ireland. Building upon the existing spatial strategies in Northern Ireland and Ireland, three possible options for government are immediately discernible:**

### **Option 1: To continue existing informal arrangements on a business as usual basis**

The do-nothing option would maintain the status quo whereby the two government departments responsible for spatial planning in Northern Ireland (Department of Regional Development) and Ireland (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government) continue to liaise on an informal basis in implementing their respective spatial strategies. This informal relationship has worked well since the inception of the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland in 2001 and the National Spatial Strategy for Ireland in 2002. However with the increasing demands imposed by globalisation and the need to escalate responses to the challenges posed by globalisation this option is severely constrained in its ability to progress a competitive all-island economy.

### **Option 2: To consider the potential for a new all-island spatial planning initiative, with associated new structures**

This option would involve the establishment of a new institution or forum on spatial planning which would formalise new structures and relationships. This option carries definite

attractions in that the spatial planning agenda would be given a central role at the heart of government within an all-island context. However, the practicalities of present circumstances including the existence of two administrative systems, two sets of planning legislation and other associated constraints, mean that the time-line required to instigate and formalise any such body would be prohibitive in light of the current urgency for joint collaborative action. A quick and timely response is needed to roll out a collaborative spatial planning agenda, which clearly needs imminent direction and co-ordination on an all-island basis.

### **Option 3: To establish a new framework for collaboration on spatial planning and infrastructure co-ordination, building on existing arrangements**

This option involves ratcheting-up the existing engagement that occurs between the respective government departments responsible for spatial planning in a more novel and inclusive way to incorporate other departments, North and South, public agencies, as well as business interests and other relevant stakeholders. This is the preferred option of this report. It entails the development of a collaborative framework of action based on a synthesis of wider stakeholder involvement. This option is driven by the priorities of competitiveness through closer integration between spatial planning and business needs over the short to medium terms, as well as the long term, for the all-island economy. Sensitive and competent guidance and practical support will therefore be required to ensure that the expanded process and escalated programme is moved forward and managed coherently.

## 5.4 Recommended Actions for the Preferred Option

**Under the preferred option, the development of the collaborative framework gives expression to the modalities of obtaining maximum mutual benefit from implementing the two spatial strategies through co-operation and stakeholder engagement on an all-island and cross-border basis.**

It is not a single all-island spatial strategy - the two spatial strategies for both parts of the island will continue to retain their discrete identities. Rather, the collaborative framework is the basis for effective co-operation to achieve mutual advantage on strategic spatial planning issues and infrastructure provision for competitive business development. The proposed collaborative framework option also offers the prospects of a more proactive and integrated strategy for inward investment.

The key Government Departments, drawing on the support of existing cross-border institutions/bodies established under the Belfast/Good Friday agreement should drive the collaborative framework. *InterTradeIreland* is an example of a supportive cross-border body with a mandate from the two Governments to assist in the development of a globally competitive economy by prioritising optimal utilisation of the island's business knowledge and expertise. The new supportive framework should enable the two Government Departments to prioritise and deliver on the task of aligning the respective spatial strategies more closely with the drive for competitiveness, growth and wealth creation capabilities across the island.

The success of the collaborative framework depends on the implementation of key projects, specifically infrastructural priority schemes. Supported by the proposed new inclusive multi-stakeholder arrangements, the identification of core projects, based on the selection criteria outlined in Chapter 4, provides opportunities for all-island co-operation to the mutual advantage of both jurisdictions.

As far as possible, the collaborative framework should help to shape relevant planning policies and guidelines in such a way that they become part of the process of achieving greater alignment of the spatial strategies and consistency in promoting all-island economic development.

The work of the collaborative framework will benefit immeasurably from the availability of dependable and compatible all-island data-sets supported by thematic mapping. This will facilitate evidence-based policy and decision-making at all levels and is deemed to be a priority for inter-jurisdictional projects.



## 5.5 Action Agenda

**It is beyond the scope of this report to specify the precise content of the collaborative framework though potential projects have been highlighted.**

This must be a priority for the two Governments, which must decide upon and develop a results oriented action agenda as a matter of urgency. A positive action agenda for government will require:

- Endorsement by both Governments of the role and value of a collaborative framework.
- Specification, by the Governments, of the content of the above, building on this report and drawing upon the advice of national experts and key stakeholders such as the business community.
- Highlighting the key responsibilities/tasks for stakeholder groups engaged in the process of preparing the framework including the most appropriate arrangements to drive the process forward.

## 5.6 Conclusions

**The rapidly growing population of the island of Ireland, continuing improvement in economic conditions and the ongoing dividends of the peace process have been generating the resources needed by the two governments to invest in the productive and development potential of the island of Ireland.**

This substantial capacity for investment now demands in turn a high level framework for collaboration on spatial and strategic infrastructure planning to:

- Inform future investment programmes;
- Maximise synergies between different aspects of investment programmes;
- Underpin balanced regional competitiveness; and
- Reposition and re-image the island in general as a globally innovative and competitive location.

Implementing the recommendations of this report will produce a collaborative framework that can feed into the National Development Plan 2007-2013 in Ireland, and the three-year rolling Government Programme Spending and Priorities in Northern Ireland.

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## APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD)
- Appendix 2 Examples of European Cross-border Co-operation
- Appendix 3 Research Interview Schedule
- Appendix 4 Survey Instrument
- Appendix 5 Illustrative Examples of Potential Projects
- Appendix 6 Sample of Successful All-Island and Cross-Border Collaborative Projects



# APPENDIX 1

## *International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD)*

The ICLRDR is a centre of excellence focused on building the capacity of local and regional authorities, and community groups and their leaders, to proactively manage local and regional development in the context of evolving inter-governmental and inter-regional relationships on the island of Ireland. These new relationships are emerging within the framework for co-operation laid down by the 1998 Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement and subsequent institutional arrangements.

The Centre will play a key role in supporting co-operation and reconciliation on the island by facilitating independent analysis and capacity building in the areas of co-ordinated spatial planning and related social and economic development at local regional, jurisdictional and international levels. Through its partners, it will bring to bear the experience of international best practice in Europe (including the UK and Ireland) and North America to promote inter-communal co-operation, sustainable development and economic and social regeneration in urban and rural areas throughout the island of Ireland.

It will work with central and local government planners, public representatives and business and local community leaders to promote practical ways to revitalise local and regional economies, particularly in disadvantaged areas, in Northern Ireland and Ireland. The complementary strengths of its academic partners provide the ICLRDR with a unique opportunity to promote planning and local and regional development as a vital

adjunct to the reconciliation process on the island of Ireland. This will be achieved by researching Irish, UK and international initiatives to promote economic, social and spatial development in order to lessen inter-communal tension, enhance cross-community and cross-border co-operation, and facilitate a return to normal life.

In these different but linked contexts, the strategic goals of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development are:

- To develop the capacity of civic and community leaders, public officials, non-governmental organisations and planning practitioners in Ireland, North and South, to participate in and lead the planning and development of their regions and localities. In Northern Ireland and the Southern border counties this will be undertaken with an emphasis on promoting local economic growth, social cohesion and community self-help. A further aim is to translate the lessons of the process to other regions of Europe and beyond which are undergoing rapid economic and social transitions, recovering from political upheaval or experiencing cross-border tensions.
- To promote research activities that document successful best practice in the fields of sustainable urban development and planning, inter-regional co-operation, and economic and social regeneration, with a particular focus on socially disadvantaged and divided areas and cross-border co-operation.

- To promote the interchange of ideas and experience, both on the island of Ireland and internationally, through the construction of a dynamic web-based site, regular workshops and professional training programmes, and the dissemination of research and case study findings through networks of policy makers, community activists and academics.
- To create networks to provide a conduit for disseminating and further developing action research and case study material among professional educators involved in planning and development on the island of Ireland, Great Britain, EU member states and the US.

As part of its networking role, the ICLRD will serve as convenor and facilitator of island fora in different planning, housing and infrastructural development sectors. In this way it will provide an independent space in which practitioners (in public, private and NGO organisations) and academics in a particular sector in both jurisdictions can together explore common challenges and opportunities.

The ICLRD will provide a wide range of resources aimed at building the capacity of three different groups in Northern Ireland and Ireland:

- Community leaders and local elected officials;
- Decision making staff in government departments, local and regional authorities, and major community and development organisations;
- Planners, both public and private sector, and other private sector professionals involved in local and regional development.

ICLRD website: [www.iclrd.org](http://www.iclrd.org)



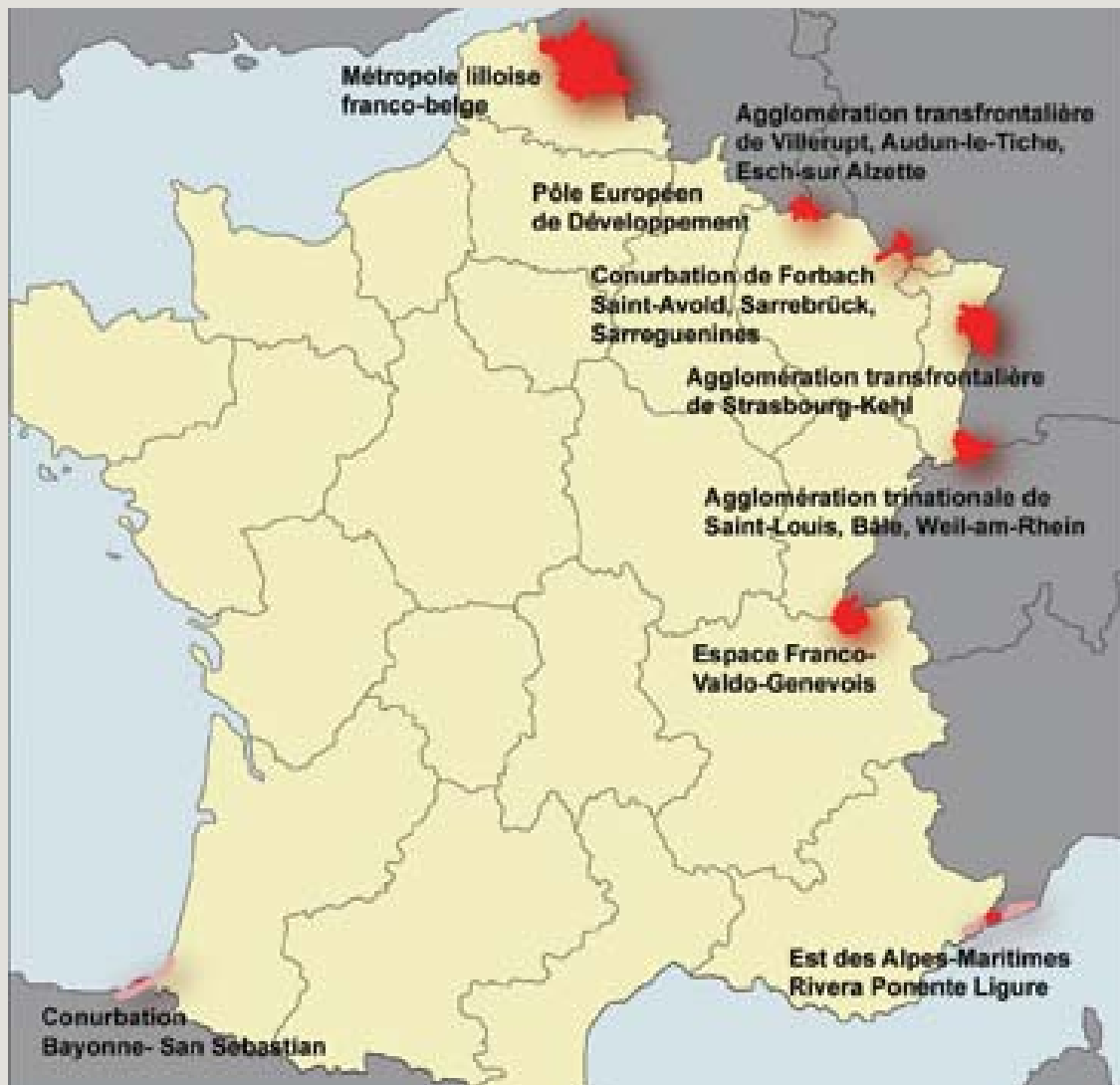
## APPENDIX 2

### *European Examples of Cross-Border Co-operation*

The eight examples that follow were selected because they illustrate various scales of co-operation in a context that is relevant to the situation on the island of Ireland. They are also of interest insofar as they range in specificity from being purely supportive of existing planning frameworks to consisting of highly specific interventions to address common problems.

Similarly, they illustrate collaborative approaches at the national, sub-regional and local levels or some combination of them. The order in which they are presented generally reflects work at different collaborative framework levels from national to local.

*Location of Selected European Cross-Border Initiatives Cited*



Source: Material from <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/indexsite.php>

### **Case Study 1: Evaluation of the Development of Cross-Border Co-operation: Kent, UK and Nord-Pas de Calais, France.**

This study, commissioned by the Syndicate Mixte de la Côte d'Opale (a French regional association), the Littoral Development Fund (FODEL) and Euro tunnel, was carried out by Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière, a French interdepartmental cross-border task force. The work evaluates the progress of cross-border co-operation between Kent County in the UK and the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region of France, two areas which, in spite of lying on either side of the English Channel, share a unique transportation connection: the Channel Tunnel.

The purpose of the study was to create the knowledge base necessary to further cross-border co-operation and development. The first section of the report analyses the current situation, comparing the two areas' local governance (including financing, local tax systems, and organisation) and their geographical, demographic, cultural, and historic characteristics. It evaluates the feasibility of co-operating to promote economic development and the obstacles to collaborative action.

The second section of the report offers recommendations for future collaboration by presenting three possible scenarios for the development of relations between the two regions:

- A projection of probable outcomes if the level of co-operation neither increases nor decreases.

- An exploration of the benefits of increasing the current level of co-operation by creating new partnership opportunities and co-ordinating systems for managing cross-border projects.
- An intervention-based scenario that develops a 'commuting path' to facilitate work-home commuting between the two regions.

Supporting the study text is an atlas comprised of maps comparing Kent and the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region on the basis of twenty demographic and economic indicators; maps showing existing transport flows across the Channel; and a forecast map for cross-channel commuting.

### **Case Study 2: Cross-border Co-operation in the Baltic Countries and North West Russia.**

The Nordic Council of Ministers was established in 1971 to promote cross-border co-operation among Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Its current objectives have been extended to include the Baltic States and north-western Russia.

While co-operation among the Nordic countries includes a number of specific interventions, collaboration with the former Soviet Union (including the Baltic republics) focuses on non-spatial issues: improving living standards, fostering communal exchanges, overcoming historical prejudice, and protecting the natural and cultural heritage. Priority activities funded in 2002-2004 were:

- Facilitating the exchange of information;
- Spreading information about Euro-regions;
- Preparation of common data sets, including maps;
- Offering training seminars;
- Encouraging the undertaking of common activities – joint conferences and twinned projects.

Financing is provided partly by the Nordic Council of Ministers and by INTERREG funds.

### **Case Study 3: Italian- Swiss Border Region**

Undertaken under INTERREG IIIA along 706 kilometres of border, this initiative covers three Swiss cantons (Grisons, Tessin and Valais) and, on the Italian side the mountain and the piedmont portions of five provinces (Bolzano, Vercelli, Verbano-Cusso-Ossola, Lombardy and the Autonomous Territory of Valle d'Aosta).

Although initially limited to the Valais Canton and the Autonomous Territory of Valle d'Aosta (June 2002), co-operative action is proceeding along the entire border area. This is being achieved through a series of informational public meetings to sensitise local governments and chambers of commerce on the mutual advantages of cross-border co-operation.

The existing situation in the regions on either side of the border has undergone a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), leading to the identification and impact analysis of a series of potential co-operative actions. The ones deemed to offer the greatest opportunities include:

- Co-operation in planning the future of the region: commonality of data sets, analysis and definition of interventions.
- Adoption of common measures to safeguard and valorise the natural, cultural and architectural heritage.
- Integration of infrastructure investment programs, particularly transportation.
- Adoption of common educational and professional training policies to facilitate cross-border labour movements (citizens without borders).

### **Case Study 4: Waste Management in the Basque Eurocity: Bayonne (France) and San Sebastian (Spain).**

The Basque Euro city has a population of around 970,000 72 per cent of whom are on the Spanish side. By 2010 the population is estimated to reach over one million.

In 2002 a feasibility study was undertaken to develop a common management plan for the nearly 610,000 tons/annum generated in the area of which nearly 60.000 tons/annum are potentially recyclable. At present, the gross treatment cost of waste in Spain is on the order of €54/ton, less than half than the €70/ton on the French side. This significant differential is mainly due to the Spanish lag in complying with EU treatment norms. The net cost differential, after the sale of electricity as a by-product of incineration is plus €22/ton in France.

The study concluded that the localisation of waste treatment stations and sanitary fills serving larger than national areas in the border would result in a more efficient and higher standard of waste treatment and allow the development of common landfills in environmentally suitable areas. Although net costs varied according to various co-operative strategies, the favoured scenarios resulted in a net cost per ton of €65 on the French side and €53 on the Spanish side. These costs included the capital costs of required facilities. Legally, no insurmountable obstacles were identified with the possible exception of the different national and local permitting standards for the construction of treatment facilities and new landfills.

#### **Case study 5: France, Germany, and Switzerland: Basel Tri-national Agglomeration**



Source: Material taken from <http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/territoire/aggloatb.pdf>

The Basel Tri-national Conurbation encompasses two Swiss cantons (Basel-Ville and Basel Campagne), two German towns (Lörrach and Weil-am-Rhein) and the French Communauté de Communes des Trois Frontières with a combined population of 600,000. Basel is Switzerland's most dynamic and productive region whose economy is principally knowledge-based industries, including pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Basel is one of the world's most important biotechnology centre. It is one of the anchors of the tri-national "Bio-Valley" that extends from Basel to Strasbourg.

Co-operation among these communities began under INTERREG II in the 1990s but was not formalised until 2001.

The first step in the development of cross-border collaboration was a planning initiative designed to provide a deeper understanding of the geographic, economic and demographic characteristics of the three areas. Out of this study emerged the concept of the Tri-national Conurbation to move beyond individual cross-border projects and view the area as a coherent whole. After INTERREG II ended, the leaders of the three regions created a formal "Association of the Basel Tri-national Conurbation" with over 50 partners representing various components from each of the communities. The Association is responsible for cross-border spatial planning and managing development. It identifies and recommends sectoral projects:

- Land management and sustainable development
- Urbanisation and land use
- Transportation

- The economy
- Nature and the environment
- Large-scale projects and infrastructure
- Institutional organisation

Under the INTERREG IIIA Programme, the Association is now working on the following objectives:

- Developing and stabilising collaboration between the communities within the Basel Tri-national Conurbation and at its periphery;
- Updating and clarifying the Association's mission and priorities;
- Continuing feasibility studies in the North and East; and
- Preparing to complete its first two regional projects.

### **Case Study 6: France and Switzerland: Greater Geneva Region**

This initiative, partially financed by INTERREG, between the French communities of Genevois-Haut Savoyard in Haute-Savoie and Pays de Gex in l'Ain and the Swiss Canton of Geneva and the District of Nyon was launched in 1997 with the publication of the 'Charter for the Cross-Border Franco-Valdo-Genevoise Agglomeration.' The Charter proposed that this 730,000-population region be considered as a coherent whole and sought to maintain the Geneva Region's key position as an international centre at the "heart of Europe". To that end, the Plan recommended ten projects to promote cross-border co-operation.

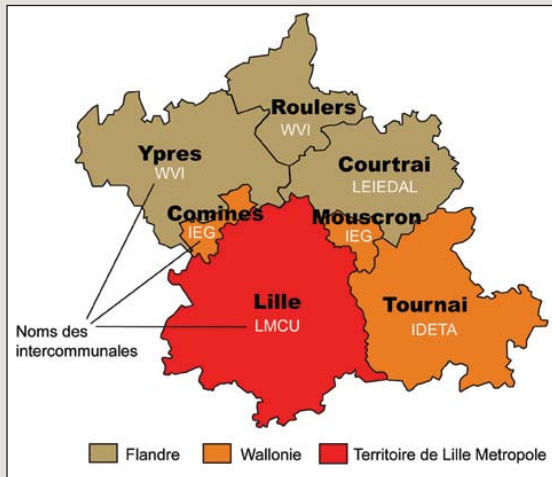
The first four are designed to create economic development zones at four "poles" along the border, including the Geneva International Airport, the CERN particle-physics laboratory, towns of Saint Julien, Archamps and Bardonnex (where a new section of the Annecy-Geneva freeway has been built) and the intermodal Annemasse Train Station.

Second stage projects consist of:

- The construction of a cross-border high-speed suburban train linking different border centres.
- A regional plan to attract international organisations.
- Agro-environmental cultivation.
- A co-ordinated development plan for the shores of Lake Geneva.
- The creation of a link between Greater Geneva's transportation system and the French TGV.
- The planning of a regional urban transportation network connected with the cross-border train system.

After the signing of the Cross-border charter in 1996, the localities of the Greater Geneva region agreed to extend their co-operation to address issues of transportation, education, economic development, housing, health, urban policy, and the management of agricultural land. They have also agreed to share certain public costs associated with the trans-border spill over of development.

## Case Study 7: Belgium and France: Lille Metropolitan Area



Source: Material taken from [http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/territoire/carte\\_lille\\_tfe.jpg](http://www.espaces-transfrontaliers.org/territoire/carte_lille_tfe.jpg)

In 1991, the Conférence Permanente Intercommunale Transfrontalière (COPIT) was formed as a partnership between five inter-municipal groups in the Franco-Belgian trans-border region with the objective of helping to create an integrated Lille Metropolitan Area. Acting as an advisory body, COPIT's goal is to encourage co-operation in this 1.8 million population region by:

- Facilitating the emergence of a recognised regional culture.
- Helping to explore common interests.
- Facilitating the development of consensus-oriented cross-border relationships.
- Bringing together decision-makers, entrepreneurs, planners, developers, and researchers to help establish a regional identity.

In 2002 COPIT released a Strategy for a Cross-border Metropolitan Area proposing that the region adopt a common development strategy focused on improving the residents' living conditions, promoting economic development, preserving the environment, and encouraging a trans-border dialogue with the goal of creating a framework for regional governance. Projects proposed by COPIT include:

- Construction of a common waste management centre;
- Extension of bus lines;
- Creation of a cross-border atlas; and
- Creation of a cross-border industrial park

The concept of a decentralised trans-border governing body is currently being explored in Brussels and Paris, with the support of France's Prime Minister.

### **Case Study 8: Germany and France: Rhine Valley**

The 1996 Karlsruhe Treaty signed by foreign ministers of Germany, France, Switzerland, and Luxembourg paved the way for cross-border co-operation at the local level. Under this treaty, local governments, and some public organisations, have the authority to create bi-lateral or multilateral local co-operative agreements. Today, cross-border co-operation between France and Germany is most evident in the existence of three large metropolitan areas: Sarrebrück-Forbach-Sarreguemines, Bâle Tri-national Agglomeration (Germany, France, and Switzerland), and the Strasbourg-Kehl Agglomeration.

Cross-border initiatives affect Alsace and Lorraine in France and Sarre, Rhénanie-Palatinat, and Bade-Wurtemberg in Germany. Under INTERREG several projects have taken place in the Lorraine region in the areas of economic development, research and technology, tourism, land management, education, and communication. Other cross-border commissions and councils with a largely consultative role have also been set up in Lorraine. Alsace is home to the Upper Rhine Conference, bringing together representatives from Germany, Switzerland and France. This Conference and its political partner, the Rhineland Council, have facilitated several INTERREG projects, including the PAMINA Program encompassing more than 70 cross-border projects.

# APPENDIX 3

## Research Interview Schedule

### A.3.1 Introduction

The methodology underpinning this research involved a series of structured interviews with key stakeholders involved in or familiar with spatial planning in Northern Ireland and Ireland.

The interviewees consulted during the course of the research are categorised below by the association of their organisation into five broad sectors: central government, regional/local government, representative bodies, research organisations, and the private sector.

*Table A.3.1 – Research Interviews by name, organisation and sector*

Ref.	Interviewee	Organisation
<b>I.1 Central government</b>		
I.1.1	Jim Hetherington / Ian Raphael	Department for Regional Development
I.1.2	Linda MacHugh	Department for Social Development
I.1.3	Graeme Hutchinson / Peter Hughes	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment
I.1.4	James McEldowney	Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
I.1.5	Brian Rowntree / Paddy McIntyre	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
I.1.6	Damian McCauley / Paul Brush	Invest Northern Ireland
I.1.7	David Gavaghan / Roisin Kelly	Strategic Investment Board for Northern Ireland
I.1.8	Tom Clarke	Policy Division, Planning Service
I.1.9	Chris Boomer	Omagh Divisional Office, Planning Service
I.1.10	Peter Mullaney	Craigavon Divisional Office, Planning Service
I.1.11	Dennis O'Hagan / Steven Boyd	Roads Service
I.1.12	Gerry Monks	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment
I.1.13	Olive Nagle	Department of Foreign Affairs
I.1.14	Kieran O'Donoghue	IDA Ireland
I.1.15	Marie Ginnity / Mary Twomey	Forfás
I.1.16	Deirdre Carroll	Department of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs



Ref.	Interviewee	Organisation
I.1.17	Aidan Punch	Central Statistics Office
I.1.18	Gareth McGrath / Suzanne McLaughlin	Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland
I.1.19	Trevor Forsythe	Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment
I.1.20	James Gillan	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment
I.1.21	David Marshall	Department of Finance and Personnel
<b>I.2 Regional / Local Government</b>		
I.2.1	John McGrillen	Down District Council
I.2.2	Tom McCall / Gerry McGivern	Newry & Mourne District Council
I.2.3	Philip Faithful / Eamon Molloy	Strabane District Council / North West Region Cross-border Group
I.2.4	Alison McCullagh	Omagh District Council
I.2.5	Victor Brownlees	Armagh & City District Council
I.2.6	Paul McElhinney	Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly
I.2.7	Deirdre Frost / Pauline White	Western Development Commission
I.2.8	Gerry Finn	Border Midland & Western Regional Assembly
I.2.9	Matt Donnelly	Border Regional Authority
I.2.10	Hubert Kearns	Sligo County Council
<b>I.3 Representative Bodies</b>		
I.3.1	William Poole	IBEC – CBI Joint Business Council
I.3.2	Dennis Rooney	International Fund for Ireland
I.3.3	Tom Gillen	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
I.3.4	John Armstrong	Construction Employers Federation

Ref.	Interviewee	Organisation
I.3.5	Pamela Arthurs	East Border Region
I.3.6	Sean Murphy	Chambers of Commerce of Ireland
I.3.7	Martin Whelan / Liam Kelleher	Construction Industry Federation
I.3.8	Eamonn McKeon	Irish Tourist Industry Confederation
I.3.9	Geoff McEnroe	IBEC
I.3.10	Niall Fitzduff	Rural Community Network
<b>I.4 Research Organisations</b>		
I.4.1	Victor Hewitt / Mike Crone	Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland
I.4.2	John FitzGerald	Economic & Social Research Institute
I.4.3	Catherine Lynch	Co-operation Ireland
<b>I.5 Private Sector</b>		
I.5.1	Feargal McCormack	FPM Chartered Accountants
I.5.2	Chris McGarry	RPS McHugh Consultants
I.5.3	Claire Eriksson	Jones Lang LaSalle
I.5.4	Colm McCarthy	DKM Consultants
I.5.5	Michael D'Arcy	D'Arcy Smyth & Associates

# APPENDIX 4

## *Survey Instrument*

### **Preamble**

InterTradeIreland, the all-Island trade and business development body, has commissioned the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) to research spatial planning strategies in Northern Ireland and Ireland to identify the potential of a framework for collaborative action.

The Department for Regional Development (DRD) in Northern Ireland, and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHLG) in Ireland are supporting this research.

The research aim is as follows:

“To reflect upon existing spatial strategies in Northern Ireland and Ireland and to set an agenda exploring possible options for a framework for collaborative action thereby creating conditions that will facilitate economic benefit and enhanced competitiveness on the island of Ireland.”

The issues that we wish to explore with key stakeholders will consider the content of respective spatial strategies in the respective jurisdiction including the potential for a framework for collaborative action within an all-island context.

Anticipated research questions will focus on the following areas:

- Information base – identification of the information necessary to develop spatial policy at the strategic and trans-boundary levels
- Action agenda – establish steps and timeframes necessary to provide integrated strategic spatial planning thinking between the two jurisdictions
- Essential collaboration – highlight opportunities for financing island collaborative projects within the parameters of EU and other funding arrangements

Listed below are the questions/issues for discussion at each interview.

### **Questions/Issues for Research Interviews with Key Stakeholders**

#### **1. Background**

Outline what you [and your organisation] understand by the term ‘spatial planning’:

Identify what level of awareness/understanding and interaction with strategic spatial policy at various scales -

- ESDP/EU spatial policy
- NSS/RDS/sister planning and transportation documents
- All-island spatial planning

## 2. Spatial Strategies

Reflecting on existing spatial strategies, would an all-island framework of collaborative action influence the dynamic within key sectors for example:

- Business and economic development
- Employment
- Population distribution
- Rural development
- Housing
- Transport
- Education and skills base
- Tourism
- Sustainability/waste management

In what ways would an all-island framework of collaborative action be effective in influencing this dynamic?

What information and datasets are required for the creation of such a framework?

What role would all-Island thematic maps have in the development of a framework of collaborative action?

## Thematic Issues

In your opinion what issues should be at the core of a framework for collaborative action indicating measures that would be beneficial to both jurisdictions:

- Travel-to-work-areas
- Labour markets
- Housing markets
- Key Transport Corridor movements
- Energy exchange
- Shared infrastructure/services

What core information and datasets are required to adequately investigate these issues and develop a framework in both jurisdictions?

What role would thematic maps have in scoping and developing actual/specific collaborative actions for these issues?

#### 4. Delivery

What elements/components are required to operationalise a framework for collaborative action, for example:

- Collaboration between government agencies
- Delivery of strategic spatial planning initiatives
- Funding and delivery mechanisms (e.g. NDP, ISNI and INTERREG) for strategic spatial planning
- Current information sharing arrangements and all-Island databases and mapping provision

To what degree do institutional and contextual issues facilitate or create barriers to all-island spatial planning and associated initiatives?

#### 5. Impacts

What do you perceive to be the likely impacts derived from a framework for collaborative action and how would this relate to regulatory and fiscal differences between the two jurisdictions:

- Identify the impact of differential fiscal policies on location decision-making, and the influence on cross-border movement

#### 6. Practicability

Explore the practicability of a framework for collaborative action:

- How do you perceive the practicability of such a framework?
- Do you have any proposals that would assist in achieving buy-in?
- Are there any measures that would enhance the process of delivery?
- Are there any examples of good international practice that may have some bearing on the framework?

# APPENDIX 5

## *Illustrative Examples of Potential Projects*

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES (Refer to page 70)	
B. Criteria (Category & Purpose)	C. Potential Project Areas (Illustrative examples from Europe)
<b>Socio-economic</b>	
To harness development potential	<p>Encouraging entrepreneurship focused on all-island SMEs, tourism, culture and trade.</p> <p>Achieving sustainable competitive efficiencies and life quality improvements through shared wider use of infrastructures and facilities such as water, waste, energy systems as well as health and education.</p> <p>Wide-ranging integration of knowledge-relevant policies, such as the promotion of innovation, education, vocational training and further training, research and technology development, into spatial development policies, especially in remote or densely populated areas.</p>
Diffusion of Innovation and Knowledge	<p>Securing island-wide access to knowledge-relevant infrastructure taking account of the socio-economic potential of modern SMEs as motors of sustainable economic development.</p> <p>Fostering networking among companies and the rapid diffusion of innovations, particularly through regional institutions that can promote innovations.</p> <p>Supporting the establishment of innovation centres as well as co-operation between higher education and applied R&amp;D bodies and the private sector, particularly in economically weak areas.</p>
Balanced Spatial Development	<p>Promoting integrated spatial development strategies sensitive to economic, social and environmental diversity.</p> <p>Reducing isolation and enhancing integration through improved access to transport, information and communication networks and other services.</p>
Dynamic, Attractive & Competitive Cities/ Urbanised Regions based on New Urban-Rural Relationship	<p>Promoting integrated spatial development strategies for regions on the island within the framework of transnational and cross-border co-operation, including corresponding rural areas and their small cities and towns.</p> <p>Use of the potential for renewable energy in urban and rural areas, taking into account local and regional conditions.</p>

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES (Refer to page 70)	
B. Criteria (Category & Purpose)	C. Potential Project Areas (Illustrative examples from Europe)
<p>Polycentric Development Model: A Basis for Mutual Benefits through Better Economic Leverage and Accessibility</p>	<p>Exploitation of the development potential of environmentally friendly tourism.</p> <p>Promoting indigenous development, diverse and productive rural areas, and wise management of the urban ecosystem.</p> <p>Securing sustainable agriculture, application of environmental measures and diversification of agrarian land utilisation.</p> <p>Promotion of co-operation between towns and countryside aiming at strengthening functional regions.</p> <p>Promotion and support of partnership-based co-operation between small and medium-sized towns at a national and transnational level through joint projects and the mutual exchange of experience.</p> <p>Promotion of company networks between small and medium-sized enterprises in the towns and countryside.</p> <p>Strengthening small and medium-sized towns in rural areas as focal points for regional development and promotion of their networking.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure/Service Provision &amp; Management</b></p> <p>Efficient and Sustainable Use of Infrastructures</p>	<p>Co-ordinated and integrated infrastructure planning and management for avoiding inefficient investments (e.g. superfluous parallel development of transport infrastructure) and securing the most efficient use of existing transport infrastructure.</p> <p>Improving transport links of peripheral and ultra-peripheral regions, both within the island and the EU taking into account air transport and the further development of corresponding infrastructure facilities.</p> <p>Improving of access to and use of tele-communication facilities and the design of tariffs in accordance with the provision of “universal services” in sparsely populated areas.</p>

## A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES (Refer to page 70)

B. Criteria (Category & Purpose)	C. Potential Project Areas (Illustrative examples from Europe)
<p>Integrated Approach to Infrastructure and Knowledge</p>	<p>Better co-ordination of spatial development policy and land use planning with transport and telecommunications planning.</p> <p>Development of packages of measures which stimulate supply and demand for improving regional access and the use of information and communication technologies.</p>
<p><b>Natural and Cultural Landscapes and Heritage</b></p> <p>Natural and Cultural Heritage as a Development asset</p> <p>Preservation and Development of the Natural Heritage (including Water Resource Management)</p> <p>Creative Management of Cultural Landscapes / Heritage</p>	<p>Preparation of integrated spatial development strategies for protected areas, environmentally sensitive areas and areas of high biodiversity such as coastal areas, mountain areas and wetlands; balancing protection and development on the basis of territorial and environmental impact assessments and involving the partners concerned.</p> <p>Development of strategies at regional and transnational levels for risk management in disaster prone areas, particularly in coastal regions.</p> <p>Promotion of transnational and interregional co-operation for the application of integrated strategies for the management of water resources, including larger ground water reserves in areas prone to drought and flooding.</p> <p>Preservation and restoration of large wetlands which are endangered by excessive water extraction or by the diversion of inlets.</p> <p>Preservation and creative development of cultural landscapes with special historical, aesthetical and ecological importance.</p> <p>Enhancement of the value of cultural landscapes within the framework of integrated spatial development strategies.</p> <p>Development of integrated strategies for the protection of cultural heritage which is endangered or decaying, including the development of instruments for assessing risk factors and for managing critical situations.</p> <p>Increasing awareness of the contribution of spatial development policy to the cultural heritage of future generations.</p>



## APPENDIX 6

### *Sample of Successful All-Island and Cross-Border Collaborative Projects*

The illustrative projects contained here cover a spectrum of activities which currently benefit from co-operation on strategic planning, networking and information exchange.

They range from infrastructure delivery to the application of the knowledge and skills base and demonstrate some of the advantages of the collaborative approach. They also indicate the potential of similar projects to contribute to the economic competitiveness of the all-island economy.

#### **BOX 1 Collaborative Road Projects**

Progress is being made on the delivery of a roads network that effectively connects all regions on the island and links them through the main gateway centres with other thriving economic regions in the UK and Europe. Accessibility by roads is a key consideration in determining markets and deciding where businesses should locate. The provision of good quality routeways would assist in the economic development of the Border areas and peripheral regions by making them more accessible and more attractive to investment. Both governments need to commit to upgrading key cross-border routes which complement the already high quality Dublin-Belfast corridor. The provision of improved East-West as well as North/South road routes are of crucial importance for the border regions of the island as key connectors for these areas to the major centres of Dublin and Belfast. The recent Dundalk Bypass has completed the upgrade of the M1 South of the Border. On the Northern side, the Dundalk/Newry Motorway

Project is underway and is expected to be completed by end 2007. These improvements will reduce journey times significantly and will complement the existing TENS route of Cork-Dublin-Belfast which serves the Eastern Seaboard.

The Transport Plan 21, recently announced by the Irish Government, contains a commitment to North/South co-operation, particularly to the improvements of the N2, N3, N4 and N5 routes – all of which have cross-border connections. Transport routes operating on a North/South basis must be integrated and developed in close co-operation. In improving such routes, it is essential that improvements occur jointly and in tandem to ensure compatibility and consistency in quality and safety standards.

#### **BOX 2 The TENS Rail Project for the Cork-Dublin-Belfast**

The density and quality of Ireland's rail network is limited particularly in the northern part of the island). Work on developing the TENS rail route for the Cork-Dublin-Belfast route has been ongoing throughout the 1990s with investment to date totalling over €240million. In 2004, the development of the Cork-Dublin-Belfast intercity rail corridor received €1million funding under the TENS programme. There is scope for further collaboration on this project. Proposals are being developed for a Trans-European Network (TENS) project to improve the Belfast-Cork route. In addition to the current Dublin-Belfast cross-border route, there is a need for a separate high-speed rail link between both these cities and extending further into

Ireland to link up with the island's third largest city Cork. Both the NSS and RDS "recognise the need for strong spatial linkages, particularly within the eastern seaboard". As noted in the paper, Transport Corridors in Europe – Executive Summary, which forms part of Stage Two of the National Spatial Strategy, "Ireland's competitive position will be determined by a range of measures of which efficient and reliable transport corridors to and from Europe is one."

The development of this route as part of the TENS in part addresses Ireland's over-reliance on road-based transport, both in terms of passenger and freight movements (as highlighted in the paper Transport Corridors in Europe). This rail route complements the existing road network under TENS – also involving Cork-Dublin-Belfast-Larne. It provides an alternative to this road route and is being marketed as a more attractive way to travel for the commuter and it also eases road congestion. The implementation of this rail link with further connections on to Larne would stem the decline of Larne port. It is envisaged under the TENS that this route will be connected to the rest of Europe via the ferry between Larne and the Scottish port of Stranraer. In addition to the benefits of linking the three largest cities on the island of Ireland, it would also strengthen the potential for success of the Twin City Corridor Project which seeks to enhance the connectivity between Dundalk and Newry.

Investment into the rail tracks and signalling systems is underway and nearing completion. What is now needed is a review of timetabling so that train times are complementary (i.e. Cork-Dublin and Dublin-Belfast). There is also a need to ensure that connections between the railway stations (Heuston Station and Connolly Station) are suitable to fit with time tabling of intercity trains. The cost of connecting between both train stations should be built into the price of the main travel ticket (i.e. Cork-Dublin-Belfast) – thus easing the switchover for passengers.

### **BOX 3 Broadband Infrastructure Challenges**

Broadband is of key strategic importance to economic growth in all business sectors, particularly with respect to improving productivity performance. For this reason poor broadband performance has serious implications for economic success and competitiveness. However, broadband take-up on the island has lagged behind competitor countries, and continues to grow less rapidly than its major competitors. The Northern Ireland network ranks well in terms of customer access, quality of service (bandwidth capacity and choice of advanced products) and off-island connectivity (via the UK) to Europe and elsewhere. However, Ireland performs poorly and ranks 21st out of 30 benchmark countries on this important quality backbone performance indicator<sup>7</sup>.

The range and availability of telecommunications services and the cost of telecommunications must continue to improve across the island of Ireland which is being out-performed by other countries in terms of broadband take-up and usage. Action is needed to improve the island's relative international performance. As with the energy sector, it is likely that an integrated broadband infrastructure and all-island market for broadband would enhance broadband availability and take-up on the island of Ireland and significantly improve its international competitiveness. The benefits of an all-island network include:

- Increased broadband availability
- Boosted competition in the market place
- Greater awareness and potential usage of the facility.

The authorities on both parts of the island have invested heavily in the roll out of broadband infrastructure and services for business and citizens. A major challenge now for the island economy is to integrate the two networks on the island to achieve mutual savings and wider linkage benefits. At present, the two networks on the island operate in isolation from one another and are failing to fill gaps and capitalise on the mutual benefits and synergy potentials of combined linkages to off-island networks particularly in the UK, Europe and America. Support is required for projects that address these deficits. For example, cross-border leased lines are used by businesses in both jurisdictions in the border areas. International charging means that such connectivity, which is essential for cross-border businesses such as

banks and large corporations, can cost up to three times the price of a similar connection within one jurisdiction.

At present, the rollout of wireless broadband is limited due to issues with erecting masts although it provides the most cost efficient and realistic means of delivering high quality broadband to the border region. INTERREG has funded a number of projects designed to assist rollout service that will address these problems. Donegal County Council is also examining a number of options on how best to provide a link fibre from the existing Letterkenny hub to the border at Bridgend with potential links into developments on the Northern Ireland side.

**BOX 4 All-island Logistics  
Chain Security Project: Creating a  
Paperless-office for Customs and Trade**

A recent decision (December 2005) by the European Parliament and Council established a framework to create a secure electronic customs system to minimise the negative impacts on export and imports trade of border crossing clearance requirements. The EU is effectively being compelled to introduce this feature by the increased security requirements for trading demanded by the United States and the World Customs Union. However, the EU will not legislate for a single mandatory solution across Europe. Instead, it expects the business sector to lead the way by creating collaborative platforms between member states that produce affordable and successful solutions over the coming 5-10 years. The aim is to establish a product tracking and transaction system using single window (paperless office) technology as

an instrument for the implementation of secure and interoperable customs clearance. It is envisaged that the establishment of a secure, interoperable and accessible electronic customs systems will improve and facilitate supply chain logistics (flow of products and services) and customs processes. Customs clearance will become more efficient, administrative burdens will be reduced, trade will be facilitated, the safety of goods and security of international trade will be increased and environmental and consumer protection will be enhanced through better targeted customs controls based on electronic risk management systems. The potential savings are significant for both government and trade in EU states. Economic benefits that can accrue include: reducing security risks; improved cargo handling/tracking; shortened turnaround times; accelerated customs clearance; elimination of redundant data; and reduction of theft and fraud by providing full traceability.

The island of Ireland project is being developed and implemented by business sector representatives, with support from relevant public sector agencies and third level institutions. It is currently being piloted with the Pharmaceutical Sector before application to other trading areas with less detailed and stringent logistic protocols. The purpose of the pilot is to deliver the single window solution, develop appropriate standards and demonstrate viability of the approach in terms of competitive advantage through reduced costs and reduced timescales for import and export for member companies. This gives users the potential for all data to be submitted once,

to allow clearance right through the supply chain, and provide clearance data that satisfy full traceability standards.

#### **BOX 5 All-Island Energy Market Framework**

All-island collaboration is already at an advanced stage in the energy sector where there is now a well-developed market with clearly defined regulatory authorities North and South. A joint Development Framework for an All-Island Energy Market was published by the two Governments in November, 2004. The framework sets out a clear rationale and mutual benefit for energy-sharing on an all-island basis and provides the policy context for action by the two Governments, regulatory authorities and industry in creating an all-island energy market. In 2004, a memorandum of understanding was also signed between the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation and the Commission for Energy Regulation in the South. A key priority is to have a Single Electricity Market in place by July, 2007. At present the electricity inter-connection between the two parts of the island is extremely limited and consists of the main 275kV line at Tandragee-Louth. Two 110kV lines at Enniskillen-Corraclassy and Strabane-Letterkenny support the main inter-connector but cannot operate to interconnect the two systems in the absence of the main 275kV connection). However, a second electricity inter-connector is expected to be in place by 2011 and a proposed 165 kilometre underground gas pipeline linking Gormanstown to Belfast via Forkhill, Armagh is due for completion in 2006.

In addition to the boost that they will contribute to the economy, these infrastructure projects will significantly expand the transmission networks and enhance security of supply for energy needs on the island.

The work of the All-Island Energy Framework is noteworthy not only because of its success to date in progressing the development of the energy market but also because it provides a practical example of all-island collaboration and partnership that can be emulated in other sectors of the economy (see [www.allislandproject.org](http://www.allislandproject.org)).

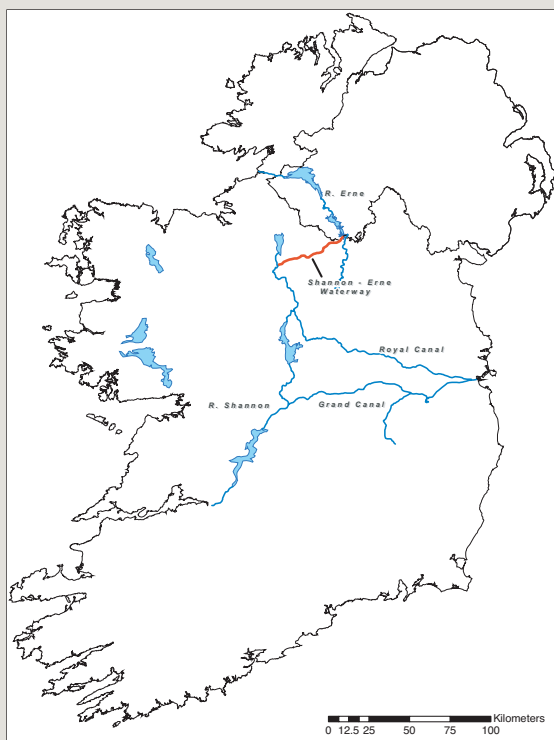
#### **BOX 6 Collaborative Planning Corridors**

The NSS and RDS recognise the potential of Letterkenny-Derry, Sligo-Enniskillen, and Dundalk-Newry as cross-border corridors. A major study is already under way in respect of the Dundalk-Newry sub-region (The Twin City Project). Similar studies may be merited for sub-regions including the North West (Derry-Letterkenny) sub-region which has obvious potential to capitalise on the natural complementarity of its two major urban centres – the hinterland of Derry/Londonderry extends westwards while the hinterland of County Donegal is to the east. Derry/Londonderry is the fourth largest city on the island and along with Sligo is one of the two major 'Border Gateways' in the RDS and NSS respectively. Enniskillen and Letterkenny represent smaller gateways and development hubs. The identification of hubs and gateways (or their equivalents) in the NSS and RDS as alternative growth poles to the current dominance of Dublin and Belfast, is seen as the first step in rebalancing the distribution of development on the two parts of the island.

On these grounds, there is a strong case to be made for a significant intervention in the North West corridor, accompanied by a public-private sector flagship vision which could build upon the two major spatial strategies and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the border. The Regional Planning Guidelines of the Border Regional Authority (BRA) already divides the border up into three zones and makes suggestions in relation to how those three zones, including the North West, might be animated. With the backing of the government departments and other public sector bodies in both jurisdictions, a Vision for the North West is being developed and promoted by the Chambers of Commerce, the North West Stakeholders Alliance and the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN). Cross-border collaboration in the North West via co-ordinated planning, particularly in the transport, education and health areas, is necessary to consolidate and amplify the linkages along the corridor. This will facilitate the business sector and their representative agencies such as InterTradeIreland and IBEC/CBI to target commercial opportunities and create linkages which interconnect businesses across the two jurisdictions. Bodies such as the IDA and Invest Northern Ireland also collaborate on cross-border promotion issues and have already co-operated to support the development of the IBEC/CBI backed cross-border business park linking Letterkenny and Derry via a virtual cross-border Business Park. Investment assistance of €15m (of which €7.55m was from Ireland) has already been channelled into the City of Derry airport and potential exists to support other cross-border collaborations in business telecommunications, energy and waste management.

### **BOX 7 Shannon-Erne Waterway and Green Box Tourism Projects**

The all-island co-operation demonstrated since 1994 in connecting the waterway networks of the Shannon and Erne has produced one of the most well known success stories of cross-border collaboration.



Shannon-Erne Waterway  
Source: [www.iwai.ie/nav/sew](http://www.iwai.ie/nav/sew)

This initiative created an island-wide tourism product that yielded benefits for the tourism markets on both sides of the border. In addition to growing boating, fishing and hotel activities it has also contributed to protecting and enhancing the extensive network of waterways

across the island as the new connection and upgrading works led to an increased recognition of the value of the waterway system as a valuable resource. The links between the Shannon navigation and the Erne system provided by the re-opening of the Shannon-Erne Waterway has stimulated significant interest in the reopening of the Ulster Canal which would extend the navigable system to Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann. The restoration of the Canal could stimulate the development of tourism and related activities along neglected parts of the canal route. In addition to developing and safeguarding an integral part of the landscape, the project could also yield economic regeneration, community benefits and support for the sustainable management of cultural and heritage resources. The success of such a project would showcase the catalytic potential of collaborative projects to drive the regeneration of areas that are outside metropolitan zones of influence and that are without an outstanding landscape or lack other natural tourism assets.

The Green Box Tourism Project is a useful illustration of the potential of such initiatives. It was launched in 2003 with the support of INTERREG and involves Leitrim, West Cavan, Fermanagh, North Roscommon, North Sligo and South Donegal. The Project idea is centred on tourism development and marketing and the formation of Ireland's first integrated ecotourism destination. It involves organic agri-food activities, production and sale of quality arts and crafts, outdoor pursuit activities including walking and cycling routes, training and demonstrations in organic farming and gardening, etc.

The benefits of this initiative are easy to discern. In tourism terms, it provides a positive image 'good news' project for an all-island promotion body such as Tourism Ireland. It can lead to economic growth for the regions involved; when the Green Box initiative was launched in 2003, it was expected that its implementation would lead to 6,000 'eco-tourists' visiting the area annually by 2006. It contributes to the creation of business networks and support structures within the farming, gardening, arts and crafts and outdoor pursuit centres. It increases employment opportunities many of which would be based around the skills and knowledge of local people. This would be of particular benefit to the more rural areas within this region. It has the potential to be (a) extended into other areas of Northern Ireland for example, Tyrone and Armagh which have a number of organic centres in operation; and (b) mainstreamed (it was initially thought that this project would lead to the formation of other Green Boxes in the area) while at the same time containing it within the border region as a 'branded' activity.

A collaborative spatial planning framework could assist this and similar projects which straddle regional boundaries to achieve their potential. For example, in addition to the above a proactive collaborative approach would provide:

- A supportive framework for the findings of Organic Farming in Northern Ireland: A Development Strategy (2001).
- Linkages between Rossinver Organic Centre in Leitrim with Loughry College, Cookstown in the provision of training and demonstrations on organic farming and gardening.
- Networks of organic farms and farm-shops – to be developed on a North/South basis – thus increasing markets for produce.
- Development of 'action-based' holidays by activity centres North/South working together and developing joint packages (walking, cycling, mountain climbing, canoeing, etc.); plus options for leisure-based activities (cruising, angling).

**BOX 8 Planning Requirements for Data Collection, Presentation and Analysis**

It is essential to capitalise upon the opportunities that exist for co-ordinated spatial planning to drive realistic collaboration. By linking consistent planning data to a presentation tool that policy makers and other decision makers including investors, North and South, can understand and use, geographic information systems (GIS) can serve as a driver for informed co-ordinated policy, project selection and execution. There is a growing appreciation that being able to illustrate data for larger population means being able to cater to larger markets or service catchments. If the data deficiencies for the key sectors can be remedied it will be possible to provide appropriate mapping for more efficient planning and thereby build-up capacity to achieve strategic objectives. A key challenge, therefore, is to identify and modify/integrate selective datasets to facilitate exchange and evidence-based decision-making in order to achieve mutual and value-added benefit.

Projects such as the recently established North West Data Capture Project (NWDCP) will assist in identifying census and non-census data held by official agencies in the two jurisdictions,

together with their characteristics and degree of complementarity. This will be augmented by the INTERREG funded Regional Research Observatory (RRO) initiative which will help to advance the data standardisation process by identifying common data needs and provide guidance on the GIS architecture needed to provide a useful platform for convenient data access and presentation. In relation to improved information and analysis needs, a potentially useful and very timely development has been the recent availability of the MOLAND Spatial Indicators Project, which offers a unique tool to assist decision making on spatial planning issues in both Northern Ireland and the Border Counties. MOLAND consists of a land use reference database and ancillary data sets for the reference year (2000) for both Northern Ireland and the Border Counties and this can be extended to cover the whole island. The ancillary datasets consist of an extensive range of socio-economic and statistical data. As well as these data sets, MOLAND uses a modelling tool to explore the consequences of spatial planning and policy decisions, and to monitor and assess where development in urban areas is likely to take place. This can provide a helpful platform for preparation and progress of joined-up studies in relation to spatial queries that transcend the geographical limitations of jurisdictional boundaries. For example, use of the model can help in the forecasting of scenarios of where to promote or permit new development and what the resulting effects of such development, will be on development in the surrounding area.

#### **BOX 9 Population Health Observatory**

The outputs from data and mapping initiatives in fields such as the health sector can contribute to more informed and joined-up planning with consequent efficiency benefits as well as health and wellbeing improvements. One of the best examples of this is the cross-border and all-island information emanating from Ireland and Northern Ireland's Population Health Observatory (INIsPHO), which is housed within the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (see [www.inispho.org](http://www.inispho.org) for further details). The Observatory supports those working to improve health and reduce health inequalities by producing and disseminating health intelligence, and strengthening the research and information infrastructure on the island of Ireland. It works closely with others involved in the production of health intelligence and its translation into evidence-based policy and practice. In addition to the production of consistent data and presentation tools, the Institute has a remit to make available shared policy development tools to enable decision-makers on both parts of the island to assess the impacts of their policies in a co-ordinated way. The application of consistent Health Impact Assessment (HIA) methodologies is a prominent example of its efforts to mainstream consideration of health issues into policy development on an all-island basis (see <http://www.publichealth.ie/hia> for further details).



# GLOSSARY

<b>BRA</b>	Border Regional Authority
<b>CBI</b>	Confederation of British Industry
<b>DEHLG</b>	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
<b>DoT</b>	Department of Transport
<b>EBR</b>	East Border Region
<b>EHS</b>	Environment and Heritage Service
<b>ESDP</b>	European Spatial Development Perspective
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDA</b>	Greater Dublin Area
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information Systems
<b>IBEC</b>	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
<b>ICBAN</b>	Irish Central Border Area Network
<b>ICLRD</b>	International Centre for Local and Regional Development
<b>IDA</b>	Industrial Development Agency
<b>IRL</b>	Ireland
<b>ISNI</b>	Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland
<b>MOLAND</b>	Monitoring Land Use/Cover Dynamics
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-government organisations
<b>NI</b>	Northern Ireland
<b>NRA</b>	National Roads Authority
<b>NSS</b>	The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020
<b>NWCBG</b>	North West Cross Border Group
<b>PPSs</b>	Planning Policy Statements
<b>RDCP</b>	Regional Data Capture Project
<b>RDS</b>	Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025
<b>RPGs</b>	Regional Planning Guidelines
<b>RRO</b>	Regional Research Observatory
<b>SELs</b>	Strategic Employment Locations
<b>SMEs</b>	Small-Medium Enterprises
<b>TENS</b>	Trans-European Networks
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>US</b>	United States of America





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Publication: June 2006

