Final Evaluation Report of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory (INICCO)

Prepared for

The Centre for Cross Border Studies

By

Indecon International Economic Consultants in association with London Economics

Indecon
www.indecon.ie
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<td>All-Island Research Observatory</td>
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<td><strong>Border Economy</strong></td>
<td>The INICCO project ‘Normal Business Restored – Reviving the Border Economy in a New Era of Peace and Devolved Government’</td>
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<td><strong>Border People</strong></td>
<td>The INICCO project ‘Border People Cross-Border Mobility Information Website (Phase Two)’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CBI</strong></td>
<td>Confederation of British Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Centre</strong></td>
<td>The Centre for Cross Border Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAB</strong></td>
<td>Citizen Advice Bureaux</td>
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<td><strong>CIB</strong></td>
<td>Citizen Information Board</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CIC</strong></td>
<td>Citizen Information Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CPD</strong></td>
<td>Continuing professional development</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>CroSPlaN</strong></td>
<td>The INICCO project ‘Cross-Border Spatial Planning and Training Network (CroSPlaN)’</td>
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<td><strong>CSO</strong></td>
<td>Central Statistics Office (RoI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DCU</strong></td>
<td>Dublin City University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEHLG</strong></td>
<td>Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DFPNI</strong></td>
<td>Department of Finance and Personnel Northern Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DkIT</strong></td>
<td>Dundalk Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DRD</strong></td>
<td>Department of Regional Development (NI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DSD</strong></td>
<td>Department of Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DSP</strong></td>
<td>Department of Social Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMDS</strong></td>
<td>Economic Modelling and Development Strategies (external consultants on the Border Economy project)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ESPON</strong></td>
<td>European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESRI</strong></td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EURES</strong></td>
<td>European Job Mobility Portal or EUROPean Employment Service. There are two elements to EURES. EURES Transnational and EURES Cross-border. There are 20 EURES cross-border partnerships.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HBC</strong></td>
<td>Horwath Bastow Charleton (external consultants on the Hospital Services modelling/prototype tool strand)</td>
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<td><strong>Hospital Services</strong></td>
<td>The INICCO project ‘Exploring the Potential for Cross-Border Hospital Services in the Border Region’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IBEC/CBI JBC</strong></td>
<td>Joint Business Council</td>
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<td><strong>IBEC</strong></td>
<td>Irish Business and Employers Confederation</td>
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<td><strong>ICBAN</strong></td>
<td>Irish Central Border Area Network</td>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>ICLRD</td>
<td>International Centre for Local and Regional Development – partner with the Centre on the INICCO project CroSPlaN</td>
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<td>INICCO</td>
<td>Ireland Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory, funded under the INTERREG IVA</td>
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<td>INICCO projects</td>
<td>The five INTERREG IVA-funded INICCO projects, described elsewhere in this glossary</td>
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<td>IPH</td>
<td>Institute of Public Health in Ireland – partner with the Centre on the INICCO project Hospital Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITI</td>
<td>InterTradeIreland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIUD</td>
<td>Institute for International Urban Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIRSA</td>
<td>National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>NISRA</td>
<td>Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency</td>
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<td>NSMC</td>
<td>North South Ministerial Council – partner with the Centre on the INICCO project Border People</td>
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<td>NSS</td>
<td>National Spatial Strategy (RoI)</td>
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<td>NUIM</td>
<td>National University of Ireland Maynooth (RoI)</td>
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<td>PIAT</td>
<td>The INICCO project ‘Pilot Impact Assessment Toolkit for cross-border cooperation in Ireland’</td>
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<td>PSI</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (RoI)</td>
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<td>QUB</td>
<td>Queen’s University Belfast</td>
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<td>RDS</td>
<td>Regional Development Strategy (NI)</td>
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<td>RoI</td>
<td>Republic of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPA</td>
<td>Review of Public Administration (NI)</td>
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<td>RPG</td>
<td>Regional Planning Guidelines (RoI)</td>
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<td>SCoTENS</td>
<td>Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South</td>
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<td>SEUPB</td>
<td>Special EU Programmes Body</td>
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<td>TEIN</td>
<td>Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCD</td>
<td>University College Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UU</td>
<td>University of Ulster</td>
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Executive Summary

Introduction and Overview

This independent report is prepared for the Centre for Cross Border Studies (‘Centre’) by Indecon International Economic Consultants in association with London Economics and Economic Consultant, Philip McDonagh. It provides the Final Evaluation Report of the Ireland-Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory (‘INICCO’), comprising projects that provide new research-based information and training in a range of areas relating to the Irish cross-border region.

Indecon believes that this evaluation is important as there is a crucial need to ensure that all scarce EU and national funding represents value for money. It is also important to learn any lessons for future policy, so as to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of such public funding initiatives. The INICCO projects are funded under the INTERREG IVA Programme (Priority 1: Cooperation for a more sustainable cross-border region; Theme 1 – Public Sector Collaboration) and administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (‘SEUPB’). They are run by the Centre in partnership with other island of Ireland organisations.

The aim of INICCO is to assist the administrations in the two parts of the island of Ireland to overcome their separate policy approaches to areas such as health, economic and spatial planning and the provision of citizens’ information in the Irish border region and on a cross-border basis more generally. To quote the INTERREG IVA Operation Programme (p. 51-2):

“By promoting cooperation between public bodies and other partners, opportunities exist to create synergies, share best practice and information with a view to assisting policy making and facilitating greater joined-up delivery, improving access to services and facilities, and ensuring better value for money”.

The approach taken in this report is evidence-based and aims to assess the knowledge-enhancing and network-building activities of INICCO, as well as the more easily quantified outputs and results, during the period from 2009 to early 2012. The importance of also including the qualitative dimension of INICCO stems from the diverse nature of the projects and their engagement with external stakeholders involved in cross-border cooperation.

The main objectives of this evaluation of INICCO, as agreed between the Centre and Indecon, are:

a) To inform decisions on operations, policy or strategy related to on-going and future EU Programme interventions in Northern Ireland and the Irish cross-border region;

b) To demonstrate accountability to the SEUPB as the donor agency;

c) To facilitate learning – contributing to the body of knowledge on what works and why in cross-border cooperation in Ireland, in order to verify or improve project/programme quality and management;

d) To give stakeholders – particularly in the public sector – the opportunity to have a say in programme output and quality;

e) To evaluate the INICCO project, which is relevant for INICCO and for the donor, project partners and other constituencies, such as government agencies, local authorities, community and business interests in the Irish cross-border region; and

f) To assess how the five projects and the management of these link with and address the aims and objectives of the INTERREG IVA Programme.
Key Findings

The INICCO projects commenced at different times during 2009/2010 and all of the projects have been successfully completed at the end of March 2012, as required by SEUPB. (An addendum to the original SEUPB Letter of Offer allowed a ‘no cost’ extension to the 31 March 2012, with additional targets.) The overall conclusion of this report is that the INICCO projects have met or exceeded the targets set in terms of their activities and impacts on issues confronting the Irish cross-border region, despite the challenges faced on some projects. These impacts will be strengthened in the years ahead as the full benefits of INICCO are realised. Our findings indicate that INICCO has produced information, insights and networking which are of use to informing cross-border cooperation.

In the table below, the key projects which have been undertaken and completed are summarised. This indicates that the key activities of INICCO have included:

- Production of information and training resources;
- Organisation of INICCO conferences, seminars and workshops;
- Facilitation of relationships with key stakeholders at local, regional, national and EU levels;
- Development of analyses of information on cross-border issues and opportunities;
- Support for cross border co-operation between the public sector, community/voluntary sector and business; and
- Development of cross border solutions to common needs and problems.

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<td>❑ Consumer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region</td>
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<td>❑ Producer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region</td>
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<td>❑ Tourism in the Cross-Border Region</td>
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<td>Hospital Services:</td>
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<td>❑ The role of community involvement in planning hospital services</td>
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<td>❑ Unlocking the Potential of Cross-Border Hospital Planning on the Island of Ireland: a Prototype Modelling Framework</td>
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<td>CroSPlaN:</td>
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<td>❑ Action research projects:</td>
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<td>○ Inter-jurisdictional planning and governance study</td>
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<td>○ Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development</td>
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<td>○ Sustainable spatial development in respect of river basin management plans</td>
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<tr>
<td>○ Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional river basin / watershed management and spatial planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>❑ Evidence-Informed Planning</td>
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<td>○ Data capture projects on evidence-based cross-border planning</td>
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<td>▪ Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool</td>
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<td>▪ All-Island Deprivation Index</td>
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<td>▪ All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool</td>
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<td>❑ Executive Training Programmes – bespoke training to local authority planners and other stakeholders in the Eastern, North West and Central Border Region</td>
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<td>❑ Conferences, Technical Workshops, New Journal and Technical Papers Series</td>
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<td>Impact Assessment:</td>
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<td>❑ Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross-Border Cooperation</td>
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<td>❑ Training courses piloted (Programme and Project level)</td>
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<td>Border People:</td>
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<td>❑ Website and on-line service established and in continuous development;</td>
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<td>❑ Cross-border mobility events – 7 thematic Border People User Group seminars</td>
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Among the unique contributions of the INICCO projects is that they have brought expertise, both from outside the island of Ireland as well as from within the island, to bear on a variety of North/South cooperation activities. INICCO conferences, seminars and workshops are valued by policymakers, professionals and other users consulted during our research. The beneficiaries of INICCO also include the international community whose research interests are focused on cross-border cooperation.

From an evaluation perspective, our analysis suggests that the INICCO projects have delivered on their ‘core issues’ – rationale, relevance, efficiency, utility and effectiveness, and sustainability – and their ‘cross-cutting themes’, namely equality, poverty, sustainable development and partnership. Notwithstanding the diverse nature of the INICCO projects, they have also resulted in some synergies among the projects as well as within the projects.

Specifically it is of note that INICCO has:

- produced a number of research reports that contribute to an enhanced body of knowledge about social and economic issues in the border region and support cross-border cooperation,
- developed a number of innovative tools that will facilitate and inform cross-border cooperation and which over time will impact on the planning and delivery of public services, and social and economic development in the border region, and
- assembled extensive relevant data about the differing situations in both jurisdictions across a number of sectors and identified gaps and challenges in using data to support cross-border cooperation and development of the border region.

INICCO research projects have also:

- Provided proposals on emerging issues such as local governance structures, aligning environmental/planning and shared services;
- Increased understanding of the complexity of generating and using cross-border data in planning and programme development and highlighted the need to improve sub-regional data;
- Increased use of data and mapping in spatial planning initiatives in both jurisdictions and integration of cross-border data, facilitating linkages to data capture projects within border network;
- Provided evidence on the potential importance of the cross-border dimension to planning public services in the border region;
- Provided a better understanding of the characteristics and performance of the border economy and how the productive sector operates within it.

Overall Assessment

Monitoring Indicators

The table below presents the monitoring indicators for the INICCO group of projects, as amended by the SEUPB in its Offer Letter to the Centre of 2012, showing that the targets set have been achieved. The INICCO project as originally envisaged exceeded its targets with an under-spend, and was subsequently extended with additional targets to be achieved by 31 March 2012.
Executive Summary

INICCO Group of Projects – Progress and Achievements Against Agreed Monitoring Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
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| 4 cross-border research projects with final reports (1 of which will be an online service), 4 completed | 1. Border Region Economy: Peripherality: Help or Hindrance  
Consumer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region  
Producer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region  
Tourism in the Cross-Border Region  
2. Hospital Services: The role of community involvement in planning hospital services  
Unlocking the Potential of Cross-Border Hospital Planning on the Island of Ireland  
3. CroSPlaN:  
   - Action research projects:  
     - Inter-jurisdictional planning and governance study (2010)  
     - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development (2010)  
     - Sustainable spatial development in respect of river basin management plans, (2011)  
     - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional river basin / watershed management and spatial planning, (2011)  
   - Evidence-Informed Planning:  
     - Data capture projects on evidence-based cross-border planning (carried out by AIRO of NUIM in tandem with ICLR D) (2011)  
     - Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool  
     - All-Island Deprivation Index  
     - All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool  
4. Border People: online service established and under continuous development |
| 1 impact assessment toolkit developed for piloting.                      | The toolkit is complete and is being disseminated. Pilot Training Course completed. |

Results

<table>
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<th>Target for all of research projects to be completed.</th>
<th>160% of the research projects completed.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>7 ‘emerging findings’ conferences (with 475 attendees).</td>
<td>7 conferences undertaken with 717 attendees.</td>
</tr>
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| 3 CroSPlaN conferences (300 attendees). 360 attendees achieved | 1. ICLRD/CroSPlaN international conference ‘Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of Recession’. 21 Jan 2010 (135 attendees)  
| 1 Border Economy conference (100 attendees). 113 attendees achieved | ‘Revising the Border Region Economy in a time of peace, devolved government and international recession’ on 16-17 November 2011 in Cavan. (113 attendees) |
| 1 Hospital Services conference (75 attendees). 62 attendees achieved | 4. Emerging Findings Conference, 12 May 2012 (62 attendees) |
Workshop, 18 May 2011 (29 attendees) |
| Target 22 seminars (with 565 attendees) of which: | 14 Seminars and User Groups over 375 Attendees |
| 3 technical workshops within CroSPlaN Spatial Planning Development and Training Network (100 attendees) 4 technical workshops / 120 attendees achieved | 1. Technical workshop: “Functional Territories” 16 June 2010. (26 attendees)  
4. Seminar: Sharing Experiences Across Borders – Planning and Local Government on the Island of Ireland (with Cooperation Ireland), 30 September 2011 (100 attendees) |
| 2 Hospital Services (60 attendees). 54 attendees achieved | Policymakers’ Seminar 13 September, Newry 2011 (15 attendees) |
| 7 Cross-Border Mobility Information events (225 attendees). 243 attendees achieved | 1. Study Day, 20 April, 2010 (14 attendees)  
2. Launch of executive summary Strand 1 & seminar 14 October 2010 (40 attendees) |
| 1. Better Understanding of Cross-Border Mobility Statistics, 2 June 2009 (20 attendees)  
2. The Cross Border Consumer, 14 December 2009 (10 attendees)  
3. The Cross-Border Worker, 20 May 2010, (27 attendees)  
4. The Cross-Border Worker II, 23 Sept 2010, (29 attendees)  
5. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 15 June 2011(56 attendees)  
6. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 2 Sept 2011(61 attendees)  
7. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 8 March 2012 (40 attendees) |
Executive Summary

Progress Against Agreed Monitoring Indicators (Contd.)

6 North/South Research Forums (150 attendees)
(215 attendees achieved)

2. Cross-Border Innovation and Creativity, 24 June 2010. (29 attendees)
3. The Future of Public Sector Cross Border Co-operation in a Difficult Financial Climate, 9 December 2010 (31 attendees)
6. INICCO Closing Event (60 attendees)

2 impact Assessment Toolkit training programmes developed and implemented with 40 participants
30 attendees achieved

IA Training programme piloted with 6 projects on 17/18 November (18 participants)
IA Training for programme implementing bodies 23 March 2012. (12 participants)

90 Central and Local Government officials, local Councillors and community leaders trained through CroSPiAn

Newry and Mourne & Louth Local Authorities Executive Training Programme November 2009 – May 2010
Theme of Shaping and Managing Cross-Border Development
Six modules delivered to council officials, elected representatives and members of the private sector in the Newry-Dundalk region.
Immediately followed by ‘The Functionality of Territory’ – half day workshop with keynote presentations from government officials, North and south. Audience largely representatives from local and regional government
North West Region Executive Training Programme
September 2010 to April 2011
Theme of Fostering Growth through Cooperation in the North-West Region
Five modules delivered to councillors and public and private sector representatives in the Derry-Donegal region.
ICBAN Region Executive Training Programme
October – December 2011.
Theme of Harnessing diversity in a shared future
Six modules delivered to senior management across all ten ICBAN councils; intensive programme delivered every two weeks

Target: 14 publications/reports

Of which: 4 research journals
• 4 CCBS journals
4 achieved
• 2 CroSPiAn journals
2 achieved
+ 3 additional reports
+ 3 briefing papers

2009 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin (by Tánaiste Brian Cowen) and Belfast (by Head of NI Civil Service Bruce Robinson)
2010 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin (by Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheal Martin)
2012 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin by Secretary General to the Irish Government Martin Fraser

2011 Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland, was launched January 2011.
CroSPiAn: final studies published on ICLRD website; including
• proposed governance and planning reforms in both jurisdictions
• the (non)integration of spatial planning and river basin management policy across the island of Ireland
• practical ways in which the shared services agenda can be pursued, with a particular focus being placed on the Irish border region
(all supplemented by international case studies)

5 Border Region Economy reports issued 5 achieved

Final report launched in March 2012, including the following elements
a) Peripherality: Help or Hindrance
b) Consumer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region
c) Producer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region
d) Tourism in the Cross-Border Region
e) Overview

2 Cross-Border Hospital Services reports 2 achieved

Hospital Services: report on “The Role of Community Involvement in Planning Hospital Services” complete and published on CCBS website Oct 2010
Executive Summary report on “The Role of Community Involvement in Planning Hospital Services” published & launched 14 Oct 2010
Prototype Modelling Framework for cross-border hospital planning launched 15 December 2011

1 Impact Assessment Toolkit report 1 achieved


1 Website service on Cross-Border Mobility Information 1 achieved

Border People Website service functioning – continuous development
www.borderpeople.info currently has over 300 pages of information with over 1000 external links to sources of public information north and south.
Monthly averages of 7,792 visitors, 8,518 visits and 17,575 page views during the reporting period.

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Evidence-Based Solutions

One of the objectives set for INICCO was that at least 14 innovative, evidence-based solutions to problems in public sector cross-border cooperation would be developed. Our analysis of results shows that 28 evidence-based initiatives were achieved, as outlined below. Some of these, such as new data resources or the development of a new journal, will contribute to a range of policy issues rather than dealing with any one specific issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Evidence-Based Solutions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Border People – unique signposting service for cross-border workers/residents/businesses/students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Border People User Group Meetings – serving the border business community as well as other groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Border People – Case Studies on solutions to real life cross-border mobility problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Border People – Recommendations on sustainable integrated public service information infrastructure</td>
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<td>5. Border People – Integration of Border People with NI Direct</td>
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<td>6. Border People – Engaged with the private sector, accountants, solicitors and the Credit Review Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CroSPiAn Professional Executive Training Programme/ICLRD – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Charter of Commitment to Cross Border Collaboration in Louth/Newry and Mourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. CroSPiAn Professional Executive Training Programme – contribution to NW Partnership Board (Derry/Letterkenny – Fort George and CoLab at LYIT – and Derry City of Culture 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. CroSPiAn Professional Executive Training Programme – contribution to ICBAN Strategic/Spatial Planning Initiative and Vision Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. CroSPiAn – All-Island Housing Monitoring Tool (new data resource)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. CroSPiAn – All-Island Deprivation Index (new data source)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. CroSPiAn – All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool (new data source)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. CroSPiAn – recommendations on the implications for inter-jurisdictional spatial planning policies and the operation of planning legislation in the two jurisdictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. CroSPiAn – recommendations on shared services across local authority boundaries and the Irish Border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. CroSPiAn – recommendations on management of cross-border river basins</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. CroSPiAn – recommendations on establishing a monitoring framework for the island of Ireland in terms of NSS and RDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. CroSPiAn – briefing paper series on examples of innovative practice in planning and regional development in other countries and regions (complements the Borderlands journal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Hospital Services – recommendations regarding acute hospital services planning in the border stemming from new, evidence-based research on the role of community involvement in hospital services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Hospital Services – cross-border hospital planning prototype modelling tool (new planning tool)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Hospital Services – Recommendations for the collection and collation of healthcare data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Hospital Services – Recommendations on service-user involvement in the planning of hospital and related health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Border Economy – problems in accessing/lack of reliable and comprehensive sub-regional economic data for the border region of Northern Ireland have resulted in consideration being given by NISRA to a larger sample size of businesses covered by the Annual Business Inquiry and the publication of sample sizes and confidence limits for data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Proposal by Padraic White (former MD, IDA Ireland) for a Border Development Zone (at November 2011 conference); initial research undertaken with a view to including it in a follow-up INICCO-2 application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross-Border Cooperation – multiple potential applications in other European border regions as well as on the island of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation Training Course – instructing users and potential users on this new policy/research toolkit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland – important vehicle for policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations and contains journal articles based on INICCO research (Border Economy and hospital services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High-Level Stakeholder Views on the Centre/INICCO

By way of providing context to the evaluation of the individual INICCO projects, we also sought the views of a diverse range of external stakeholders with an interest in cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland, through direct consultations and invitations to provide written comments. We also reviewed public speeches and statements by stakeholders on the work of INICCO. While the comments by individuals are not in themselves conclusive, in view of the nature of the INICCO projects, presenting the views of external stakeholders is of interest. These views were carefully assessed by Indecon and are consistent with our own evaluation of the programmes and the quantified evidence on project activities. The views of those consulted highlighted a number of achievements of the Centre/INICCO, as well as raising certain challenges and issues for future policy.

Perceptions of the achievements of the Centre/INICCO included the following:

1. Overall, the stakeholders consulted – which include senior public servants and private sector personnel from both sides of the border – have a high regard for the Centre and its work. The perceived strengths of the Centre are its knowledge and networks in respect of the Irish cross-border region. The Centre is seen as a small and flexible organisation, which “punches-above-its-weight” in terms of its activities and reach, both nationally and internationally.

   An example of this is the comments made concerning the Border People website by John Handoll, an international lawyer and expert on EU mobility issues based at William Fry solicitors in Dublin, and Irish representative on the European Network on Free Movement within the EU. He noted that:

   “In my practice and research into free movement issues, the Border People website has become an essential tool. More importantly, its clear and user-friendly design allows citizens on both sides of the border to access up-to-date information on key topics; it has evolved over time in response to citizens’ needs and has become a first port of call for those seeking to understand their rights”.

2. The Centre cannot, however, be expected to be expert in all fields; it exists on a modest budget and expectations of its applied research output must take account of the fact that it does not have the research resources which exist in university faculties or in larger research institutes. Nevertheless, through its networks on the island and internationally, it has been able to take the lead on a number of projects addressing identified gaps in areas of the cross-border agenda.

3. The importance of the Centre’s work on training and the development of individuals to help up-skill them and disseminate good practices in a cross-border context was highlighted by various stakeholders. An example of senior policymakers views on the Centre was indicated in the speech by Mary Bunting, NI Joint Secretary of the NSMC, to the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network (TEIN) delegates on 27 October 2011 where she noted that:

   “The Centre makes an excellent contribution to research and cooperation on the island of Ireland in areas such as education, training, health, ICT, the economy, citizens’ information and a range of other practical areas”.

4. The contribution of the Centre and INICCO to areas such as regional development was also raised by senior stakeholders. For example, Martin Fraser, Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach, indicated his belief that the Centre is engaged in valuable work in a challenging context. Mr Fraser gave the example of the opportunities identified in their work on health and on regional development and indicated that these initiatives were very well conceived.
5. A range of other positive views from senior stakeholders consulted were expressed. For example, Sir George Quigley, Chairman of Bombardier Aerospace, indicated that:

“I have seen them at close quarters in various contexts and have formed a very positive view of their relevance, competence and effectiveness”.

Positive views were also expressed by a private sector representative organisation. For example, Reg McCabe, Chief Executive of the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council, indicated “a very positive view of CCBS and its work and IBEC have developed a close relationship with the Centre over time”.

6. The Centre’s work programme through INICCO was seen as having relevance for the private sector as well as the public sector. However, some views were expressed suggesting placing greater emphasis on supporting the private sector in any future programmes. This is discussed further below.

During the consultations a number of diverse views and challenges were also signalled, as well as opportunities for future research (post-INICCO):

1. There is a perception by some stakeholders that the Centre is primarily focused on the public sector, and this raises the issue of whether more could be done to enhance collaboration with private sector organisations and/or provide research that could meet identified needs of the private sector. It is accepted, however, that the Border People project has taken a business-oriented approach to its user group meetings in 2011 (as recommended by the Indecon team in our Interim Evaluation Report last year). A range of private sector organisations have been engaged (giving their time free-of-charge) with commitments for future involvement. Furthermore, the Border Economy project focuses on the importance of the private sector to the border region economy. However, it is important to keep in mind that since 2009 the overwhelming majority of CCBS research funding has been for the INICCO project – funded under the INTERREG IVA Public Sector Collaboration call. Indecon also believes that the provision of research and insights such as provided by INICCO may inevitably be of greater benefit to policymakers and we believe this is consistent with its original rationale.

2. One issue noted by a number of stakeholders is that the Centre and INICCO are not implementation agencies and that implementation of various initiatives, in practice, is often a difficult challenge. One of the positives of INICCO is that it entails work by the Centre in collaboration with other cross-border/island of Ireland organisations, with steering/advisory groups, who can help to implement cross-border initiatives. However, ultimately, implementation is a matter for policymakers. This suggests there is a continual challenge for the Centre to maintain its advocacy of cross-border collaboration with central and local government and with implementation agencies.

3. During the consultations one stakeholder raised the issue of the level of engagement by the universities who were founder members of the Centre. While the Centre and its island of Ireland partner organisations have formed useful relationships with universities during the course of INICCO, the challenge remains of developing significant cross-border research programmes within universities. An effective way forward may be to intensify these links (between universities North and South and between universities and the Centre) on a project-by-project basis. It is important to also consider the relationship that exists between the Centre and ICLRD and to note that a number of the core partners are universities, such as NUIM and University of Ulster. The Centre manages the all-island university network Universities Ireland and its recent North/South scholarships scheme, and other initiatives such as cooperation with African universities project. None of these initiatives are funded by INTERREG, and are therefore outside the scope of this evaluation.

4. A small number of stakeholders raised the possibility that the Centre might be more active in the provision of quantitative analysis. However, we believe this is not a specialist area of the Centre and, given the challenging funding outlook for the centre, we believe that the best way of accommodating more quantitative-based research by the Centre might be through its links with other organisations – for example, with NUIM as successfully demonstrated on the CroSPiAn project in the form of the new data capture and mapping tools.
5. Important for future policy is the fact that in the course of developing its projects, the Centre has assembled extensive relevant data about the differing situations in both jurisdictions across a number of sectors. It was suggested to us that a worthwhile exercise might be to assemble and further develop this information so it is easily accessible and provides a useful resource for planners and policymakers including the patterns of deprivation in border areas. ICLRD, in association with NUIM, has developed an innovative all-island Deprivation Index with the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at NUIM. Indecon believes that maintaining and developing the important data and evidence assembled by the Centre and INICCO is key to maximising the legacy benefits of INICCO. Other possible lines of research work post-INICCO which might be pursued include:

a. Education – structures, policies and outcomes – with a view to addressing underachievement within the ranks of the disadvantaged and, more generally, the ability of the system to deliver a ‘product’ which is relevant to the needs of the economy;

b. Competitiveness issues on a North/South basis;

c. Economic development;

d. Utilities (especially renewable energy commitments);

e. People (skills and education);

f. Infrastructure and innovation.

Recommendations

Indecon believes it is important to continue to support the achievements of peace on the Island of Ireland. These measures should in part comprise of the development of high quality cross-border research and initiatives to facilitate networking and the sharing of knowledge. In this context, Indecon believes it will be important that the next phase of the work of the Centre and INICCO builds on the achievements to date. Indecon believes the following potential areas of work should be considered:

- Border People – The proposal is that the Centre would provide training and capacity-building to the citizens information providers, North and South, so that they are able to confidently respond to complex cross-border mobility problems (with the Centre continuing to provide strategic and management support).

- CroSPIaN:

  - Opportunity to use the discussion and networking gained at the ICLRD Annual Conference (2012) to maximise the benefits of research opportunities;

  - Review of planning and governance at regional and local level in the context of the economic crisis and emphasis placed by central government on communities ‘doing it for themselves’ – and growing debate around shared services

  - Future action research projects should continue to be focused on directly addressing policy problems facing the cross-border region;

  - Building on the data and mapping resources developed under INICCO and creating others—these are widely welcomed because they are practical and can be used by planners and local authority officials, senior management within local government, elected representatives, and policy-makers.
Focused training and development – should build upon the application of the tools developed through INICCO, including Impact Assessment as well as those developed by CroSPIaN Hospital Services:

- One of the conclusions of the HBC report is the need to undertake more research on applying the prototype framework and there may be scope to act in this regard;
- Scope for the Centre to assist CAWT with fact-finding, tailored research on enhanced cross-border cooperation in health services on the island.

Border Economy:

- Possibility of carrying out a feasibility study on designating the Border Region a Special Development Zone and dovetailing with future CroSPIaN work. Initial work has already been undertaken involving discussions and consideration of this issue.

Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation:

- Continued dissemination of the toolkit to ensure its potential is maximised and it is properly used;
- Development of companion toolkits with Euro Institut;
- Possible development of European cross-border impact assessment tool in collaboration with INTERACT;
- Specific exemplar projects could be undertaken using the toolkit.

Other opportunities:

- Active ageing and voluntary sector (European Years 2011 and 2012);
- Cross-border initiatives in terms of addressing the long-term unemployed.

As indicated previously, Indecon supports the suggestion from stakeholders that assembling and developing the extensive data built up by the Centre should be a priority. Indecon also believes that given the constraints on funding, the importance of continuation of the Centre’s on-going projects must be taken into account in any consideration of new projects.

Overall Conclusion

The conclusion of this report is that the INICCO projects have exceeded the targets set in terms of their activities and the impacts on issues confronting the Irish cross-border region. Our findings indicate that INICCO has produced information, research and networking which is of value in facilitating cross-border cooperation.

Our overall assessment is that the INICCO projects have worked well, notwithstanding the challenges in meeting interim deadlines during the period, and the fact that the projects involved a large and diverse range of research activities. Based on our analysis, Indecon believes this work merits continued funding and support.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Centre for Cross Border Studies for its cooperation and assistance since the appointment of the Indecon team as the external evaluators of the INICCO projects and in the preparation of this report. Special thanks are due to Andy Pollak, Director, Ruth Taillon, Deputy Director (Research), Joe Shiels, Border People Project Manager, Mairéad Hughes, Deputy Director (Finance and Administration), Patricia McAllister, the Director’s PA and Events Manager, Eimhear Donnelly, INICCO Project Administrator, Annemarie O’Kane, INICCO Information Officer, and Margaret Connolly, Company Secretary. We would also like to pay tribute to Chris Gibson (independent Chair of INICCO and Chair of the Board of the Centre for Cross-Border Studies, until 2011) and to Helen Johnston, current Chair of the Centre. John Driscoll (Director, ICLRD), Caroline Creamer (Deputy Director, ICLRD).

The Indecon team would also like to thank the members of the INICCO Steering/Advisory Groups for their advice and assistance. Beginning with the Border People Steering Group, and in addition to the Centre personnel serving on the group, we would like to acknowledge the following members: Pat Donaghy (NSMC), Grainne Killen (NSMC), Joe Foy (NSMC), Bill Nolan (NSMC), Margaret Stanley (NSMC), Gerry Hegarty (Citizens Information Board), Derek Alcorn (Citizens Advice Bureau Northern Ireland), Paul Cunningham (Department of Social Protection), Michael Carr (EURES Cross-Border Partnership). Turning to the CroSPlaN Steering Group, we would like to thank: Dr. Chris Boomer (Planning Service NI) Ciaran Tracey (Leitrim County Council), Danny McSorley (Omagh District Council), Pádraig Maguire (Border Regional Authority, Cavan), Dr Chris Boomer (Planning Service NI), Caitriona Mullan (ICBAN), Colin McKenna (ICBAN), Dr Neale Blair (UU) and Prof. Deborah Peel (UU). In respect of the Hospital Services Advisory Group, we would like to thank: Dr Jane Wilde (IPH), Tom Daly (CAWT), Dr Ambrose McLaughlin (PSI), Stephen McMahon (Irish Patients Association), Sean Brown (Patient and Client Council), Dr Patricia Clarke (Health Research Board), Joanne Vance (National Woman’s Council of Ireland), Professor Jonathan Titter (University of Warwick), and Alice McAndrew (North South Ministerial Council) and Eamonn Rossi (North South Ministerial Council). With regard to the Border Economy Steering Group, we would thank the following members: Celine McHugh (Forfás), Michael Smyth (University of Ulster), Eoin Magennis (ITI), Graeme Hutchinson, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry, Edgar Morgenroth (ESRI), Damian McAuley (Invest NI), Colin Stutt (economist) and Professor Michael Best (University of Mass.). In relation to the Pilot Impact Assessment Tool (PIAT), we would like to acknowledge Dr Kenneth Bush, (INCORE International Conflict Research Institute), Brian O’Caoinealbhan (Co-operation Ireland), Teresa Lennon (SEUPB), Celeste McCallion (NISRA), Adrian McNamee (Victims Commission), Owen Metcalfe (IPH), and Colette Nulty (Pobal).

Thanks are also due to the following individuals who provided important insights and feedback: Sir George Quigley (Bombardier Aerospace); Stephen Kingon (NI Electricity); Sir Bruce Robinson (Head of the NI Civil Service); Mary Bunting (Joint Secretary, NSMC); Liam Nellis (CEO, ITI); Aiden McGinley (CEO, ILEX); Colm Donaghy, (Belfast Health and Social Trust); Jenny Pyper (NI Department of Regional Planning and Transportation); Professor Richard Barnett (VC, UU); Martin Fraser (Secretary General, Department of An Taoiseach Rol); Anne Barrington (Joint Secretary, NSMC); Reg McCabe, CEO (IBEC-CBI, Joint Business Council); Pádraic White (Chair, Louth Economic Forum); Laurence Crowley (Aer Lingus board member and former Co-Chair of the North/South Roundtable Group); Declan McGrath (former Chair, IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council); Tim O’Connor (former Joint Secretary, NSMC); and David Walsh (Department of Environment and Local Government).

Finally, we would also like to particularly thank all the individuals and organisations who attended the various events hosted by the Centre and its partners in respect of the INICCO projects during 2009, 2010 and 2011 and who provided user feedback to Indecon.

The views and analysis in this report are the sole responsibility of the consultancy and the usual disclaimer applies.
1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This report is prepared for the Centre for Cross Border Studies (‘Centre’) by Indecon International Economic Consultants in association with London Economics and Philip McDonagh (together the ‘Indecon team’). It provides the Final Evaluation Report of the Ireland Northern Ireland Cross-Border Cooperation Observatory (‘INICCO’), which comprises five projects that aim to provide research and analysis, information, practical support, mentoring and training of relevance to enhanced cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland. The INICCO projects are funded under INTERREG IVA (Priority 1 – Cooperation for a more sustainable cross-border region, Theme 1 – Public Sector Collaboration) and administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (‘SEUPB’). The INICCO projects are run on a day-to-day basis by the Centre in partnership with other island of Ireland organisations, which are described below.

The aim of INICCO is to assist the administrations in the two Irish jurisdictions to overcome their separate policy approaches to areas such as health, economic and spatial planning and the provision of citizens’ information in the Irish border region and on a cross-border basis more generally. To quote the INTERREG IVA Operation Programme (p.51-2): “By promoting cooperation between public bodies and other partners, opportunities exist to create synergies, share best practice and information with a view to assisting policy making and facilitating greater joined-up delivery, improving access to services and facilities, and ensuring better value for money.”

The INICCO projects commenced at different times in 2009/2010 and all of the projects were completed by March 2012.

The term ‘INICCO’ is a term of convenience for the package of projects funded by INTERREG IVA, however most people familiar with the work undertaken through the INICCO project would be more likely to identify it with CCBS, ICLRD or Border People rather than “INICCO”.

1.2 Overview of INICCO

The INICCO consists of five individual research projects aimed at informing enhanced cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Ireland (‘RoI’) and Northern Ireland (‘NI’). Each project is run by the Centre in association with a partner organisation together with a steering or advisory group with members drawn from external organisations from each part of the island as well as representatives from the Centre and its partner organisation. There is also the INICCO Steering Committee, responsible for the overall coordination of the individual INICCO projects. The North South Research Forum which meets twice a year, offers an opportunity for academics and other professional researchers, public officials, funders, policy makers and other interested parties to meet in a semi-formal setting to discuss research, policy and practice of particular relevance to the border region and/or the promotion of cross border co-operation. The five individual INICCO projects were formally launched by the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service on 25 March 2009 in the Stormont Hotel in Belfast along with the 2009 edition of the Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland, a publication that is widely disseminated throughout the island and internationally. INICCO was formally brought to an end on 30 March 2012 in the Merrion Hotel in Dublin by the Secretary to the Irish Government when he launched the 2012 edition of the Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland. What follows is a brief description of the five INICCO projects.
The Border People project represents Phase Two of an earlier information system, in the form of a website, that aims to provide more systematic dissemination and marketing of information and public feedback on cross-border mobility issues, assisted by an active and enlarged user group drawn from a range of citizens’ advice, employment advice, local authority, business and community organisations. This INICCO project is led by the Centre in partnership with the North South Ministerial Council (‘NSMC’) (see Box 1.1).

The Cross-Border Spatial Planning Development and Training Network (CroSPlaN) project aims to contribute to the enhanced alignment of spatial planning policy and practice across the Island of Ireland, with a particular emphasis being placed on the Irish cross-border region via the provision of relevant research information and training for policy-makers, local government officials and councillors, and others involved in local and regional development in the border region. The CroSPlaN project is managed by the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (‘ICLRD’). A sister organisation to the ICLRD, the All-Island Research Observatory (‘AIRO’), a research unit and interactive spatial data portal based at the National University of Ireland Maynooth (‘NUIM’), has also been involved in CroSPlaN.

The main strands of activity under the Network include:

- Documentation and applied research, technical support, and capacity building in innovative approaches to spatial planning and territorial cohesion to foster cooperation based on: functional relationships and inter-dependencies, territorial economy, an understanding of institutional competencies and potential operational linkages, and adoption of monitoring indicators;
- Executive training programmes for local government officials (incl. senior management) and local councillors based on the emerging findings of current ICLRD research projects: e.g. the alignment of planning regulations in an era of planning and governance reforms, cross-border land-use and environmental management and the challenges of reconciling the objectives of different sectoral interests; and the joint promotion of a shared service (such as front-line services) by agencies in the two jurisdictions;
- Documenting and disseminating relevant external good practices cases on cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and governance from EU and elsewhere to provide external precedents that help local decision-makers to adapt new approaches;
- Holding an annual conference and one technical workshop per year to disseminate emerging research findings, promote networking and exchange, and engage in the larger planning and governance debates that impact on national and local policies; and
- Providing research results, local best practice documentation, and short briefing papers on topical issues and other support activities to forum members.

In respect of the executive training programmes, these consist of modules delivered to representatives from the East Border Region, the Central Border Region and the North West Border Region.

The Steering Group for this project brings together practitioners and academics with a direct involvement – or interest – in the growth and development of the Irish border Region; with organisations represented including: Leitrim County Council, Omagh District Council, Planning Service Northern Ireland, ICBAN, Border Regional Authority, University of Ulster, NUI Maynooth and the Centre for Cross Border Studies.
In the **Hospital Services** project, the Centre is partnered by the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (‘IPH’). The key focus of the overall project is to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more sustainable region by exploring the potential for cross-border hospital services in the Irish border region. This INICCO project consists of two inter-linked research strands: (1) the role of community involvement in hospital service planning along the border; and (2) modelling hospital service planning on a border region basis. The latter study, builds on two previous reports by CCBS, *Removing the Barriers: an Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Co-operation in Hospital Services in Ireland* (2007) and *Surveying the Sickbeds: initial steps towards modelling all-island hospital accessibility* (2008).

The first strand of the Hospital Services project is based on extensive consultations with community organisations, health service users and health professionals in the border region. It examines the role of community involvement in decisions regarding the re-configuration of local hospital services in the Irish border region and provides proposals relevant to the future planning of hospital services in the border region that reflect patient needs.

Horwath Bastow Charleton (‘HBC’) was appointed by the Centre in November 2009, to undertake the development of the prototype modelling tool for hospital planning on a border region and all-island basis. The overall aim of the project was to ‘identify how cross-border hospital services can provide mutual benefits for the people of the border region’. The key focus was to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region by exploring the potential for cross-border hospital services in the Irish border region. The project team emphasised the need to take into account the context of the changing picture within health services, in particular the shift from the traditional image of acute hospitals towards the delivery of many services at or near the patient’s home, alongside the pattern of centralising complex care in fewer locations in order to safeguard patient safety and improve outcomes. In light of these considerations, this study focused on developing a methodology for modelling and examining acute healthcare services on a cross-border and all-island basis, without being limited to considering only hospital locations.

The **Border Economy** project consists of four closely interrelated research topics whose collective aim is to seek out new and insightful ways of understanding and improving the development potential of the economy of the Irish cross-border region.

The aim of this project is to find ways of understanding and increasing the accessibility, size, transparency, competitiveness and profitability of Irish border region markets in a context where peace and normality have finally arrived in Northern Ireland and the Southern Border Region, but have been followed by a deep economic recession. This overall project – in which the Centre is partnered by InterTradeIreland – is being carried out by a team led by Dr. John Bradley, formerly a research professor at the Economic and Research Institute in Dublin; Professor Michael Best of the Universities of Massachusetts and Cambridge, and two economists from the Wroclaw Regional Development Agency in Poland (the research is ‘twinned’ for comparative purposes with the Lower Silesia region of Poland and its common border with the German länder of Saxony and Brandenburg).
The research was tasked with an examination of four constituent elements:

1. The ‘generic’ challenges the region faces due to its peripheral location. A ‘framing’ study, Topic 1: Peripherality: Help or Hindrance?, presented at the first Steering Group meeting in April 2010, provided a stand-alone interpretive framework for understanding how a border region becomes peripheral, and how peripherality creates challenges to development. It also provided inputs in terms of data sources (or lack of them) and specific applications to help understand the other three elements of the study.

2. How border region consumer markets might be made more efficient drivers of regional growth. This second study focused on the border region as an area where consumer behaviour has been, and continues to be, both isolated and distorted, and which must now seek ways of becoming a genuine single market. Cross-border shopping is the most dramatic aspect of this consumer behaviour, but the study is more interested in the disruption that the border causes to the evolution of local consumer market linkages on both sides of the border.

3. How the region’s small and micro-enterprises, which are the mainstay of so much economic activity in the region, might be enabled to develop. This study, which evolved into a study of manufacturing in the border region, involved factory visits and detailed interviews with owners and managers. The report includes a number of case studies on individual firms in the manufacturing sector of the border region.

4. How the region’s tourism product might dovetail with strategic plans for tourism in Ireland. This final study explores tourism in the context of the Belfast Agreement and looks at the impact of cross-border tourism cooperation, making comparisons with the Polish-German border and considering tourism on the island today.

The final report of the Border Economy project launched on 30 March 2012 reflects the expansion of the research from the original terms of reference and the four topics set out as the focus of the research. The title of the report – Cross-Border Economic Renewal: Rethinking Regional Policy in Ireland – likewise reflects both the changing economic and political environment in which the research was conducted and the final conclusions and recommendations arising from the research. The final report is divided into five sections: Chapter 1 reflects on the relationship between history and economics on a “Divided and divisive island “and sets out the researchers’ “logic of analysis”. Part I: “The Past”, contains two chapters; one on “The origins of Ireland’s two economies: 1750-1960” and one on “Economic consequences of the Troubles: 1968-1994”. Part II, “The Present” sets out the political and policy contexts with chapters entitled “The Belfast Agreement and the island economy”; “Development strategy frameworks: what do they tell us?”; “The Border: national and international context”; “The island economy context for the border region”; and “Stranded? The border region economy”. Part III. “Inside the Border Economy”, contains the researchers’ findings on the three key economic sectors: “The cross-border shopping phenomenon”; “Producing in the border region economy”; and “Tourism and the border”. In Part IV, “The Future” the report concludes with a final chapter considering the need for and recommending “A new approach: the Border Development Zone”.

The Steering Group for this project brings together economists, industrial promotion practitioners and cross-border cooperation specialists from InterTradeIreland, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (NI), Invest Northern Ireland, Forfás (RoI), the Economic and Social Research Institute (RoI), the Centre for Cross Border Studies and University of Ulster.
The Cross-Border Impact Assessment Toolkit is a method to assist people planning cross border programmes and projects by setting out a set of steps to be followed to ensure that proposed projects, programmes or policies are both internally coherent and that the proposed project, programme or policy is effectively addressing a core problem or problems of the Cross-border Territory. While this Impact Assessment Toolkit has been developed specifically for use in the Irish “Cross-border Territory” it is intended that the Cross-border Impact Assessment methodology can be easily adapted to other cross-border territories.

This Toolkit is particularly timely in light of the European Commission’s increasing focus on ‘Territorial Cooperation’ and ‘Territorial Cohesion’. The Toolkit will be an aid to meeting the criteria of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes and developing stronger projects that can contribute to significant social, economic and environmental change.

This project was carried out by a team consisting of Centre for Cross Border Studies Deputy Director Ruth Taillon; the Director of the Euro-Institute in Kehl, Germany, Dr. Joachim Beck, and, as research assistant, Sebastian Rihm, a postgraduate student of the Universities of Kehl and Ludwigsburg working as an intern in the Centre.

The project Steering Group was drawn from the Special EU Programmes Body, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), Cooperation Ireland, INCORE International Conflict Research Institute (University of Ulster), Pobal, Institute of Public Health in Ireland, Northern Ireland Commission for Victims and Survivors, International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD) and the Centre for Cross Border Studies.

The cooperation among the island of Ireland bodies involved in INICCO reflects what the Director of the Centre (Andy Pollak) describes as “a whole new infrastructure of North-South bodies and co-operative networks that did not exist 15-20 years ago.” The Centre’s Director has suggested that:

“We must never forget that the practical, often humdrum work of these bodies and networks is now part of a North-South architecture which was constructed by far-sighted politicians and civil servants over long months and years of negotiations in the mid-1990s. It was based on the belief that North-South institutions – alongside internal Northern Ireland and east-west institutions – were crucial to begin the slow process of breaking down fear and suspicion and building understanding between the two Northern communities and between the two parts of the island”.

1 ‘Dangerous for Dublin to turn away from North’, Andy Pollak, The Irish Times (3 January 2012).
2 Ibid.
Box 1.1: Profiles of the Centre’s Partner Organisations in INICCO

The NSMC (whose Joint Secretariat is partner to the Centre on the Border People project) was established following the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (1998) to develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland. This includes collaboration on an all-island or cross-border basis on matters of mutual interest and benefit, and within the competencies of the administrations North and South. The NSMC comprises senior public representatives from each part of the island together with a Joint Secretariat, based in Armagh and staffed by members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Irish Civil Service. The areas of cooperation under the NSMC are agriculture, education, environment, health, tourism and transport.

ICLRD (partner to the Centre on the CroSpIaN project) is focused on building the capacity of regional and local authorities, development agencies, cross-border networks and community and voluntary organisations to manage spatial planning on the island of Ireland as a whole. It works in partnership with the Centre, the National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM), the University of Ulster (‘UU’) and the Institute for International Urban Development to provide relevant research aimed at tackling issues relating to spatial planning and local development, North and South. It is active in organising and hosting conferences and events, providing professional education for officials involved in local and regional planning in both parts of the island and makes available publications and briefing papers by way of disseminating relevant information.

The IPH (partner to the Centre on the Hospital Services project) promotes cooperation for public health on the island of Ireland. Its main areas of work are three-fold: strengthening public health intelligence, which includes the dissemination of new knowledge through research and surveillance; capacity building, including strengthening partnerships and the development of health impact assessment on an all-island basis; and policy and programme development and evaluation, which includes tackling health inequalities and the establishment of a new Public Health Policy Centre.

Established under the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, ITI (partner to the Centre on the Border Economy project) has been given responsibility by both Governments in the RoI and NI to enhance North/South economic co-operation to the mutual benefit of both parts of the island. By encouraging better use of collective resources, ITI aims to help facilitate trade and business growth across the island; create an environment to make it easier to do business; and increase the competitiveness of individual companies and the two economies in the global marketplace.

Based in Kehl, Germany, the Euro-Institut specialises in continuing education and training on cross-border cooperation. It provides advice on specific cross-border research projects and training to public policy officials in cross-border issues. It is part of the network of EU cross-border research groups.

Source: Indecon

1.3 Methodological Approach

The main objectives of the evaluation of INICCO as agreed between CCBS and INDECON are:

a) To inform decisions on operations, policy, or strategy related to ongoing and future EU Programme interventions in Northern Ireland and the Irish cross-border region;

b) To demonstrate accountability to the SEUPB as the donor agency;

Source: Indecon
c) To **facilitate learning** - contributing to the body of knowledge on what works and why in cross-border cooperation in Ireland, in order to verify or improve project/programme **quality** and **management**;

d) To **give stakeholders** – particularly in the public sector – **the opportunity to have a say** in programme output and quality;

e) To **evaluate** the INICCO project which is relevant for INICCO and for the donor, project partners and other constituencies such as government agencies, local authorities, community and business interests in the Irish cross-border region.

f) To assess how the five projects and the management of these link with and **address the aims and objectives of the INTERREG IVA Programme**.

The methodological approach taken in this final evaluation report has regard to the inputs, activities/outputs, results and wider impacts of each of the INICCO projects. Inputs include the guidance provided by the project steering/advisory groups, activities/outputs relate to the work elements completed and the results refer to the outcomes of the projects. The impacts are the longer-term social, economic or cultural changes attributed to the projects but it must be recognised that some of the impacts may not become apparent until after 2012, given the nature of the projects.

The evidence on each of the evaluation elements includes quantitative monitoring data as well as qualitative data from interviews, participant feedback, written reports, and a detailed analysis of the initiatives. The evaluation includes consultations with a large number of stakeholders. The Indecon team are grateful to the various stakeholders who took the time to contribute to our evaluation.

The evaluation also includes an assessment of INICCO’s performance in terms of its agreed indicators which are specified in the SEUPB’s Letter of Offer (originally issued in 2009 and amended February 2012), in particular, the Letter of Offer specified as impact indicators:

> “At least 14 innovative, evidence-based solutions to problems in public sector cross-border cooperation presented to the Irish and Northern Irish governments.”

A detailed review of activity on developing such solutions and a rigorous analysis of other quantitative and qualitative indicators agreed with SEUPB was also undertaken (see table of Monitoring Indicators presented previously in the Executive Summary).

In addition to considering the outputs, results and impacts indicators, our evaluation report also has regard to the ‘core issues’ of the INICCO projects, namely:

The following five core issues are central to the evaluation process:

- Rationale;
- Relevance;
- Efficiency;
- Utility and Effectiveness; and
- Sustainability.
Further, we have also collated information in respect of the four ‘cross-cutting themes’ of the INTERREG IVA Programme:

- Equality;
- Sustainable Development;
- Poverty; and
- Partnership.

We have also considered whether there are any synergies within each of the five individual INICCO projects as well synergies across the five projects.

1.4 Structure of the Final Evaluation Report

The structure of the report is as follows:

- Section 2 considers the high-level stakeholder views on the Centre/INICCO to give an overall perspective to the evaluation;
- Sections 3 - 7 provide the details of the evaluations of the five individual INICCO projects, (namely Border People, CroSPlaN, Hospital Services, Border Economy and Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation); and
- Section 8 then summarises the evaluation of the overall INICCO project to date and presents our conclusions key findings and recommendations.
2 High-Level Stakeholder Views on the Centre/INICCO

2.1 Introduction

As the Centre is the lead partner on all of the INICCO projects, it is important to evaluate INICCO in the context of the Centre’s other work. During our evaluation, we sought the views of high-level stakeholders with an interest in cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland.

In addition to certain direct consultations stakeholders were invited to make written comments on the work of the Centre and to comment on the individual INICCO projects with which they were familiar. In what follows, we distil the feedback received from the stakeholders. In our analysis of individual projects we also consider the views of users and other stakeholders. We have also reviewed public speeches and statements by stakeholders on the work of INICCO. The views of those consulted highlighted a number of achievements of the Centre/INICCO as well as raising certain challenges and issues for future policy. These views were assessed by Indecon and are consistent with our own evaluation of the programmes and the quantified evidence on activities.

2.2 Views of Stakeholders

Overall, the stakeholders consulted – who include senior public servants and private sector personnel from both sides of the border – have a high regard for the Centre and its various partner organisations and the work undertaken. The perceived strengths of the Centre are its knowledge and networks in respect of the Irish cross-border region. The Centre is seen as a small and flexible organisation, which “punches-above-its-weight” in terms of its activities and reach, nationally and internationally.

An example of this are the comments made by John Handoll, an international lawyer and expert on EU mobility issues based at William Fry solicitors in Dublin, and Irish representative on the European Network on Free Movement within the EU. He noted that:

“In my practice and research into free movement issues, the Border People website has become an essential tool. More importantly, it’s clear and user-friendly design allows citizens on both sides of the border to access up-to-date information on key topics; it has evolved over time in response to citizens’ needs and has become a first port of call for those seeking to understand their rights”.

The Centre cannot, however, be expected to be expert in all fields. CCBS operates with a modest budget and expectations of its applied research output must take account of the fact that it does not have research resources that compare university faculties or larger research institutes and which result in peer reviewed publications. Nevertheless, through its networks on the island and internationally, it has been able to take the lead on a number of projects addressing identified gaps in areas of the cross-border agenda. INICCO is seen as contributing insights on diverse issues such as cross-border mobility, hospital services, local planning, the border economy and impact assessment for cross-border cooperation.

The Centre’s work programme through INICCO was seen as having relevance for the private sector as well as the public sector, which is relevant in the current economically challenging times. However, some views were expressed suggesting placing greater emphasis on supporting the private sector in any future programmes. This is discussed further overleaf.
Stakeholders contacted expressed positive views on The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland in terms of its reach and influence.

The importance of the Centre’s work on training and the development of individuals and dissemination of good practices in a cross-border context were highlighted by various stakeholders. A number of people consulted also referred to the impact of the Centre’s research and practical support for co-operation. An example of senior policymakers’ views on the Centre was indicated in the speech by Mary Bunting, NI Joint Secretary of the NSMC, to the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network (TEIN) delegates on 27 October 2011 where she noted that:

“The Centre makes an excellent contribution to research and cooperation on the island of Ireland in areas such as education, training, health, ICT, the economy, citizens’ information and a range of other practical areas.”

The contribution of the Centre and INICCO to areas such as regional development was also raised by senior stakeholders. For example, in our consultations Martin Fraser, Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach indicated his belief that the Centre for Cross-Border Studies is engaged in valuable work in a challenging context. Mr Fraser gave the example of the opportunities identified in their work on health and on regional development and indicated that these initiatives were very well conceived. He also referred to the indispensable role of the Centre’s director in terms of his contribution to CCBS.

The value of the Centre’s contribution to the assessment of the impact of cross border projects is illustrated by remarks presented on behalf of the Irish Minister of State with Responsibility for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton T.D., at the conference on Cross-Border Training and Impact Assessment in Ireland and Europe, Cavan, 27 October 2011:

“I would like to commend the work of the Centre for Cross Border Studies and, in particular, its Director, Andy Pollak, and Director of Research, Ruth Taillon. They’ve put together a terrific line-up for this conference, with participants from ten border regions across different parts of Europe….Tomorrow, on the second day of this conference, an Impact Assessment “Toolkit” for Cross-Border Cooperation will be launched. This toolkit promises to become an invaluable resource for practitioners right across Europe - not just in the border regions of Ireland...There is one sentence in the toolkit which really stands out for me: The proposed activities should have a greater effect at the level of the Cross-border Territory....than would be the case if the jurisdictions acted separately. This, very concisely, encapsulates the rationale of our whole approach to North-South cooperation.”

Sir George Quigley, Chairman of Bombardier Aerospace, made a more general comment on the work of CCBS, focusing on activities that were outside the INICCO project:

“I have seen them at close quarters in various contexts and have formed a very positive view of their relevance, competence and effectiveness.

I recall two instances in particular:

(1) A major conference several years ago in the Slieve Russell Hotel involving all the Irish Universities (with speakers from abroad, including Australia) to consider how the Universities could better tap the international student market for undergraduate and graduate students.

(2) A programme over several years for the training of staff in cross border bodies or Government Departments dealing inter alia with cross-border issues. This was very imaginatively conceived and executed, with an impressive line-up of speakers”.
Positive views also were expressed by Reg McCabe, Chief Executive of the IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council, who expressed “a very positive view of CCBS and its work,” noting that IBEC has “developed a close relationship with the Centre over time”.

During the consultations a number of challenges have also been signalled, as well as opportunities for future research (post-2011/INICCO).

There is a perception by some stakeholders that the Centre is primarily focused on the public sector, and this raises the issue of whether more could be done to enhance collaboration with private sector organisations and/or provide research that could meet identified needs of the private sector. It is accepted, however, that the Border People project has taken a business-oriented approach to its user group meetings in 2011. A range of private sector organisations have been engaged (giving their time free of charge) with commitments for future involvement. Furthermore, the Border Economy project focuses on the importance of the private sector to the border region economy. However, it is important to keep in mind that since 2009 the overwhelming majority of CCBS research funding has been for the INICCO project – funded under the INTERREG IVA Public Sector Collaboration call.

Indecon also believes that the provision of research and insights such as provided by INICCO may inevitably be of greater benefit to policymakers and we believe this is consistent with its original rationale.

One issue noted by a number of stakeholders is that the Centre and INICCO are not implementation agencies and that implementation of various initiatives, in practice is often a difficult challenge. Indeed, much of the research by ICLRD and CCBS is aimed at policy-makers and involves policy-makers through Steering Committees and Advisory Boards and one-on-one discussions.

One of the positives of INICCO is that it entails work by the Centre in collaboration with other cross-border/island of Ireland organisations, with steering/advisory groups, who together can help to implement cross-border initiatives. However, ultimately, implementation is a matter for policymakers. This suggests there is a continual challenge for the Centre to maintain its advocacy of cross-border collaboration with central and local government and with implementation agencies.

In relation to implementation issues, in general there appeared to be receptiveness of local government to acting on cross-border initiatives and it was suggested that perhaps this is an area where the Centre should focus its work post-2011. The Indecon team considers that this applies to certain initiatives – such as CroSPaN’s Executive Training Programme – but not to others where central and regional government decision-making is required (e.g. health and economic matters pertaining to the border economy).

An on-going issue is how to ensure the “longevity” of work (like INICCO) beyond the current project funding. It is felt by stakeholders that future research should be focused on “practical usage” where there was significant potential to endure after project completion (such as data/statistics and/or directly relevant skills/training development that meets identified needs). Much of the work undertaken through INICCO has involved the development of a number of tools that are relevant to skills/training development. Sustainability, of course is an on-going issue particularly when so much cross-border work continues to depend on EU funding.
One issue which was raised concerned the institutional position of the Centre in relation to the NSMC and other institutions and some agencies. Given constraints on public expenditure there is an on-going need to ensure that duplication is avoided. The Indecon team believes that INICCO works in a complementary fashion to other organisations and has helped with synergies in the provision of research and information. Indecon believes that ensuring close co-operation with our organisations should remain a key strategy for this work.

Disappointment was expressed by some stakeholders consulted regarding the dissolution of the North South Roundtable Group, which was seen as a forum for discussing the issues raised through the Centre’s research (although the NSRG, which was wound up in February 2010, had no connection with INICCO). However, the North South Research Forum under INICCO has provided opportunities for discussion of policy issues and to share research findings. Nevertheless, more could be done to disseminate the new information and tools coming from the INICCO project.

During the consultations one stakeholder raised the issue of the level of engagement of the universities who were the founder members of the Centre (Queen’s University Belfast and Dublin City University). While the Centre and its island of Ireland partner organisations have formed useful relationships with universities during the course of INICCO (e.g. with the University of Ulster and the National University of Ireland, Maynooth), the challenge remains of developing significant cross-border research programmes within universities. An effective way forward may be to intensify these links on a project-by-project basis. The Centre manages the all-island university network Universities Ireland including its recent North/South scholarships scheme, and the Ireland Africa Partnership. CCBS is also the secretariat for SCOTENS. Neither Universities Ireland nor SCOTENS are funded by INTERREG, however, and are therefore outside the scope of this evaluation.

A small number of stakeholders raised the possibility that the Centre might be more active in the provision of quantitative analysis. It should be noted however, that CCBS has delivered some quantitative analysis through INICCO. However, we believe this is not a specialist area of the Centre and given the challenging funding outlook for the Centre, INDECON believe that the best way of accommodating more quantitative-based research by the Centre might be through its continuing partnership with ICLRD and ICLRD’s partners and with other organisations such as AIRO of NUIM and the University of Ulster. Indeed, ICLRD and AIRO propose to develop this work further in the future, involving CCBS where there is scope and opportunity.

The examples of the Border Economy and Hospital Planning projects also illustrate how the Centre can accommodate more such research work and in our view this may be the best way of developing this line of work in the coming years.

Important for future policy is that in the course of developing its projects over the years, the Centre has assembled extensive relevant data about the differing situations in both jurisdictions across a number of sectors. It was suggested that a worthwhile exercise might be to assemble and further develop this data so it is easily accessible where it could provide a useful resource for planners and policymakers including the patterns of deprivation in border areas. For example, the CroSPiLaN project has developed an innovative all-island Deprivation Index with the All-Island Research Observatory.
Indecon believes that maintaining and developing the important data and evidence assembled by the Centre and INICCO is key to maximising the legacy benefits of INICCO. Other possible lines of research work post-2011 which were suggested include:

a. Education – structures, policies and outcomes – with a view to addressing underachievement within the ranks of the disadvantaged and, more generally, the ability of the system to deliver a ‘product’ which is relevant to the needs of the economy;

b. Competitiveness issues on a North/South basis;

c. Economic development;

d. Utilities (especially renewable energy commitments);

e. People (skills and education); and

f. Infrastructure and innovation.

Indecon also believes that given the constraints on funding the importance of the continuation of the centres on-going projects must be taken into account in any consideration of new projects.

2.3 Summary

Overall, the stakeholders from whom we received feedback – including senior public servants and private sector personnel from both sides of the border – have a high regard for the Centre and its work during 2009-2011, and in previous years. The consultations suggest that particular strengths of the Centre are its knowledge and networks in respect of the Irish cross-border region, which have been built up over many years. The Centre’s work is seen as of importance in bringing together a range of other island of Ireland bodies to shed new light on diverse issues in cross-border mobility, hospital services, local planning, strategic spatial planning, impacting on people and place, fitting with EU territorial agenda of place-based and community-driven development; the weaknesses of the border economy and impact assessment for cross-border cooperation, an important new development for cross-border work on the island.
3 Border People Project

3.1 Introduction

Border People came from a recommendation in a report commissioned by the NSMC in 2001 to address some of the information gaps that exists for people who move across the border to work, live or study. The first phase of the Border People website was launched by the NI Deputy First Minister in May 2008 as the first public information website of its kind on the island of Ireland. The Border People website is the only cross-border source of information that covers both jurisdictions. The website is structured around the four themes of ‘commute’, ‘work’, ‘live’ and ‘study’. (http://www.borderpeople.info/) and is managed by CCBS. While there are other public information websites in either part of the island of Ireland, the Border People website fills a need by bringing together information on a cross border basis from a large and diverse range of information sources in one website.

The NSMC continues to be the Centre’s partner on Phase Two.

During 2009-2012, the Border People website continued to provide practical and up-to-date information for people living and/or working in the border region. The project also facilitated links to other bodies in the RoI and NI to enable service users’ information requirements to be dealt with by the most relevant organisation.

During 2009-2012, there have been seven thematic Border People User Group meetings in the border region that have been used both to inform and to obtain the views of service users so as to improve the website and its relevance.

The project has gained profile during the period, including among the business community through the Border People User Groups, which during 2009-2010 tended to focus on employees and consumers but since 2011 have widened to include businesses. One of the objectives of the User Group meetings is the facilitation of cross-border information sharing, networking and to provide a platform for discussion on current border issues and to highlight new and emerging trends in the border region.

While Border People is providing up-to-date information, the complexity of some queries, in particular in relation to taxation and social welfare, is such that they cannot be addressed solely by the provision of information on a website. Currently, existing organisations, such as the central government departments and citizens’ advice centres in both jurisdictions, and the European Employment Service, provide some advisory services but there is no dedicated resource to deal with complex cross-border queries. The interaction of different social welfare and taxation systems makes these queries complex. Therefore, there is scope for Border People to be developed further (post-/INICCO) to establish a network of advisors, from within existing organisations, to deal with cross-border welfare and taxation issues. This model could be based on that used in other European border regions that experience cross-border movement (e.g. the INFOBEST offices on the French-German border, and similar offices on the Dutch-German and Swedish-Norwegian borders).
The current phase of the Border People website runs until 31 March 2012. The planned Border People Phase Three aims to provide sustainable and mainstreamed cross-border mobility information in Ireland as an essential aid to a common travel zone in Ireland and Europe. The immediate aim is that by early 2015 the provision of cross-border mobility information (online and face-to-face) will be built into the mainstream advice provided by a range of citizens information provision in Ireland and NI. The structural aim of the project is that the direct public facing provision element of Border People will be provided by these existing information services and that the Centre for Cross Border Studies will continue to manage the Border People online information service in a partnership between itself and the Citizens Advice Bureau NI Phase 3 of Border People will also seek to provide more quantitative evidence on the flows of people living, working and studying in the cross-border region and, by identifying the facts, will then be in a better position to address barriers to cross-border people mobility, which have been identified in previous studies, for example the Indecon/PWC study of 2001.

3.2 Inputs

There are two people within the Centre allocated to the management and development of the Border People project – comprising the website, telephone and email information service and user groups – CCBS IT manager Joe Shiels and information officer (Annmarie O’Kane). The Border People Steering Group, which has met regularly since the commencement of Phase 2 of the website in 2009, guides the development of the website. It comprises the Border People staff, CCBS Director, Andy Pollak, and representatives of the NMSC, the Irish Department of Social Protection, the NI Department of Finance and Personnel, the NI Citizens Advice Bureau (which includes the information facility Borderwise), the Irish Citizens Information Board, EURES (the European Job Mobility Portal) and SEUPB. The Delivery and Innovation Division (DID) of DfP host and maintains the Border People website in Belfast using the Livelink content management system.

3.3 Activities and Outputs

The Border People website currently provides over 300 pages of information and over 1,000 external links to sources of public information for people who move across the border to live, work or study). As well as the over 6,000 page views per month that Border People receives an average of 60 queries by telephone and email monthly. Border People is, therefore, a key player in the niche area of cross-border mobility information.

Border People has important links with other providers of public sector information who lack cross-border expertise. For example, NI Direct, the official government website for NI citizens, commissioned Border People to produce a cross-border/frontier worker page for its website. Border People has also widened its audience through the creation of Facebook and Twitter pages that provide up to date information on forthcoming events and changes in government policy that could affect frontier workers and others living and working in the border region.
The seven Border People User Group meetings have attracted over 240 service users, including local councillors, professionals, business owners and personal users. The first User Group focused on using Cross-Border Mobility Statistics. Subsequent User Groups have been on themes addressing the needs of cross-border consumers, cross-border workers and three have focused on support to cross-border businesses. Border People staff members have also attended events as a support to other projects, such as EURES and TradeLinks, and forums held by Chambers of Commerce in the border region. These activities reflect the relevance of the Border People project to businesses as well as consumers, students and employees. A key benefit of the User Group meetings identified by INDECON in our consultations with service users and other stakeholders is their facilitating of cross-border networking, which would not otherwise occur.

Figure 3.1 provides data on the extent of usage in terms of the number of visitors, visits and the number of pages visited each month during January-October 2011. The tracking of these metrics was improved in 2010 (based on the aforementioned webstats system adopted by the DID within the NI Department of Finance and Personnel). If we compare the figures during Jan-Oct 2011 with the same period in 2010, we find that:

Due to the information made available on the website and the assistance provided to individuals, the Border People project has become recognised as a source of practical cross-border information.

One individual stated “The help and support from the Border People project has been tremendous and I will definitely recommend the service to anyone in need of help and support.”

- The average number of visitors to the Border People website has increased by 3%, from 6,563 to 6,752;
- The average number of visits has grown by 5%, from 7,043 to 7,405;
- The average number of pages visited has risen by 6% from 14,815 to 15,698;
- The number of ‘page views’ on the Border People website during 2011 was on average 15,836 per month read by 6,880 visitors.

Figure 3.1: Usage of the Border People Website (Jan-Oct 2011)

Source: Centre for Cross Border Studies.
3.4 Results

3.4.1 Results Indicators

The key results of Border People (Phase 2) are as follows:

- The development of an easy-to-navigate, stand-alone, central access point for information and advice in plain English on cross-border mobility issues, covering all aspects of cross-border mobility of concern to people moving across the border to live, work, study or retire; with links to other relevant websites in NI, the RoI and other relevant information sources;
- The Border People team responds to an average of about 60 queries per month via the comment facility on the website, email or telephone. The enquiries are usually of a complex nature e.g. involving, cross border claims for social welfare or taxation responsibilities;
- The completion of seven thematic Border People User Groups facilitating networking by service users in the public and private sectors;
- Recommendations for developing a sustainable, integrated public service infrastructure for the island; and
- Case Studies showing agreed on solutions to cross-border issues for individuals accessing public services on both sides of the border.

3.4.2 Indecon Survey of Users Evidence on Results

As part of this evaluation the Indecon team designed an online survey of the Border People website users that was then conducted by Border People staff. The online survey drew a total of 67 responses, resulting in a response rate of over 50%.

Table 3.1 overleaf presents the survey responses that indicate that Border People is delivering a relevant and efficient service:

- **Stand-Alone, Central Access Point**: A significant majority of users strongly agree or agree that the website provides a practical access point for information and advice on cross-border mobility.
- **Information in Plain English**: Users also strongly agree that the information contained in the Border People website is in plain, easy-to-understand English).
- **Easy-to-Navigate Website**: There is also a high level of agreement among users that the Border People website is well-designed and easy-to-navigate Links to Other Relevant Websites and Information Sources. Most users agree or strongly agree with the statement that the website provides relevant links to other sources of information.
Integrated Reporting and Advice Service for User:

Users responding to the survey believe that the integrated reporting and feedback system within the Border People website is useful, although the strength of agreement on this particular monitoring indicator is slightly lower compared with the other indicators. Since the Indecon survey, the query-and-report-back aspect of Border People has been tightened and this is something that the next phase (Phase 3) of Border People should seek to accomplish post-2012.

| Table 3.1: Border People - Survey of External Users - Views on Usefulness/Relevance of Border People |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Please indicate your views regarding the usefulness/relevance of the Border People website | Strongly Agree/ Agree | Neutral | Disagree/ Strong Disagree | Don't Know |
| The website provides a practical access point for information and advice on cross-border mobility | 87.3% | 7.9% | 0.0% | 4.8% |
| The information is in plain, easy to understand English | 87.1% | 8.1% | 0.0% | 4.8% |
| The website is well-designed and easy to navigate | 80.6% | 12.9% | 0.0% | 6.5% |
| The website provides relevant links to other sources of information | 82.5% | 9.5% | 3.2% | 4.8% |
| The feedback form is useful | 60.0% | 23.3% | 0.0% | 16.7% |

Source: Indecon Survey of External Users of Border People Website.

In addition, Border People has developed working relationships with partners in the provision of cross-border mobility information and with other public and private sector partners with an interest in cross-border mobility.

3.5 Impacts

3.5.1 Impacts Indicators

The impacts indicators for the Border People website (Phase 2) include:

- Contribution to better-informed cross-border mobility on the island of Ireland;
- Practical information on a range of cross-border issues easily accessible and relevant to a variety of audiences, including policymakers, businesses and marginalised and disadvantaged individuals and communities; and
- Enhanced recognition of the Centre as an information agency by policymakers and the wider community in the border region of the island. Due to the information made available on the website and the assistance provided to individuals, the Border People project is now recognized as a source of practical cross-border information.

The Project also:

- Provides a resource for people working and living in the border region of the island of Ireland.
3.5.2  Indecon Survey of Users’ Views on Impacts

Table 3.2 presents the Indecon survey of users’ views on the extent to which the Border People website is achieving its intended impacts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please indicate your views regarding the impact of the Border People website</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree/Strong Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The website contributes to better-informed cross-border mobility on the island of Ireland</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website covers a wide range of relevant cross-border issues</td>
<td>87.1%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website is a unique cross-border information resource on the island of Ireland</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information is accurate and up-to-date</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The website enhances the work and reputation of the Centre for Cross-Border Studies on the island of Ireland</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Indecon Survey of External Users of Border People Website.*

**Contributed to Better-Informed Cross-Border Mobility:**

There is a high level of agreement among users with the statement that the website contributes to better-informed cross-border mobility on the island of Ireland.

There is strong agreement among users of the Border People website that the website:

- provides accurate, up to date and high quality, practical information on a comprehensive range of cross-border issues;
- is easily accessible and relevant to a variety of audiences;
- covers a wide range of relevant cross-border issues; and
- is a unique cross-border information resource on the island of Ireland.

**Enhanced Recognition of the Centre as Authoritative Research and Information Agency:**

The survey results suggest that the Border People website enhances the work and reputation of the Centre for Cross-Border Studies on the island of Ireland.
3.5.3 External Stakeholders’ Views

The Border People website is well regarded by European observers. As noted previously, John Handoll, an international lawyer and expert on EU mobility issues based at William Fry solicitors in Dublin, and Irish representative on the European Network on Free Movement within the EU, commented on the significance of Border People in a European as well as an island of Ireland context indicated that:

“In my practice and research into free movement issues, the Border People website has become an essential tool. More importantly, it’s clear and user-friendly design allows citizens on both sides of the border to access up-to-date information on key topics, it has evolved over time in response to citizens’ needs and has become a first port of call for those seeking to understand their rights.”

Also in the speech by Mary Bunting, NI Joint Secretary of the NSMC, to The Euro-Institute Network (TEIN) delegates on 27 October 2011 it was suggested that:

“The Centre has developed and managed for the NSMC a very important website – Border People – which provides easy access to information for citizens.”

Chris Gibson, who recently retired as Chairman of the Centre and Chair of the overall INICCO Steering Committee, believes that the Border People has been a “major success of the Centre”.

Other stakeholders consulted had positive views on the Border People project and the expertise and knowledge resulting from it was seen as of use when examining new and emerging obstacles to cross-border mobility. User group events were also seen as having been focused, well-attended and informative.

One issue raised in our consultations is that while Border People is providing up-to-date and relevant information, the complexity of some queries, in particular in relation to taxation and social welfare, is such that they cannot be addressed solely by the provision of information on a website. Currently, existing organisations, such as the central government departments and citizens’ advice centres in both jurisdictions, and the European Employment Service, provide some form of advisory services but there is no specific, dedicated resource to deal with complex cross-border queries. It is the interaction of different social welfare and taxation systems which makes these queries complex and there is a lack of an effective advisory service to deal with complex cross-border taxation and welfare benefits issues. Indecon believes there is scope for Border People to be developed further to establish a network of dedicated cross-border advisors, from within existing organisations, to deal with such issues. This model could be based on that which is used in other European border regions that experience cross-border movement (e.g. the INFOBEST offices on the French-German border, and similar offices on the Dutch-German and Swedish-Norwegian borders).

In addition to the above feedback from external stakeholders, members of the Indecon team have attended the User Group meetings during 2010 and 2011 and it was evident that the meetings have contributed to networking among local authority officials, councillors, business people and members of the public in the Irish cross-border area. For example, during 2011, some professionals and business people informed us that attendance at the meetings advanced their business networks and have already opened up new business opportunity.
We also sought feedback from external members of the Border People Steering Group. According to one member:

“The Border People website is an excellent hub of information and one to which we rely on and refer to on a daily basis. The quality of the information is second to none and we recommend the site to all our users and use as a reliable source. The staff members are more than helpful and able and are always willing to assist.”

3.6 Core Issues

3.6.1 List of Core Issues

As discussed above, the following five key issues are central to the evaluation process:

- Rationale;
- Relevance;
- Efficiency;
- Utility and effectiveness;
- Sustainability.

3.6.2 Review of Core Issues

In respect of rationale, the Indecon team considers that there is merit in an independent website that pulls together and updates information on a range of cross-border issues on the island of Ireland. While there are many public information websites on either side of the border, there is no single repository that attempts to pull together existing information that is focused on the cross-border dimension. With regard to relevance, the evidence obtained during our research confirms that the Border People website has delivered on its intended results and on its impacts. Turning to efficiency, the Indecon team believes that the Border People website is provided in an efficient manner given the small team of people working on the website on a full-time basis. In helping to ensure the efficiency of the website, the Border People Steering Group is playing a role in guiding the work of the Centre and in terms of ensuring that the website is working in a technical sense. In relation to utility and effectiveness, the website has improved the system whereby it tracks and monitors visits. On sustainability, the website has a vision about what it can achieve efficiently and effectively including scope for further development of the query system to accommodate more complex queries from users. This development would however have to be very carefully organised and coordinated to ensure standards.
3.7 Cross-Cutting Themes

3.7.1 List of Cross-Cutting Themes

The horizontal cross-cutting themes common to all INICCO projects are:

- Equality;
- Sustainable development;
- Poverty;
- Partnership.

The Border People website aims to promote equality and sustainable development and to address poverty by sign-posting relevant public information on cross-border mobility, for example access to healthcare and pensions and compliance with cross-border tax. It also aims to create opportunities for the development of partnerships between government, citizens’ information providers, community and voluntary groups, and the general public. Indecon believes the partnership with NSMC is particularly of significance in this context.

3.7.2 Evidence on Cross-Cutting Themes

The survey evidence (September 2010) on the extent to which the Border People website is meeting its cross-cutting themes listed above is presented in Table 3.3.

| Table 3.3: Border People - Survey of External Users - Views on Cross-Cutting Themes of Border People Website |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Please indicate your views regarding the impact of the Border People website | Strongly Agree/Agree | Neutral | Disagree/Strongly Disagree | Don’t Know |
| The website provides practical information with the scope to address inequality in the border region (e.g. through drawing attention to information that may facilitate people gaining access to services on either side of the border) | 83.3% | 10.0% | 1.7% | 5.0% |
| The website has the potential to contribute to sustainable development in the border region (e.g. through joint North-South initiatives in response to demand/issues raised by users of the website) | 81.7% | 8.3% | 1.7% | 8.3% |
| The website has the potential to contribute to addressing issues of social exclusion, unemployment and poverty in the border region (e.g. by making relevant information available) | 78.3% | 11.7% | 1.7% | 8.3% |
| The website has the potential to enhance cross-border cooperation generally on the island of Ireland | 85.0% | 6.7% | 1.7% | 6.7% |

Source: Indecon Survey of External Users of Border People Website.
Beginning with equality, there is support among users for the statement that the Border People website provides practical information with the scope to address inequality in the border region (e.g. through drawing attention to information that may facilitate people gaining access to services on either side of the border). According to the Indecon survey, over 83% of users agree or strongly agree with this statement.

In respect of sustainable development, the survey suggests support among users that the website has the potential to contribute to sustainable development in the border region (e.g. through joint North-South initiatives in response to demand/issues raised by users of the website).

Similar support in respect of the poverty and partnership cross-cutting themes is suggested by the survey results. In the case of the former, over three-quarters of users are in agreement with the view the website has the potential to contribute to addressing issues of social exclusion, unemployment and poverty in the border region (e.g. by making relevant information available); regarding the latter, 85% of users agree or strongly agree with the view that the Border People website has the potential to enhance cross-border cooperation generally on the island of Ireland.

This however is not to suggest that web site has a major impact on the different structural challenges of equality, sustainable development or poverty and tackling such issue would require more significant initiatives.

3.8 Synergies

The survey evidence in Table 3.4 suggests an overall positive contribution of the Border People website to date. A very significant proportion of its users (92%) agree or strongly agree with the view that overall the Border People website is an important and valuable resource for people working and living in the border region of Ireland. This finding is considered with the views of other stakeholders consulted. Any such survey findings however represents the views of those who had a specific interest or need for information in this area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please indicate your views regarding the Border People project overall</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/ Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree/ Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall the Border People website is an important and valuable resource for people working and living in the border region of Ireland</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Indecon Survey of External Users of Border People Website.
3.9 Summary

Our assessment is that the Border People project has worked well during 2009-2012. The website has gained profile during the period. Further, the Border People User Groups – of which there have been seven – have been successful and have attracted over 240 attendees during the period. In terms of results, there is an agreement among users that the Border People website:

- Provides a practical access point for information and advice on cross-border mobility;
- Makes available information in plain, easy-to-understand English;
- Is well-designed and easy-to-navigate;
- Facilitates relevant links to other sources of information; and
- Gives an integrated reporting and advice service for users.

Turning to the impacts of the project, the key findings are that the Border People project:

- Provides a resource for people working and living in the border region of the island of Ireland;
- Contributes to better-informed cross-border mobility on the island of Ireland;
- Gives practical information on a comprehensive range of cross-border issues that are easily accessible and relevant to a variety of audiences;
- Facilitates enhanced recognition of the Centre as an information agency by key policymakers and the wider community in the border region of the island; and
- Contributes to networking among local authority officials, councillors, business people and members of the public in the Irish cross-border area;
- Awareness of the need for a cross-border information service as is evident with the integration of Border People with NI Direct;
- Border People engaged with the private sector, accountants, solicitors and the Credit Review Office.

We consider that the core issues are met by the Border People project. Its rationale stems from the fact that it fulfils a need for compiling relevant information from existing sources on cross-border issues from both parts of the island of Ireland. It is relevant to frontier people, who work or study in one side of the border and who live on the other side and during 2011 has become relevant to facilitating business networking opportunities. The efficiency of the website stems from the fact that it has met its results and impacts targets with a small resource and budget base – although it has also benefited from the fact that it could build on Phase 1 of the Border People website launched in 2008. In regard to utility and effectiveness, it has improved the system whereby it tracks and monitors visits. Regarding sustainability, the website has a vision about what it can achieve efficiently and effectively including scope (post-2011) for the further development of the query system to accommodate more complex queries from users. This development will have to be very carefully organised and coordinated to ensure standards. We believe there is scope for Border People to be developed further to establish a network of cross-border advisors, from within existing organisations, to deal with more complex cross-border issues, such as relatively complex social welfare and taxation issues.
The Border People project has delivered on the **cross-cutting themes** of INICCO, namely **equality**, **sustainable development**, **poverty** and **partnership**. The online Indecon survey of users suggests support that the website has the potential to contribute to these horizontal themes, including enhancing the extent of cross-border cooperation on the island of Ireland. However Indecon would caution against placing unrealistic expectations on the role of a website in addressing these challenging cross cutting themes. In terms of **synergies** with the other INICCO projects, the focus of Border People during 2009-2011 has appropriately been on development of Phase 1 of the Border People website and gaining critical mass of users and synergies with other INICCO’s are less directly relevant.

Post-2011, Border People should continue, including with a more advanced query/advice system by coordinating advisors from existing organisations as in other European cross-border regions. We understand this is what is envisaged for the next phase (Phase 3) of Border People, where it is planned that the Centre embed capacity building and training in a partnership comprising the Citizens Advice Bureau NI and the Citizens Information Board (Ireland), with a Steering Group and the Centre continuing to provide strategic and managerial support to the new network. Given the evolution of Border People since 2008, this plan is in our view, appropriate.
4 CroSPlaN Project

4.1 Introduction

The largest of the individual INICCO projects, CroSPlaN is run by the Centre in partnership with ICLRD with the objective of strengthening the policy and operational linkages between central, regional and local policy-makers, as well as officials and practitioners, involved in strategic spatial planning policy and practice, and local and regional development, in the Irish border region.

4.2 Inputs

The CroSPlaN Steering Group includes representatives from a range of stakeholders with interests in cross-border spatial planning issues. The group includes both Directors of the Centre and ICLRD plus senior planning officials from Leitrim County Council and Omagh District Council as well as representatives from the Border Regional Authority, the Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN), Planning Service Northern Ireland and academic specialists in spatial planning from the UU and NUIM. The Committee is supported in its work by the Centre’s Project Administrator. In addition, a ‘sister organisation’ of the ICLRD, the AIRO, a research unit and interactive spatial data portal based at NUIM, has contributed to CroSPlaN with three new on-line tools in areas with user/researcher potential, namely: an all-island housing atlas; a prototype all-island deprivation index; and an island-wide index of accessibility. The latter has potential synergies with the Hospital Services INICCO project through data on access to acute hospital services.

The Steering Group is the channel through which new ideas for CroSPlaN activities are proposed, discussed and developed, with a focus on the relevance and quality of the research and training to external users given the external membership of CroSPlaN. An example of additional research brought forward through the Steering Group is the scoping study on monitoring indicators for the NSS/RDS (2011).

ICLRD and the SEUPB agreed an (no cost) extension of CroSPlaN until the end of March 2012 in respect of completion of the January 2012 ICLRD/CroSPlaN Annual Conference and Technical Workshop, which will lead to the completion of the activities under the CroSPlaN project.

4.3 Activities and Outputs

The range of activities and outputs of CroSPlaN originally planned during 2009-2011 are summarised as follows:

- Two action research projects per year, one of which is to focus on the island of Ireland and the other to provide international case study evidence;

- One executive training programme per year aimed at officials, councillors and other stakeholders involved in local planning in the Irish border region (the aim being to train a total of 90 such executives during 2009-2011 or an average of 30 executives at each training programme as set out in the SEUPB offer letter, 2009);

- One annual conference per year (aimed at 300 attendees during 2009-2011 or an average of 100 attendees per annual conference as set out in the SEUPB offer letter, 2009) (this being the ICLRD Annual Conference, held in January); and

- One technical workshop per year (with the intention of hosting 100 attendees over 2009-2011 or an average of 30-35 attendees at each workshop as set out in the SEUPB offer letter, 2009) (this being facilitated within the ICLRD Annual Conference although themed separately and with attendance by invitation).
Most of these activities/outputs have been completed as at January 2012 and it expected that the outstanding work elements will be completed in early 2012.

A summary of the activities/outputs completed under CroSPiAaN is as follows:

- **Action research projects:**
  - Inter-jurisdictional planning and governance study (2010);
  - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development within the EU and elsewhere (US) – the Basle Metropolitan Area, spanning Germany, France and Switzerland, and the Boston Metropolitan Area, spanning collaboration involving planning organisations, research organisations and the business community (2010);
  - Sustainable spatial development in respect of river basin management plans, their (inter)relationship with spatial planning policy and practice and the challenge of implementation in the border region (2011);
  - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional river basin / watershed management and spatial planning within the EU and Elsewhere (EU) – The Elbe River Catchment with a specific emphasis on the Berlin-Brandenburg river Basin, and the Connecticut River Watershed with a particular emphasis on the Pioneer Valley (2011).

- **Evidence-Informed Planning**
  - Data capture projects on evidence-based cross-border planning (carried out by AIRO of NUIM in tandem with ICLRD) (2011):
    - Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool;
    - All-Island Deprivation Index;
    - All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool.
  - Scoping study on the development of a spatial monitoring framework for the island of Ireland; with specific focus on the NSS and RDS.

- **Executive training programmes aimed at councillors, officials, private sector representatives and other organisations (including community/voluntary bodies):**
  - Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region (2009-2010); building on previous research work and technical assistance by the ICLRD on the potential for collaborative working in this Twin-city region in a number of thematic areas (e.g. tourism, financial services, etc.);
  - NW Border Region, including the Linked Gateway of Letterkenny-Derry or Letterkenny-Derry Corridor, which is recognised in the two major strategic planning policy documents in the island of Ireland, namely the NI Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the RoI National Spatial Strategy (NSS) (the only cross-border linked gateway on the island of Ireland) (2010-2011);

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3 The deprivation and accessibility indices were formally launched at the 2012 ICLRD Annual Conference in Dundalk. The new housing atlas has been launched.
Central Border Region, where the CroSPlaN training programme is being delivered recognising the specific challenges of this diverse cross-border sub-region and taking cognisance of the current ICBAN training programme running in parallel (on political and civic engagement, which commenced in September 2011).

- Annual conferences:
  - ICLRD Annual Conference 2010 (Enniskillen) on the theme of ‘Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of a Recession’;
  - ICLRD Annual Conference 2011 (Sligo) on the theme of ‘The Changing Business Community and Spatial Planning Landscape: Doing More with Less’;
  - ICLRD Annual Conference 2012 (Dundalk) on the theme of ‘Planning for a New Future: Can Planning and Cross-Border Cooperation Deliver Change in Ireland and Europe’.

- Technical Workshops;
  - Technical Workshop 2010 (Enniskillen) on the theme of ‘Evidence-Informed Planning: Making Information Accessible to Build Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation’;
  - Technical Workshop 2011 (Sligo) on the theme of ‘Land Banks, Surplus Housing and Unfinished Estates: Assets and Liabilities’;
  - Technical Workshop 2012 (Dundalk) on the theme of ‘Models of Cross-Border and Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation: Learning from the Experiences of Others’.

In addition to the above, the CroSPlaN project has also delivered the following new initiatives:

- An annual journal – *Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland* – the first edition of which was launched in 2011, at the ICLRD Annual Conference in Sligo;
- A briefing paper series of cross-border spatial planning issues (featuring shorter papers on issues of interest);
- Scoping Study on the development of a spatial monitoring framework for the island of Ireland; with specific focus on the NSS and RDS;
- A half-day conference in association with Cooperation Ireland and Queens University Belfast on planning and local government on the island of Ireland – and the opportunities for sharing of experiences given the reform agendas being pursued by both governments in the areas of planning and local government (30th September 2011).

Following the joint event hosted with Cooperation Ireland on *Sharing Experiences Across Borders – Planning and Local Government on the Island of Ireland* on 30th September 2011, the All-Ireland Steering Forum (to which cooperation Ireland provides the secretariat and which is made up of County Managers / Chief Executives from both jurisdictions) have given their backing to ICLRD and Cooperation Ireland developing a work programme for 2012 which emphasises shared learning and drawing on international expertise. This is timely in the context of the planning and governance reforms taking place across both jurisdictions.
4.4 Results

4.4.1 Action Research Projects

**Completed Projects**

The completed projects include a report entitled ‘All Change But Any Alignment? The Impact of the Proposed Governance and Planning Reforms Across the Island of Ireland on Inter-Jurisdictional Planning (2010)’.

This report, published on-line on the ICLRD website, focuses on inter-jurisdictional planning and multi-level governance. The study analyses the process outcomes of the Review of Public Administration in NI with a particular focus on the reform of local government. Recommendations are provided on the implications for cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning policies and operations given new planning legislation in the RoI. A summary version of this research has been published in the inaugural ICLRD journal: *Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland*.

Following the completion of the report in 2010, it was announced that the RPA in NI, as originally envisaged and assumed in the report, would not be proceeding and, in the RoI, local authority funding and operations were impacted by the economic crisis. However, the NI Executive has recently announced that the proposal in the NI RPA that the 26 district councils be reduced to 11 be reinstated. The NI Executive has also recently announced that it is going to look into shared services among local authorities (some have already moved on this in anticipation of the RPA in 2009-2010).

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

- Regional Planning in the Boston Metropolitan Area
- The Basel Metropolitan Area: Three Borders - One Metropolitan Area

ICLRD has written two international case studies in inter-jurisdictional and cross-boundary governance and planning. These studies, completed before the end of 2010, present examples of practices in the (a) Basel Metropolitan Area, spanning Germany, France and Switzerland, and (b) Boston Metropolitan Area, which includes regional development initiatives by metropolitan planning organisations, the business community and research organisations working in practice. The cases are available on the ICLRD website. The Basel case was used as part of the NW Training programme and a summary version of this research was published in the first edition of the ICLRD journal: *Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland*. 

In 2010, the CroSPlaN Steering Group recommended that the action research projects in the remainder of the INICCO funding period should include examination of the environmental implications of the EU directives on habitat, water framework and groundwater on planning in the Irish border region and that the executive training programmes should consider introducing these topics and their implications for local, regional and trans-boundary planning, in the process helping to promote synergies within CroSPlaN. It was subsequently agreed, following one-to-one meetings with the members of the CroSPlaN Steering Group to ensure that the resulting research was focused and relevant in practical terms.

On the island of Ireland, eight River Basin Districts were jointly established by the Irish Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) and the Department of Environment Northern Ireland. Three of these river basins are cross-border. This CroSPlaN action research project aims to document the challenges associated with achieving integrated decision-making in cross-border river basins with a particular focus on water quality and the role of spatial planning. The research sought to document existing institutional structures and policy initiatives, explore current management practices, identify international good practices in managing river basins that involve more than one jurisdiction and put forward recommendations as to how the current scenario – at the national, regional, local and cross-jurisdictional government scale – can be improved. The research was undertaken in three phases:

- Phase I – Island of Ireland-Mapping the Institutional and Policy Environment and the application of EU policies into national legislation, policy and river-basin management;
- Phase II – International Good Practice – involving the documentation of international practices that are relevant to the island of Ireland; and
- Phase III— Conclusions and Recommendations.

The research team on this action research project comprised researchers from NUIM and UU plus personnel at NIRSA, AIRO (NUIM) and the IIUD.

- River Basin Management and spatial planning: An International Perspective (2011)
- The Connecticut River Basin: Integrating Water Quality Improvements with Regional Land Use Plans
- The Elbe River Basin District: Integrated Cross Border Management in Practice

ICLRD has written two international case studies on river basin management and the extent to which spatial planning policy and practice are linked. These studies, completed before the end of 2011, present examples of practices in the (a) the Connecticut River Basin spanning four States, and (b) the Elbe River Basin, which includes various tiers of government working together to align environmental management and spatial planning policy.

Cross-Border Evidence-Based Planning – Three New Data Capture Projects and One Scoping Study

The three data capture projects are motivated in part by the lack of comparable, cross-border data, which otherwise would be useful in informing cross-border spatial planning. The umbrella theme for this ICLRD work on cross-border planning under the auspices of CroSPlaN is ‘The Preparation of, and Future Use of, Spatial Data Indicators’. The three projects, involving the inputs of AIRO at NUIM, comprise an island of Ireland housing monitoring tool, an all-island index of deprivation and an all-island accessibility mapping tool. These three resources are accessible by logging onto the AIRO website and can also be accessed through the ICLRD website.

(1) The all-island housing monitoring tool is based on the collation and distribution of a series of all-island data sets relating to housing and the housing market. This project was completed in 2011 by AIRO/ICLRD in association with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in the RoI and the NI Housing Executive. The housing atlas is interactive and hosted on the AIRO website (at NUIM). The RoI part of the atlas provides 2000-2010 annual time-series interactive maps of all DECLG available data and features an interactive mapping module for all of the Department’s unfinished estates data. The atlas has been described by external stakeholders as a more “user friendly” atlas in respect of such estates in the RoI than other information.

(2) The new prototype all-island index of deprivation – while aware of the Noble Index of Deprivation for NI (also known as the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure, NIMDM) and two deprivation indices in operation in the RoI (the SAHRU Index of Material Deprivation and the New Measures of Deprivation, developed by Trutz Haase and Jonathan Pratschke) – has entailed the development of a methodology for the production of an all-island deprivation index that will enable cross-border like-for-like comparison for the first time. This work is undertaken in association with Trutz Haase. The new research extends the existing New Measures of Deprivation for the RoI to develop an all-island index. This on-line tool is available from the AIRO website; and has been described by one external stakeholder (a former Government Minister in RoI) as a series of maps that ‘changes forever the way we look at Ireland’.

(3) The all-island accessibility mapping tool uses the most up-to-date road navigation data to identify degrees of accessibility/remoteness both sectorally and geographically across the whole island. This index allows examination of relative access to different services such as health and education on a cross-border basis. Work undertaken as part of this study feeds into, and supports, the ICLRD research programme on shared services, described below. The results are available through a mapping module on the AIRO website, at NUIM.

The research team on (1)-(3) comprised three members of AIRO (including Professor Rob Kitchen, a senior academic at NIRSA (NUIM) together with two members of ICLRD, including the Director of ICLRD (John Driscoll).
In regard to the new housing monitoring tool, indicators are available at the local authority or ‘district council’ level (26) in NI and at the local authority ‘county/city’ level (34) in the RoI. Data for the indicators has been sourced from a number of different organisations in both jurisdictions. The primary source of housing information in NI is the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Much of this data is available in annual reports and briefing papers and also available through the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) website. In the RoI, housing data is generally available through two inter-linked organisations: the Housing Department within the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

In order to make the housing indicators as interactive and accessible as possible, the project team developed an on-line mapping tool to display the results. Users of this tool can view the housing themes, explore patterns, monitor key indicators, present trends and importantly support decision making. Users can also query data and create user defined mapped outputs. The ‘All-Island Housing Monitoring Tool’ is currently available (beta version) for use on the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) website www.airo.ie/mapping-modules

The main objective of new deprivation Index for the island is to respond to a long-standing need to develop a way of measuring deprivation on a coherent, all-Ireland basis to facilitate an array of cross-border governmental programmes. One of the reasons why this type of measure has not previously been available is that a deprivation index that bridges different jurisdictions – and thus different data sources – raises considerable methodological challenges. The methodological development and data analysis behind the index has been developed by Trutz Haase in collaboration with AIRO at NUIM. It is not suggested that the index is ideal as it is based on two censuses conducted at two different points in time, namely 2001 in Northern Ireland and 2006 in the Republic of Ireland. Nevertheless, it was felt that the principal challenges involved in developing an all-island deprivation index might best be explored using the available data – despite their shortcomings – in preparation for the publication of the small area population statistics from the 2011 censuses. The methodology for an all-island index outlined in this CroSPiAN action research project thus prepares the ground for commissioning a new measure as soon as data from the new census data become available (in 2012).

Deprivation indices have a long history in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Indices for Northern Ireland have, followed the design of those adopted in the UK as a whole. Deprivation indices for the RoI originated with a series of local development programmes that were implemented from the late 1980s onwards, but have followed a different trajectory. The merits of developing a satisfactory methodology for calculating’ all-island small area deprivation scores at the present time are because the 2011 Census provides an opportunity to study the spatial distribution of deprivation from a comparative perspective. The 2011 Census has been co-ordinated throughout all European countries, and the definitions and procedures used ground the feasibility and utility of developing small area deprivation measures not only at an all-island scale but also at a European-wide level.

The new index embodies a combination of three dimensions of relative affluence and deprivation: demographic profile, social class composition and labour market situation, and attempts to capture/measure the likelihood of poverty/deprivation.
In September 2011, the project team responsible for the development of the new index of deprivation held a half-day workshop to discuss the initial findings of the research and invited key members of the national statistical agencies from both Northern Ireland (NISRA) and the Republic of Ireland (CSO) to attend. The workshop was an opportunity to discuss in detail the methodology behind the index and also a first step in the dissemination of the overall results.

Rather than develop a static mapped output of the results, the AIRO research team developed an interactive mapping interface to accommodate the results of the new index. The interactive mapping system allows users to view, zoom and query the results of the index. Users can zoom to a particular area of interest, query the location and are presented with a detailed summary of results. The results place the study area in context with its parent county/district, national and all-island deprivation results. The beta website, All-Island Deprivation Index Mapping Viewer, is currently going through a user testing process with a focus on both the functionality of the site and also on the findings of the initial index results. Following this process, it is hoped that the All-Island Deprivation Index will be launched at the annual ICLRD conference in January 2012. Illustrative output from the new resource is shown below (for Dublin and Belfast).
The All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool provides an analysis of access to settlements and key service infrastructure such as transport, education and health facilities across Ireland. Accessibility scores to a range of services have been developed for every residential address point on the island (approximately 2.7 million) based on average drive-time speeds (average speed on NAVTEC road network plus 10% urban area congestion charge). For the purposes of the mapping tool the accessibility scores have been averaged at the most detailed spatial statistical unit available – Small Areas for the Republic of Ireland (approximately 18,000) and Output Areas for Northern Ireland (approximately 5,000).

The online accessibility mapping tool, developed using ArcGIS Viewer for Flex from ESRI, allows users to select from a variety of maps and query the accessibility score at the small areas level. Accessibility scores have been developed for the following services to date:

- Gateways, Gateways and Hubs
- Settlements > 50,000, Settlements > 20,000, Settlements > 10,000, Settlements > 5,000 and Settlements > 1,500
- Education: Primary and Secondary Schools
- Health: Full 24hr Emergency Hospitals, Full 24hr and Partial Emergency Hospitals, GPs, Pharmacies and Dentists
- Train Stations, International and All International and Regional Airports
- Emergency Services: Fire Stations, Garda/PSNI Stations

Origin datasets have been generated from a variety of sources such as NISRA/NINIS, the HSE, the Dept of Education, and DubLinked/NTA. For access to this free and interactive mapping tool, and to explore the different results, see http://airomaps.nuim.ie/airoaccessm

Towards a Spatial Monitoring Framework for the Island of Ireland: A Scoping Study (2011)

In addition to the three data-capture projects, this strand of CroSPlaN also involved a scoping study on moving towards a joint spatial monitoring framework for the island of Ireland. This is an additional research study that both the ICLRD CroSPlaN Team and the Steering Committee feel will contribute to linking the evidence-based planning and monitoring of the Regional Development Strategy in NI and the National Spatial Strategy in RoI – as well as support the roll-out of the joint government consultation document, Spatial Strategies on the Island of Ireland: Framework for Collaboration. The scoping study also will provide a description of how these efforts are linked to wider EU and regional practices in monitoring spatial indicators.

Shared Services Across the Island of Ireland: Propositions for Local Council Collaboration (2011/12)

The interest in a shared services agenda is growing among central and local government officials as government budgets in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland are under severe pressure. Furthermore, in Northern Ireland, the ‘post’-RPA era will be seeking new models for local authorities to share services. This study explores how a shared services agenda focusing on specialist services, might work across local authority boundaries and the Irish border – in the context of forthcoming decreases in local government budgets in both jurisdictions; shared services having the potential to secure greater efficiency of delivery as well as cost savings.
ICLRD and the Centre used two working groups to advise the study team: a ‘policy working group’ drawn from the cross-border bodies and departments (NSMC and associations representing councils north and south, DRD, DEHLG) and a ‘practice group’ consisting of representatives of local councils, providers of shared services facilities and sectoral representatives.

Like the river basin management study, the two action research projects (island of Ireland and International) are presented as an integrated report covering the island of Ireland and EU and other international cases (covering Scotland, Spain, New York and Canada).

The research team allocated to the shared services research project under CroSPlaN includes, in addition to senior staff at ICLRD, researchers from QUB, AIRO and IIUD.

**Shared Services across Local Government: Sharing International Experiences (2011/12)**

This research programme includes a stand-alone report focusing on emerging good practices in shared services among local governments across three international case studies; namely New York State, Canada and Scotland. This research programme has documented good practice in the adoption and roll-out of shared service agendas, synthesising key findings emerging from the international cases and putting forward key propositions for shared services in the Irish context.

The ICLRD also featured a Spanish case study on *Recognising the Need for Flexibility in Cross-Council Partnerships: The Experience of Mancommunidades* as part of the ICLRD technical workshop on Models of Cross-Border Cooperation. Manuel Conte, President of the Comarca de Los Monegros presented a case focusing on the experiences of mancomunidades in Asturias in rolling-out shared services across rural municipalities. This builds on the continuing work of an ICLRD research affiliate – based in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick – on the topic of local municipalities in Spain sharing resources – including staff on a flexible basis.

**Summary**

Completed in March 2012, the CroSPlaN project has yielded the following published action research studies:

- Local governance structures on the island;
- Governance and planning – two international case studies (Europe and the US);
- Data capture projects (three new data capture resources for use by academics and other researchers, planners and professionals and one scoping study);
  - Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool
  - All-Island Deprivation Index
  - All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool
  - Towards a Spatial Monitoring Framework for the Island of Ireland: A Scoping Study
- River basin management systems – two studies (island of Ireland and international); and
- Shared services – two studies (island of Ireland and international).

In consideration of these results, CroSPlaN completed all its action research projects at the conclusion of INICCO in March 2012.
4.4.2 Executive Training Programmes

Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region

Building on the previous ICLRD initiative – ‘The Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region: Supporting the Implementation of Cross-Border Collaborative Frameworks’ (January 2009) – ICLRD proposed that the first CroSPiaN executive training programme be organised for the Newry-Dundalk region during October-December 2009. Aimed primarily at council officials, councillors and representatives from the private community from Newry and Mourne District Council, Louth County Council and Dundalk Town Council, this training course aimed to cover areas such as: balanced rural and urban development; regeneration; indicators and monitoring in evidence-informed planning; leadership and partnership in achieving sustainability; and the role of finance/funding in collaborative, cross-border initiatives.

In retrospect, the choice of the NE border region was appropriate as this ‘pilot’ course would lay the foundation for the subsequent two executive training programmes in the NW and Central Border Regions, and built on ICLRD’s existing knowledge base regarding the East Border Region.

What initially started out as the concept of the ‘Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region’ has been broadened to include a formal agreement between Louth County Council and Newry and Mourne District Council (namely the Memorandum of Understanding or MOU between the two local authorities signed in Brussels in March 2011 and the subsequent Charter of Commitment to Cross Border Cooperation signed in April 2011 by various public and private sector stakeholders in the Eastern Border Region). Thus, the agreements, which build on cross-border cooperation in the Eastern Border Region and to which CroSPiaN and ICLRD have contributed extends to areas such as Drogheda and the rest of Louth as well as Newry and Dundalk.

It was suggested to us during our consultations that all three sub-regions within the border region have an interest in cross-border cooperation in local and regional spatial and economic development and there is a record of collaboration; meaning that the role of CroSPiaN was to build on and facilitate future cooperation. This in turn means that different solutions need to be considered in one sub-region that may not necessarily apply in another sub-region. For example, stakeholders that we spoke with in the NW informed us that they have been considering different forms of cross-border agreements between local authorities, which may not necessarily result in an MOU like that adopted in the Eastern Border Region between Newry/Mourne and Louth County Council.

The three executive training programmes have accordingly been tailored, to the specific requirements of the border sub-regions. This has been evident in respect of the NW sub-region and the ICBAN sub-region.

The first executive training programme under the Dundalk-Newry heading consisted of five modules. The theme of the first training module was ‘Shaping and Managing Cross-Border Development’, which included a presentation by the NSMC on setting the wider context for cross-border cooperation in spatial planning, exploring international examples of corridor development and inter-jurisdictional cooperation and spatial planning on the island of Ireland, with reference to the NI Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the RoI National Spatial Strategy (NSS). The first training module also featured roundtable discussion among the participants and closing comments from a representative of the Irish Department of the Taoiseach.
The subsequent four modules of the first executive training programme on the Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region were given during the following months and the last module was hosted by the Centre and ICLRD on 11 May 2010 at the Canal Court Hotel, Newry. A representative from the Indecon team attended the last training module and sat in on the small group discussions among the attendees that have been a central feature of the learning experience gained in the first executive training programme.

The feedback received from the attendees indicated this training programme involved an interactive learning approach, in which issues were openly discussed and there was cooperative learning. Throughout the modules, the activities centred on three working groups – tourism, green/environmental and cross-border enterprise.

In addition to the first module, which, as mentioned above, considered international examples of cross-border local/spatial development, the other four modules considered:

- Evidence-based planning;
- Implementing cross-border planning;
- Engaging the community in shaping and delivering local spatial/development strategies; and
- Bringing together an action agenda.

A strength of the first executive training programme is that it took a practical, action-oriented approach to cross-border planning and development in the Newry-Dundalk region. In each module, there were presentations from members of local authorities as well as from ICLRD and invited guest speakers. These presentations and other course-related materials were distributed to attendees and are available to participants on a dedicated training website.

At the final module of the first executive training programme practical issues discussed included:

- What are the vital ingredients of an overarching vision for cooperation in the twin-city and wider region?
- Does the three-tiered structure – comprising senior management group, advisory groups and joint technical teams – provide the necessary framework for initiating, supporting and growing future projects in the Newry-Dundalk region?
- Does the structure allow for local leadership within the public and private sectors to advocate for and champion an action agenda?
- Can the three-tiered structure address short-term actions and provide longer-term guidance on strategic initiatives?
- Should the preparation of a regional agreement be considered, outlining key areas for joint working, including more formal structures?

At the conclusion of the CroSPlaN executive training programme, the attendees were presented with certificates by the Centre and ICLRD validating their attendance at, and successful completion of, the programme. Informal feedback from the attendees to Indecon suggests that the programme was successful.
A wider impact of the first executive training programme is the MOU between Louth County Council and Newry-Mourne District Council (signed in Brussels in March 2011) and the subsequent Charter of Commitment to Cross Border Commitment (signed by various public and private sector stakeholders in the Eastern Border Region in April 2011). At this event, at which a member of the Indecon team was present, the contribution made by ICLRD to the framing of the historic agreement was noted and the ICLRD Director, John Driscoll, was highlighted in this regard. Following the training programme, John Driscoll together with Andrew McClelland of University of Ulster prepared a background paper outlining options to the Councils in terms of practical models of collaborative working. This report, Developing a Strategic Alliance between Newry and Mourne District Council and the Louth Local Authorities, is available for download from the ICLRD website.

**NW Border Region**

The planning for the second of the three executive training programmes began in 2010 and aimed to examine cross-border cooperation in local development in the NW region, including the Letterkenny-Derry/Londonderry corridor, which is of interest as being the only cross-border Gateway in the RoI National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the importance of this corridor for the NW part of the island is also recognised in the NI Regional Development Strategy (RDS).

The training modules commenced in October 2010 in Letterkenny and ran until June 2011, longer than originally envisaged. The modules included the themes:

- ‘Perspectives on City Regions, Functional Territories and the North-West Region’ (the speakers were Dr Neale Blair, Lecturer, Built Environment Research Institute, University of Ulster School of the Built Environment; John Driscoll, Director, ICLRD; Niall Cussen, Senior Planning Advisor, the RoI Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government; Jim Hetherington, Senior Research Associate, ICLRD, and Michael D’Arcy, Principal, D’Arcy Smyth and Associates);

- ‘Leadership and Institutional Arrangements in Achieving Collaboration’ (the keynote presenter was Professor Greg Lloyd, Head of the School of the Built Environment, University of Ulster and the module was chaired and facilitated by Dr Patricia O’Hara, Chairperson of the National Statistics Board and Adjunct Professor at the National Institute for Regional Spatial Analysis, NUIM);

- ‘Delivering Cross-Border Collaboration – How will the region maximise culture as a shared resource in the North-West?’ (the keynote presenters were Claire McColgan, Director of Culture Liverpool; Dr Aideen McGinley, Chief Executive, ILEX Urban Regeneration Company; Oonagh McGillion, Temporary Director of Development, Derry City Council; and the module was chaired and facilitated by Dr Tim O’Connor, former Secretary-General to the President of Ireland and former Joint Secretary of the NSMC); and

- ‘North West – New World? How will the region meet the challenges and maximise opportunities in the cross-border economy?’ (The keynote presenters were Dr John Bradley, Economic Consultant; Paul Hannigan, President of Letterkenny Institute of Technology; and the module was chaired and facilitated by Aidan Gough, Strategy and Policy Director at InterTradeIreland).
In response to a request from Donegal County Council further modules in May and June covered synthesis of the entire training programme where the ICLRD worked in agreement with the local authorities in Derry and Donegal; with a particular emphasis being placed on organisational and operational models (incl. priority actions) for the newly established North West Partnership board.

We received some mixed reactions from participants regarding the first of the NW training modules reflecting the inevitable learning process in developing such programme but overall the feedback was positive. The positives communicated to us were the facilitation of cross-border networking and exchange of ideas and practices, a benefit that permeates all of the training programmes. There was also praise for the coordination and leadership shown by the Director of ICLRD John Driscoll, who recognised some of the challenges and issues early on in the delivery of the training programme and responded positively in the latter modules, which were generally felt to be much improved. The less positive views concerned the slow pace of the early modules, and, it was felt by some, a lack of understanding of the particular issues faced by the NW. However, as the modules developed, these initial teething issues were ironed out, thanks to John Driscoll and his team in meeting the challenges of the programme.

We have been informed by senior stakeholders in the NW Border Region that subsequent to the NW training programme a number of important developments are being acted upon. While these developments were already in train before the CroSPlaN training programme, it was felt that the modules were helpful” in reinforcing the networks. The initiatives include:

- Building cooperation between Donegal and Derry in advance of the Derry City of Culture event in 2013;
- Support and consolidate the newly formed NW Partnership Board, (one of the participants said that “it was very useful to get the core group together and keep up the momentum ... on our new regionalism journey”);
- Business development initiatives, including the Fort George initiative in Derry (under ILEX), which will extend to Letterkenny and Donegal; and
- Business support collaboration, including further funding for Letterkenny Institute of Technology’s CoLab facility (under the NI Science Parks initiative in Fort George/ILEX) and initiatives underway in the Letterkenny-Derry Corridor.

ICLRD has been asked to continue to provide support and technical assistance to Donegal County Council, Derry City Council and ILEX in developing a work programme for the Board and identifying priority areas of action, which illustrates the potential of the NW executive training programme to support cooperation in the NW.

After the close of the training programme, ICLRD forwarded a briefing note on options for cooperation and arranged follow-up seminars with the above mentioned councils and ILEX. This included an exchange of experience with officials from Newry and Mourne and Louth. In a presentation in February 2012 to senior departmental officials at the North South Ministerial Council, the NW Partnership Board indicated its intent to pursue an enabling agreement among the involved councils. In that presentation, the role of ICLRD’s executive training programme and subsequent follow-up assistance was noted.
Central Border Region

The third and final CroSPiaN training programme was carried out in the Central Border Region (the largest of the border sub-regions – see map below). It was carried out during October December 2011 over six modules delivered by ICLRD to the ten ICBAN councils. Each module lasted four hours and the programme was designed to create a space in which senior management in the 10 local authority areas could both network and further develop their ideas on future collaborative action.

The programme was aimed at County Managers and CEOs of the ten councils within ICBAN, plus two senior managers/directors of services from each council; this was agreed in advance with both the Councils and ICBAN and was based on the recognition that ICBAN’s own Political and Civic Engagement Programme was being rolled-out at the same time.

The intensive programme provided an opportunity for council representatives to identify key themes in which they wished to (further) develop collaborative action – and engage with those councils within the Central Border Region, both North and South of the border, which they believe are key to progressing these initiatives.

The six modules delivered were as follows:

- ‘Understanding the ICBAN Sub-Region in a Cross-Border, Island of Ireland and European Context (Wednesday, 5 October 2011);
- ‘Spatial Planning and Management in the ICBAN Sub-Region – Development, Investment and Models of Collaboration in Micro-Regions’ (Wednesday, 19 October 2011);
- ‘Opportunities for Implementing a Shared Services Agenda’ (2 November 2011);
- ‘Community Enabling-Marrying Bottom-Up Needs with Top-Down Constraints’ (Wednesday 16 November 2011);
- ‘Collective Leadership – Building Consensus and Achieving an Identity’ (30 November 2011); and
- ‘Pulling it All Together’ (Wednesday 7 December 2011), which included a presentation by Padraic White (former Chief Executive of the IDA and currently Chair of the Louth Economic Forum), and considered the possibility of a special development zone for the border region.
The priority themes around which the training was delivered were (1) tourism (including the natural and built environment, heritage, culture, diaspora and creative industries), (2) shared services and (3) renewable energies, energy efficiencies, climate change and the green economy.

From the first module, it became clear that facilitation would be required to work through the challenges and opportunities surrounding the priority themes. To this end, facilitators were utilised from organisations such as:

- NIRSA
- NUIM
- An Foras Feasa, NUIM
- UU
- Travel Logic
- SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland)
- LG Improvement (formerly IDeA)

The CroSPlaN training programme took place in the context of a number of other initiatives planned or underway in the ICBAN Region. These include the development of a ‘Vision Plan’ for the ICBAN Region, which will aim to complement existing national strategies and seek to inform planning locally, as well as government spending policies and priorities centrally in respect of the ICBAN Region. Also noteworthy are ICBAN’s own Data Capture Project (to which ICLRD is providing advice and support) and the SPACEial Project underway in the NW (including parts of the ICBAN Region), which is being coordinated by the specialist data capture and mapping unit within Donegal County Council and two further ICBAN studies on roads and telecoms within the ICBAN Region, all of which are relevant in the context of this evaluation. A telecoms study is also underway, arising from previous research showing that the ICBAN Region has less availability, choice and coverage in terms of numbers of fixed, mobile and broadband operators compared with elsewhere on the island. A further roads study commissioned by ICBAN is evaluating the need for prioritized investments to key transport corridors within the ICBAN Region, namely the N16/A4 Road running east-west between Sligo and Ballygawley and the N2/A5 running north-south between Letterkenny and Monaghan.

Feedback that we have received from external stakeholders who have participated in the CroSPlaN Central Border Region training programme indicates that the modules have been informative but most importantly have reinforced existing cross-border networks in the region and facilitates exchange of ideas, initiatives and good practices. During the ICLRD training the initiative that councils should concern in ensuring that the training was brought to bear was in the context of the regional Vision Plan. An important feature of the ICLRD training was supporting new initiatives between the councils.

By the end of the INICCO project, over 90 delegates had participated on the CroSPlaN executive training programmes during 2009-2011.

A particular aspect of ICLRD’s training programmes that bears mentioning is the manner in which the ICLRD management team follows-up with the local councils regarding the recommendations adopted by the delegates. This occurs after the formal programme has concluded and has led adoption of new approaches to cross-border cooperation.
4.4.3 Annual Conferences and Technical Workshops

Three annual conferences and the same number of technical workshops have been hosted by ICLRD and the Centre as part of the INICCO CroSPiAaN project, completing all the requirements of this aspect of CroSPiAaN. The conferences were held in January 2010, 2011 and 2012 at different locations and the technical workshops were run as separate but related parts of the annual conferences (with attendees by invitation). There were 135 attendees at the 2010 annual conference, 110 attendees at the 2011 annual conference and 128 at the 2012 annual conference – all of which are the ICLRD Annual Conferences. Over the three technical workshops, over 100 attendees were present. The three CroSPiAaN conferences and technical workshops have succeeded in attracting over 300 and 100 attendees respectively – these being the targets originally agreed with the SEPUB.

Annual Conferences

The theme of the 2010 conference held in Enniskillen was ‘Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of a Recession’. The two-day annual conference opened with a ‘health-check’ on the current state of the island of Ireland in a number of areas – the economy, the environment and planning. The rest of the conference focused on the actions required to prepare and sustain the island for economic recovery and explored how greater cooperation can be developed around environmental planning, shared services and the green economy. The invited speakers who addressed the conference included economists, academic planners, representatives from central government departments on the island and the US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland, who was the keynote closing speaker.

As well as discussing the current economic situation across the island, a number of the speakers at the 2010 annual conference stressed that spatial planning has a key role to play in securing economic recovery in both Irish jurisdictions. It was added that, as the island moves into recovery, the value of using data to inform and drive a shared civic agenda, thus ensuring that future policies are evidence-informed and ‘fit for purpose’, was emphasised. A message emerging from the conference was that the economic environment of the future across the island of Ireland will be different to that during the 2000s. It was also suggested that indigenous development – leading to industry clusters, where feasible will be relevant to the long-term prosperity and successful sustainable development. It was also suggested that recovery is likely to be driven by the concentration of employment growth in major urban areas, which illustrates the interaction between spatial planning and economics – including the ‘new economic geography’ – which is also relevant to the Border Economy INICCO project. The various presentations given at the conference are publicly available online via http://iclrd.org/web/2010-conference/.

Table 4.1 overleaf provides qualitative comments from participants who attended the 2010 annual conference in Enniskillen – they were forwarded to the Indecon team after the conference was held and reveal a level of satisfaction among participants.
Table 4.1: Comments and Feedback from the 2010 (Fifth) Annual ICLRD Conference

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<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Source: Indecon analysis of feedback data.</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Ireland and in particular the conference. The participants in [the] morning workshop were so enthusiastic and open to ideas and discussions. I do think the island is ready for an indicators project and you seem to have a critical mass of partners already engaged in the work.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I wonder could you forward to me the presentations from the seminar on the 21st and 22nd of January 2010. They were very interesting.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I found the conference to be very good and most interesting, having attended on the Thursday. I was wondering, when might the presentation copies be available on the website, and under what section would they be found?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Thank you for a wonderful job of organisation in relation to the ICLRD Conference and Seminar from Wednesday to Friday of last week. A first class event in so many ways. Well done!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Congrats on an extremely powerful conference which I think can now be described as a firm fixture in the diaries of all those involved in cross-border co-operation, collaborative working and change management on a North-South basis. The content was wonderful and I have no doubt some of the key contributions will remain active in people’s minds in the coming months.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Congratulations on a wonderful conference and networking opportunity last week. The workshop and conference content was really stimulating and the organisation, as always, impeccable. Let us know when the material goes on line.”</td>
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The 2011 annual conference - the Sixth ICLRD Annual Conference – in Sligo was based on the theme ‘The Changing Business Community and Spatial Planning Landscape: Doing More with Less’. The 110 attendees included representatives from central, regional and local government, elected representatives, policy-makers, cross-border networks, community representations, academics and representatives of the business community. Copies of the conference presentations, audio files are available for download on the ICLRD website.

The conference was organised around four sessions (further details are available on the ICLRD website, www.iclrd.org):

- Planning for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Growth;
- Planning for Homes and People: New Challenges, New Agendas;
- Planning for Shared Innovation: Infrastructure to Support Innovation-Led Recovery; and

The conference focused on the changing budgetary, legislative and policy landscape, and the practical realities of reduced budgets. It debated the need for implementing a period of austerity and the opportunities this can create for renaissance and resurgence. As part of the conference, the inaugural edition of the ICLRD’s new journal, Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland, was launched by Anne Barrington and Mary Bunting, Joint Secretaries of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC).
The theme of the third annual conference (the 7th ICLRD Annual Conference) in Dundalk on 19-20 January 2012 was ‘Planning for a New Future: Can Planning and Cross-Border Cooperation Deliver Change in Ireland and Europe?’ The conference considered models of collaboration across borders and between local government and other key local agencies. It was organised around three main sessions:

- **The Collaborative Framework – Cross-Border Regionalism in Action** – which considered the role of new regionalism in enhancing cooperation, whether inter-county or inter-jurisdictional;
- **Leadership through Planning** – which provided an overview of how the public, private and civic sectors need to collaborate more to bring about real, effective change;
- **Planning the Future** – which dealt with rethinking the role of planning, governance and community.

At the end of the conference, which was well-attended by 128 people, there was an ‘open discussion’ with a rapporteur and conference speaker assigned to each table, with discussion themes including framing the economic recovery of Ireland, the potential for new forms of governance in improved collaborations and partnerships, opportunities in the context of the ‘Collaborative Framework for the Island of Ireland’. As with previous ICLRD conferences, the 2012 conference facilitated a good mix of academics (international and from Ireland), practitioners and senior civil servants, as well as members of ICLRD and the Centre, to speak at the event.

Two members of the Indecon team were in attendance at the 2012 conference and the feedback we received from talking to participants (both attendees and speakers) was positive and it was felt the event was useful, as a source of exchange of ideas and information and from a networking perspective.

**Technical Workshops**

The first (ICLRD) technical workshop entitled ‘Evidence-Informed Planning: Making Information Accessible to Build Inter-Jurisdictional Cooperation’ was held just before the ICLRD Annual Conference on 20 January 2010 in Enniskillen. Aimed at (specially invited) planners, officials, practitioners and academic researchers interested in accessing data and information to inform spatial planning and local and regional development, the half-day workshop, which was attended by over 40 delegates (including the speakers, chair and facilitator), considered the role of spatial data in broadening the public’s participation in planning and public policy.

The first technical workshop considered the role of various technologies (3-D visualisations, highly interactive web visualisations and scenario modelling) in helping stakeholders involved in spatial planning processes to better understand the impacts and trade-offs of development decisions. It argued that spatial data and visualisation technologies are specifically relevant in the context of regional planning (and this applies internationally). It demonstrated how visualisation tools can be used to communicate complex regional concepts associated with rather abstract spatial dynamics. The workshop featured presentations by the Director of the Boston Indicators Project and the Data Services Director of the Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Both organisations have been working together for a number of years to promote inter-jurisdictional planning and shared services in the greater Boston area by providing access to timely and relevant information to local government officials, politicians, the community and voluntary sectors and academic researchers.
The objective of the first technical workshop was to provide an example of ‘good practice’ of how intermediary institutions such as the border networks and other groups can use data to drive regional change among decision and policy makers within local government as well as other groups involved in regional development. The technical workshop also provided an opportunity for AIRO (based at NUIM) to present its latest work on cross-border indicators, including mapping and data support.

The second technical workshop, within that year’s ICLRD Annual Conference, took place on 20-21 January 2011 in Sligo, the theme of which was ‘Land Banks, Surplus Housing and Unfinished Estates: Assets and Liabilities’. It was attended by over 30 participants by invitation only and was well received. The overall topic was of relevance in the context of the development by AIRO, in collaboration with ICLRD, of the All Island Housing Monitoring Tool during 2011. The workshop also provided a forum for highlighting emerging issues regarding land banks and under-utilised housing estates in the border region and exchanging international experiences from the US Resolution Trust and potential lessons for NAMA in working with local authorities and housing associations. The three key speakers were:

- Mr Brian Rowntree, Chairman, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;

- Mr Nicolas P. Retsinas, Senior Lecturer in Real Estate, Harvard Business School, Director Emeritus of Harvard University’s Joint Centre for Housing Studies & Former Assistant Secretary for Housing-Federal Housing Commissioner at the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);

- Mr Niall Cussen, Senior Adviser, Department of the Environment. Heritage and Local Government.

The theme of the 2012 Technical Workshop in Dundalk was ‘Models of Cross-border and Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation: Learning from the Experiences of Others’. The ICLRD workshop took place on the morning of 19 January 2012 (9.30-12.30pm) with presentations by: Mr Christopher Curtis, Chief Planner, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission on the role and values of Memorandums of Association (MOAs) in securing cooperation and consensus across the forty-three communities within the Pioneer Valley with which the Commission works; Mr José Maria Rodríguez-Fernández, CEO, Mancomunidad del Consejos del Oriente de Asturias on how bilateral and multi-lateral associations of local authorities in Spain – known as mancomunidades – cooperate to deliver services within functional territories; and Mr Gerard McGivern, Director of District Development, Newry and Mourne District Council, on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Louth local authorities that was signed in March 2011 and which involves collaboration in areas such as emergency planning, tourism and recreation, and sustainable economic growth. At the technical workshop over 30 people were in attendance. Like the previous workshops, there was an open forum for discussion during the second half of the morning, which considered opportunities for greater collaboration across councils.
4.4.4 New Journal and Briefing Papers

The first edition of the ICLRD Journal, Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland was launched at the January 2011 ICLRD Conference (in Sligo). A summary version of the completed first action research project (‘All Change But Any Alignment? The Impact of the Proposed Governance and Planning Reforms Across the Island of Ireland on Inter-Jurisdictional Planning’) was published in the journal and the journal also contains a summary version of the associated action research project on governance and planning in Basle. Articles from this first issue of Borderlands – together with the wider ICLRD research studies - are available on the ICLRD’s website.

The second issue of the ICLRD Journal Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland was launched at the ICLRD Annual Conference in January 2012 (Dundalk) by Frank McDonald, Environmental Editor of The Irish Times. The journal references two other aspects of INICCO:

- ‘All-Island Deprivation Index – Towards the Development of Consistent Deprivation for the Island of Ireland’, Trutz Haase, Jonathan Pratschke and Justin Gleeson; and
- A Reflection Piece entitled ‘River Basin Management and Spatial Planning: Prospects for Integration and Cross-Border Cooperation’, Cormac Walsh (Formerly NIRSA< NUI Maynooth and now with the University of Hamburg and ICLRD).

The publication of these research studies in the Borderlands journal provides them with an additional source of dissemination. The deprivation index is potentially significant in a European context because the new methodology developed for the index will enable use of the 2011 RoI and Northern Ireland census datasets, which have been coordinated across the EU.

Under the CroSpIaN programme, ICLRD has also published a series of briefing papers on topical issues on planning in the border region. It has used these briefing papers for the other CroSpIaN activities such as the training programme and the roundtable series held in cooperation with the Border Regional Authority. The briefing papers and other research results from CroSpIaN will be capable of being used as a research resource in 2012 and beyond.

The following briefing papers are available online on ICRLD’s website:

- **Good Planning Key to Future Success** (No.1) (by Professor Rob Kitchen, Director of the National Institute of Regional and Spatial Analysis (NIRSA) at NUIM and Chair of the Management Board of the Irish Social Sciences Platform; and Professor Alastair Adair, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Communication and External Affairs at the University of Ulster);

- **Linking Spatial Planning with Public Investment: Perspectives from the Island of Ireland** (No.2 ) (by David Counsell, chartered town planner and planning academic and lecturer at University College Cork; and Professor Greg Lloyd, Professor of Urban Planning and Head of the School of the Built Environment at the University of Ulster);

- **The Conditions Necessary for Gateway Development; the Role of Smaller Gateways in Economic Development** (No.3) by Jim Walsh, NUIM and Cormac Walsh, Urban Institute of Ireland at UCD;

- **ESPON and the EU Research Agenda** (No. 4) (by Cliff Hague, the ESPON contact point for the UK, a freelance consultant and researcher, and Professor Emeritus at Herriot-Watt University in Edinburgh; and Brendan Bartley, the Irish contact point for ESPON and Senior Research Fellow with the ICLRD);
4.5 Impacts

4.5.1 Overview of Impacts

Based on our review of documentation, including event reports and publications, our consultations with members of the CroSPlaN Steering Group (apart from the ICLRD and Centre members) and, most importantly of all, external stakeholders and users, we consider that the varied CroSPlaN activities, integrating ICLRD’s role as advocate / animator of change; facilitator between the policy-praxis divide, will result in the following impacts:

- **Action Research Projects:**
  - Improved knowledge and understanding of thematic issues of relevance for the cross-border region;
  - High-level reference guide to opportunities and benefits within each thematic topic;
  - Practical proposals on emerging issues such as local governance structures, aligning environmental/planning and shared services, with the potential to assist in new initiative design.

- **The data-oriented projects (part of Action Research) completed by AIRO (NUIM) have the corresponding impacts (with over 1,500 external users to date):**
  - Better understanding of the spatial linkages to policy and practice;
  - Improved understanding of the key messages within the data – in turn leading to enhanced evidence-informed policy;
  - Identification of best practices in methods of providing data/mapping support;
  - Increased understanding of the complexity of generating and using cross-border data in evidence-based-planning and programme development;
  - Increased use of data and mapping in spatial planning initiatives in both jurisdictions and integration of cross-border data, facilitating linkages to data capture projects within border networks.
Executive Training Programmes:

- Facilitated cross-council networking;
- Strengthened cross-border operational linkages in spatial planning and development (Louth-Newry/Mourne MOU in March 2011 and Charter of Commitment to Cross Border Collaboration in April 2011; NW Partnership Board; and ICBAN Spatial Planning Initiative and Vision Plan);
- Facilitated dialogue between central and local government on issues of relevance to the border region - for example, senior civil servants involving in planning and the environment from NI and the RoI attended/addressed modules as part of the executive training programmes and this gave them direct exposure to opportunities and challenges in respect of the border region;
- Facilitated understanding of issues and opportunities for cooperation at policy and project level in other parts of Ireland as well as in the border region;
- Strengthened capacity to manage change and build cross-border collaboration.

Conference and Technical Workshops:

- Facilitated access to international expertise for border officials and planners that otherwise would not happen;
- Reinforced cross-border networks;
- Reinforced the importance of evidence-informed decision-making and evidence-based planning.

Additional impacts and synergies of CroSPlaN:

- Key role of spatial planning and territorial cohesion in north/south cooperation recognised by the launch of new Borderlands journal by the Joint Secretaries of the NSMC at 2011 Annual Conference in Sligo;
- New journal offers a way of further dissemination of the work of CroSPlaN and future research on planning and development relating to the Irish border region – for example, in respect of the new all-island index of deprivation;
- Journal serves to heighten interest in the cross-border dimension in spatial planning and development on the island of Ireland;
- Journal serves to ensure quality control in the work of CroSPlaN and ICLRD;
- Briefing papers relate to topical issues on planning in the cross-border region in a manner complementary to the longer and more detailed articles in the new journal, ensuring different audiences are reached;
- Briefing papers and journal articles also have use in other CroSPlaN activities such as the training programme and roundtable series held in cooperation with the Border Regional Authority;
- ICLRD has been involved with and provided guidance to ICBAN spatial planning activities through involvement in the spatial planners’ steering committee – the advice has been instrumental in helping ICBAN to develop an internal capacity within the region to guide its vision plan and evidence-based planning activities;
On 9 March 2011, in association with the Border Regional Authority and NIRSA and ICLRD, over 100 planners from the RoI and border counties informed and shared experience of developing core strategies from the bottom up and was attended by over 100 planners from the RoI and border counties;

On 28th April 2011, in association with the Border Regional Authority NIRSA, and ICLRD 35 housing experts, planners, academics and policy-makers presented papers and discussed how central and local officials should work together in a workshop on ‘Lank Banking and Housing Development: The (New) Role of the Planning System’;

On 30th September 2011, in association with Cooperation Ireland and Queens University Belfast, ICLRD held a half-day conference on planning and local government on the island of Ireland – and the opportunities for sharing of experiences given the reform agendas being pursued by both governments in the areas of planning and local government. This event was attended by 100 planners, policy-makers, elected representatives and academics from both jurisdictions and led to new exchanges between central government departments regarding planning.

4.5.2 External Stakeholders’ Views

The views that the Indecon team received with specific regard to the CroSPlaN project are summarised as follows:

- Overall contribution to putting the cross-border planning and development agenda on the policy landscape;

- Aspects of CroSPlaN felt to be most useful by users are data/mapping tools (where users like senior management, planners and local authority officials and elected representatives have a strong demand for relevant data/information to inform their day-to-day duties and inform new initiatives), the conference and some aspects of the training (shorter training events focused on more specific and discrete developments as they arise);

- New information – that can be updated – that can inform planning and land-use is felt to be especially useful. However, users also expressed less preference for reports and papers, which they can be at risk from becoming out-of-date and/or lose relevance;

- Events like conferences and short-term training modules are felt to be useful for enabling cross-border networking and sharing of ideas – it was mentioned, for example, that training on how to use the new data/mapping tools would be good.

ICLRD has indicated its intention to update reports and briefing papers and continue to integrate findings into its training, seminars and future conferences to support north/south cooperation in local and regional development.

Some stakeholders/users who we engaged with pointed out the following opportunities and challenges:

- In regard to the water basin management action research project, there may be scope for the findings and recommendations of this study to shape policy in regard to water quality, which is becoming a significant issue what with the planned introduction of water charges, and the completed report should be brought to the attention of the central government departments on both sides of the border and to agencies like the EPA in Dublin. This happened in early 2012 when DoECLG Water Division requested the study in light on the review of implementation structures for river basin POMS;
In the Budget 2012, the Irish Minister for the Environment announced that there will be a new property tax of €100 per year from 2012 and that residents in properties in ‘ghost estates’ would be exempt, however the definition and extent of this term would be subsequently finalized – there may be scope for the AIRO Housing Monitoring Tool to contribute to this important task in 2012; and

One person made the general point that INTERREG IVA Programmes such as CroSPIaN “must be regarded as a ‘soft’ support to the sustainable development of the border region” and “the synergies they produce should not be underestimated”, although the “benefits may not be as concrete as one would hope but these benefits are every bit as real in relation to the sustainable development of the region.”

4.6 Core Issues

4.6.1 List of Core Issues

The core evaluation issues are:

- Rationale;
- Relevance;
- Efficiency;
- Utility and effectiveness;
- Sustainability.

4.6.2 Evidence on Core Issues

In respect of both rationale and relevance, the Indecon team believes there is a lot of common ground between communities along the Irish border region and it therefore makes sense to share experiences in relation to local planning and development and to encourage a system of exchanging good practices for the region overall. The development of a single repository for datasets covering both jurisdictions is also relevant in this regard. In addition, the access to best practice internationally and ensuring it is available to a diverse range of stakeholders is important.

In regard to sustainability, we believe that the work to date of CroSPIaN has contributed to sustainable development in the Irish border region – a good example in this regard is the development of the MOU arising from the first CroSPIaN executive training programme in respect of the Dundalk-Newry Twin City Region and initiatives underway in the NW and Central Border Region following the executive training programmes in those regions. The same comments apply in regard to efficiency and utility and effectiveness, in which the small CroSPIaN team has delivered a large number and wide range of activities within a limited budget. In this regard, ICLRD has successfully used its network of specialists in planning and spatial development on the island and internationally to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of its work under CroSPIaN.
4.7 Cross-Cutting Themes

4.7.1 List of Cross-Cutting Themes

The horizontal cross-cutting themes are:

- Equality;
- Sustainable development;
- Poverty; and
- Partnership.

4.7.2 Evidence on Cross-Cutting Themes

In regard to equality, CroSPlaN has facilitated public officials and representatives to have information relevant to the objectives of (a) promoting equality and good relations in both jurisdictions and (b) implementing equality legislation and good practice and integrating issues of inequalities into cross border spatial planning. Regarding poverty, CroSPlaN has provided information to public officials and representatives relevant to the task of integrating anti-poverty strategies with spatial planning and development. A tangible contribution to addressing poverty has been the development of the all-island deprivation index. It was not however suggested that CroSPlaN on its own represents a significant measure to impact directly on some of these cross-cutting themes such as poverty. In respect of partnership, CroSPlaN has provided a large number of opportunities for Steering Committee members and users of CroSPlaN’s activities and results to exchange information and build relationships. New cross-border partnerships developed between public authorities involved in spatial planning and development. In sustainable development, CroSPlaN has contributed towards new practical initiatives relating to sustainable development along the Border Region – for example, the MOU in the Eastern Border Region, assisting the North West Partnership Board in the NW and inputting into the ambitious strategic work of ICBAN in the Central Border Region.

4.8 Synergies

We consider the CroSPlaN has resulted in the following synergies

- Research reports, international conferences, technical workshops and the Borderlands journal, which contribute to an enhanced body of knowledge on spatial, social and economic issues in the border region;
- Enhanced relationships among border councils and their constituent stakeholders and between ICLRD, the Centre and key academics, representatives of statutory bodies and community/voluntary sector from both sides of border & elsewhere;
- The training programmes have drawn on case studies and research work developed by elsewhere under CroSPlaN;
- The Border Economy research through a presentation by John Bradley was featured in two of the training programmes (Newry/Dundalk and the NW Region) (although the tone and results did not go down well with many in the NWQ);
Customized websites were established for each of the training programme, which are available to the participants after the close of their respective training programme; and

The all-island accessibility index has potential synergies with the Hospital Services INICCO project through data on access to acute hospital services.

4.9 Summary

The largest of the individual INICCO projects, the objective of CroSPlaN is to strengthen the policy and operational linkages between central, regional and local policymakers and among officials and practitioners involved in spatial planning in the Irish border region.

As will be seen from the Monitoring Indicators (Table 8.1) suggests that the targets of CroSPlaN have all been achieved at the end of the INICCO project in early 2012 and on some aspects the project exceeded the targets set.

With regard to results, at the end of the project in early 2012, CroSPlaN will have achieved the following:

- Action research projects:
  - Inter-jurisdictional planning and governance study (2009)
  - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development within the EU and elsewhere.
  - Sustainable spatial development in respect of river basin management plans and their implications for future development.
  - Shared services developments among local authorities in each part of the border
  - Data capture projects on evidence-based cross-border planning (carried out by AIRO of NUIM in tandem with ICLRD) (2011)
  - Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool
  - All-Island Deprivation Index
  - All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool
  - Towards a Spatial Monitoring Framework for the Island of Ireland: A Scoping Study

- River basin management systems – two studies (island of Ireland and international); and

- Shared services – two studies (island of Ireland and international).

- Executive training programmes aimed at senior management, councillors, officials, private sector representatives and other organisations (including community/voluntary bodies):
  - Newry-Dundalk Twin City Region (2009-2010)
  - NW Border Region, including the Linked Gateway of Letterkenny-Derry or Letterkenny-Derry Corridor.
  - Central Border Region.
Annual conferences:
  o ICLRD Annual Conference 2010
  o ICLRD Annual Conference 2011
  o ICLRD Annual Conference 2012

Technical Workshops (held as part of the annual conferences):
  o Technical Workshop 2010
  o Technical Workshop 2011
  o Technical Workshop 2012

The CroSPiA project has also delivered the following new initiatives:

  A new (annual) journal – Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland – the first edition of which was launched in 2011, at the ICLRD Annual Conference in Sligo; and

  A briefing paper series of cross-border spatial planning issues.

The impacts we consider have resulted from CroSPiA are varied as follows:

Action Research Projects;
  o Improved knowledge of thematic issues;
  o High-level reference guide to opportunities within each thematic topic;
  o Proposals on emerging issues.

The data-oriented projects (part of Action Research) completed by AIRO (NUIM) have the corresponding impacts (with over 1,500 external users to date):
  o Better understanding of the spatial linkages to policy;
  o Evidenced based planning strengthened.

Executive Training Programmes:
  o Facilitated cross-council networking;
  o Strengthened cross-border operational linkages in spatial planning and development;
  o Facilitated dialogue between central and local government on issues of relevance to the border region - for example, senior civil servants involving in planning and the environment from NI and the RoI attended/addressed modules as part of the executive training programmes and this gave them direct exposure to opportunities and challenges in respect of the border region;
  o Facilitated understanding of issues and opportunities for cooperation;
  o Strengthened capacity to manage change and build cross-border collaboration.
Conference and Technical Workshops:
  - Facilitated international experts;
  - Reinforced cross-border networks;
  - Reinforced the importance of evidence-based planning.

Additional impacts of CroSPlaN:
  - New journal launched by the Joint Secretaries of the NSMC at 2011 Annual Conference in Sligo;
  - Journal offers a way of further dissemination of the work of CroSPlaN and future research on planning and development relating to the Irish border region;
  - Briefing papers relate to topical issues on planning in the cross-border region;
  - ICLRD has been involved with and providing guidance to ICBAN spatial planning activities.

The research suggests that CroSPlaN has delivered on its core issues and cross-cutting themes and has resulted in synergies, both within CroSPlaN and with other INICCO projects.
5 Hospital Services Project

5.1 Introduction

This INICCO project – the full title of which is ‘Exploring the Potential for Cross-Border Hospital Services in the Border Region’ – consists of two inter-linked research strands: the role of community involvement in hospital service planning along the border; and modelling hospital service planning on a border region basis. Both projects have been completed.

The latter study, building on two previous reports by CCBS, Removing the Barriers: an Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Co-operation in Hospital Services in Ireland (2007) and Surveying the Sickbeds: initial steps towards modelling all-island hospital accessibility (2008), aimed to examine the number, size, composition and possible locations of hospitals that would be required in the future if the planning of acute hospital services in the border region was on the basis of population needs rather than jurisdicational frontiers. Its purpose is to provide a ‘prototype’ model of cross-border health service accessibility driven by geographical considerations around the distribution of patients (potential need and demand), the configuration of hospitals North and South (along the border) (potential supply based on bed numbers and specialties) and the transport network (modelling of accessibility based on travel time).

Horwath Bastow Charleton (‘HBC’) was appointed by the Centre in November 2009, to undertake the development of the prototype modelling tool for hospital planning on a border region and all-island basis. The overall aim of the project was to ‘identify how cross-border hospital services can provide mutual benefits for the people of the border region’. The key focus was to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region by exploring the potential for cross-border hospital services in the Irish border region. The project team emphasised the need to take into account the context of the changing picture within health services, in particular the shift from the traditional image of acute hospitals towards the delivery of many services at or near the patient’s home, alongside the pattern of centralising complex care in fewer locations in order to safeguard patient safety and improve outcomes. In light of these considerations, this study focused on developing a methodology for modelling and examining acute healthcare services on a cross-border and all-island basis, without being limited to considering only hospital locations.

The final report was launched at the Europa Hotel in Belfast on 15 December by Tom Daly, Director General of the cross-border health authorities’ network Cooperation and Working Together (‘CAWT’), which was timely in that it coincided with the Compton Review of NI Health and Social Services and the findings of the HBC Report fed into this review. Feeding into the report was a conference hosted by the Centre in Dundalk in May 2011 titled ‘Emerging Findings Conference: Exploring the Potential for Cross-Border Hospital Services in the Irish Border Region – A Prototype Modelling Tool for Planning Hospital Services on a Cross-Border Basis’. This well-attended conference, at which two members of the Indecon team were present, included a presentation by Shane McQuillan and Vanya Sargent of HBC, together with Dr David Wellbourn of Matrix Knowledge Group (London) (part of the HBC team commissioned by the Centre to work on the prototype hospital modelling tool), who presented the then key research findings of the prototype modelling tool, and the feedback received, including constructive feedback from the Director of the Centre (Andy Pollak), was used to complete the final report. The final research report and the accompanying Excel data tool are available to download from the Centre’s website www.crossborder.ie.
The first strand of the Hospital Services project is based on consultations with community organisations, health service users and health professionals in the border region. It examines the role of community involvement in decisions regarding the re-configuration of local hospital services in the Irish border region and provides proposals relevant to the future planning of hospital services in the border region that reflect patient needs. The final report of the study was launched at the Hospital Services Seminar (Emerging Findings) on 14 October 2010, at which a senior member of the Indecon team was present. In finalising the report, the Centre team, led by the Deputy Director (Research), received positive and helpful feedback from the Hospital Services Advisory Group to produce a report that is available on the Centre’s website.

5.2 Inputs

Like the other INICCO projects, central to the functioning of the Hospital Services INICCO project is its high-level steering group, in this case known as the Hospital Services Advisory Group. The membership of this group includes representatives from the IPH (also the Chair of the group), the Health Research Board (Dublin), the Patient and Client Council (NI); the Irish Patients Association (Dublin), the National Women’s Council of Ireland (island of Ireland), the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Dublin), the Department of Foreign Affairs (Dublin) (in an observer capacity), an academic specialist from the University of Warwick in the UK together with the Director and Deputy Director (Research) of the Centre. The Director General of CAWT (Tom Daly), also a senior member of the Health Services Executive (HSE) is a member of the Advisory Group. This link between the project/Centre and CAWT has been important for both Hospital Services projects and will be important in the context of the Compton Review (into which the prototype hospital modelling tool has fed) in NI.

The Advisory Group provided the Centre with the opportunity to benefit in a unique and structured way with island-wide experts in what is a particularly complex and sensitive area. The experts’ participation in the Advisory Group meetings also provided opportunities for cross-border and cross-sectoral relationships to be established/developed between the individuals and agencies.

5.3 Activities, Outputs and Results

5.3.1 Introduction

From an evaluation perspective, the activities, outputs and results of the Hospital Services INICCO project may be considered together as the ‘products’ of the project and have comprised two research reports.

5.3.2 Community Involvement Strand

Work on the community involvement or ‘participation strand’ of the Hospital Services project, which was led by the Deputy Director (Research) of the Centre (Ruth Taillon), commenced in September 2009 with a preliminary round of informal interviews with selected individuals. These conversations informed the production of a detailed research plan that elaborated on how the research objectives in the project inception document would be put into practice. A master list of individuals and organisations to be consulted was then compiled and a scoping exercise of key policy and other relevant documents undertaken.
The research work in the community involvement strand involved two phases – a desk-based review of relevant research and the policy context, and secondly a fieldwork phase where Ruth Taillon conducted detailed face-to-face consultations and focus groups with various relevant stakeholders in the provision of acute hospital care services in the border region. Those consulted included voluntary health campaign/action groups, and the extensive list of those consulted is provided in the final report available at the Centre’s website.4

The research review phase of the paper included the following elements: a detailed review of the legislative and policy context in each part of the border; an outline of the composition, roles and responsibilities of the new health and social care structures; a usefully produced ‘typology’ of public and service user involvement; and identification of the key policy reports that have influenced, and the practical reconfiguration decisions (‘critical incidents’), that have been taken about planning of hospital facilities and services in the context of the reform programmes North and South.

Both aspects of the community involvement strand were carried out during late 2009 and early 2010. In May 2010, a draft final report of the research paper was circulated among the members of the Hospital Services Advisory Group for comment and feedback. Among the suggested changes was to bring out more the fact that the conclusions and recommendations were based on new primary research data. Other suggested changes from the Hospital Services Advisory Group included sharpening the recommendation of the report, all of which were taken on board in the production of the final report.

The final report of the community involvement strand was launched at the Hospital Services Seminar (Emerging Findings) on 14 October 2010, attended by 40 people including members of the Centre, the Hospital Services Advisory Group and a representative of the Indecon team and the new report was positively received. According to the representative from the NI Patient and Client Council,5 who formally launched the report (Sean Brown, Head of Development and Corporate Services):6

“The proposals coming from the research are clear and give an opportunity to make a difference for individuals and communities in some very specific situations. Acting on the proposals though will demonstrate that efficient services will result from genuine engagement. We need to challenge how we view things and how we do things. For the health service, this view will come from the patients, service users and communities surrounding and using it.”

Hard copies of the executive summary of the final report are available from the CCBS/Centre office and electronic versions of the full report and executive summary are available on the Centre’s website. The impacts of the report are considered blow.

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5 This organisation was formed in 2009 to provide a voice for people in NI on health and social care issues. The person who formally launched the report is a member of the Hospital Services Advisory Group.

5.3.3 Hospital Modelling Strand

The key research findings of the study were presented at a well-attended (62 people) Hospital Services Emerging Findings Conference in Dundalk in May 2012, at which two members of the Indecon team were present. The final report by HBC was formally launched at the meeting of the North South Research Forum in Belfast in December 2011, which coincided with the publication of the Compton Review that included recommendations about cross-border sharing of health services similar to those recommended in the CCBS report.

The report is structured in four parts:

- Part I, which includes setting the context, consideration of CAWT’s role and potential obstacles to cross-border cooperation in acute hospital services;

- Part II comprises the modelling framework and outlines the potential in respect of ‘exemplar’ hospital services, namely orthopaedic surgery, otolaryngology (ENT or ear nose and throat), paediatric cardiac surgery, cystic fibrosis and acute mental health services (the prototype modelling tool, in the form of an Excel spreadsheet model, is applied consistently across these exemplar services and comprises consideration of benefits, barriers, champions, select benchmarks and choice of model, finishing with lessons for the prototype tool at the end of each service);

- Part III sets out the ‘vision’ for 2030; and

- Part IV considers the planning methodology and opportunities in respect of the new south west acute hospital in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh.

In addition, the report contains a list of the persons consulted during the research, previous work in the area of cross-border health collaboration and a detailed examination of potential barriers and inhibitors. It also contains a data appendix with illustrative workings of the tool.

The HBC report comments on changes to the terms of reference during the study period. The shift in the focus of the study (from the original terms of reference, which may in hindsight have been overly ambitious in terms of what the study could deliver in practice) was necessitated by the need to take into account the context of the changing picture within health services, in particular the shift from the traditional image of acute hospitals towards the delivery of many services at or near the patient’s home, alongside the pattern of centralising complex care in fewer locations in order to safeguard patient safety and improve outcomes (what an acute hospital looked like ten years ago is different from its current set-up, and that will be radically different again into the future).

It was also felt that this project should be as relevant and practical as possible, and takes into account the current hospital configuration, the plans, if any, for changes to that already in train, and the likelihood of new investment in acute facilities and services. Whilst a ‘blue skies’ approach can be useful in suggesting new ways of considering how communities’ needs can best be met by health services, it can run the risk of being dismissed as aspirational.

In light of these considerations, the study focused on developing a methodology for modelling and examining acute healthcare services on a cross-border and all-island basis, without being limited to considering only hospital locations. As stated in the report (p. 2):

“It should be noted that whilst the original terms of reference refer to the development of a “modelling tool”, and indeed as part of the overall process we include an Excel-based data modelling tool that can be used in some instances to facilitate some quantitative analysis, what we have developed is a holistic modelling methodology, designed to bring the user through the process of examining and making decisions about the feasibility and shape of proposed cross-border healthcare services.”
In regard to timing, the original methodology envisaged a four-month period of consultation with key stakeholders across the health and social care systems in NI and RoI, commencing in December 2009 and finishing in March 2010. This was intended to lead to a period of analysis and examination of the main strategic imperatives, with an interim report being issued in June 2010.

In practice, however, and as outlined in the final report by HBC, the consultation period took much longer than originally anticipated, due to the need to consult a significant number of senior executives within the relevant organisations, and issues involved with engagement with government officials. As a result, the original four-month consultation period – which included the Christmas and New Year break in 2009/2010 – took considerably longer to bring to a conclusion.

The interim report was submitted in October 2010 and this document dealt mainly with the potential barriers to establishing cross-border acute services, and provided some early discussion of exemplar projects which had tackled these barriers across the two jurisdictions. An extension of the date for submission of the draft final report was agreed to August 2011, a target which was achieved. The draft final report was a second iteration of the main document and reflected discussions with the Centre held in late August 2011. The draft final report was subsequently considered by the Hospital Services Advisory Group in September 2011.

“Given the similarity of the challenges being faced, and of the service configuration approaches which have been independently recommended in the two jurisdictions, perhaps there is now an ideal opportunity to consider whether such approaches might best be achieved on a cross-border basis, thereby providing better access to care for people within border communities, and offering enhanced economies of scale to the NI and RoI exchequers” (p. 14).

“CAWT’s considerable body of experience and accomplishments lead us to believe that with the strategic direction of the CAWT partner organisations, it should remain the central partnership for the promotion, development, and implementation of cross-border health and social care, including acute hospital services, in the NI/RoI border region” (p. 20).

“The data modelling tool is an Excel-based model using in this instance (to illustrate how such tools can be used) activity data, benchmark data from another country, and bed utilisation figures to generate some expected resource requirements in terms of beds for a project to address the needs of the population. This is used for the orthopaedic and ENT surgery exemplar services and is discussed in detail in Part IV. As mentioned in that section, this Excel tool is considered to be a small subset of the inputs required to build a model for a cross-border service and is not intended to be a stand-alone modelling tool...It must be stressed that the aim is not to produce a mechanism by which one can take data and use the modelling process to generate an answer. This is a decision-making aide that aims to ensure that the relevant questions are asked, the relevant information is gathered, and that different aspects of service design can be examined. It is designed to be flexible for different service areas and is intended as a holistic toolkit to be used alongside judgement and critical thinking. The data modelling tool is one aspect of the overall modelling framework and is not the single key element in what should be a wider approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative aspects” (p. 32).

“Whilst the Excel data modelling tool is a useful aide to the overall modelling process, we emphasise that this does not constitute the modelling methodology in itself and consider it a relatively small component of the wider framework. We have used it in two of the exemplar service areas, i.e. orthopaedic surgery and ENT, where data modelling was a useful aspect of the methodology to inform the overall decision-assisting process. It is not intended to be used in isolation as the quantitative aspects of the modelling of cross-border services cannot be considered separately to the qualitative in a holistic fashion...It should also be noted that this tool has been built to examine bed requirements purely as an example and it can be adapted and modified to look at other key data elements for different service areas using the same principles. For example, it could be adapted to examine the
impact of new cross-border services on theatre session requirements or staffing, if the relevant current and target metrics were known” (pp. 110-111).

“[S]ignificant work has been done to enhance cross-border collaboration in health service delivery in recent years, much of it facilitated through CAWT and local health agencies in NI and RoI. Clear benefits have been achieved, particularly in providing access to services for communities within the border region, much of it on a South-to-North basis. In most instances where such initiatives have been pursued, funding has been time-limited and services have not been mainstreamed, although it would appear that the provision of radiotherapy services at Altnagelvin Hospital for patients within Donegal and adjoining areas of RoI will shortly commence on a permanent basis” (p. 120).

“Against this backdrop, our preliminary conclusion is that there is likely to be reasonably significant scope for further development of acute hospital and other health care services on a cross-border basis. Given recent progress and the cohesion achieved across the various agencies in NI and RoI, we would expect such development work to be taken forward by CAWT, an approach which we would strongly endorse” (p. 120).”

The main findings of the HBC report are summarised as follows:

- Whilst there are significant barriers in the development of cross-border acute healthcare services, the report suggests that these are surmountable (however, legislative, administrative, and cultural changes are required for long-term solutions to such obstacles to facilitate wide-scale progress);
- It is suggested that CAWT represents the most appropriate structure for the development and management of future cross-border health and social care initiatives, including those in the acute sector;
- Community involvement is seen as a crucial aspect in the planning of new and reformed acute hospital services in the border regions, as outlined in the report from the first strand of the Hospital Services project described earlier;
- The new South West Acute Hospital (in Enniskillen) is believed to present an opportunity in respect of service provision on a cross-border basis – it was further suggested that particular opportunities may arise in areas such as day-case surgical procedures in orthopaedics, serving patients not just in Fermanagh and Tyrone but also in the surrounding cross-border areas (however, the report states that further research is merited into the potential for the new South West Acute Hospital to serve a cross-border catchment area); and
- The report recommends that future development of cross-border acute healthcare services should aim to generate a two-way flow of patients across the border, rather than a one-sided approach providing services largely in one jurisdiction to be accessed by patients from the other.

The Hospital Modelling report was launched at the North South Research Forum in December 2011 at which a member of our consultancy team was present. The keynote speaker at this event was Dean Sullivan, Director of Planning and Performance at the NI Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.
5.4 Impacts

5.4.1 Community Involvement Strand

The Indecon team has assembled the evidence of the impact of the community involvement strand of the Hospital Services INICCO project (the final report of which was formally launched and well-received at the emerging findings seminar on 14 October 2010 in Dundalk). As part of our research we utilised an Indecon online consultation process with attendees at the INICCO Hospital Services Study Day and also independently examined the report in detail. This was in addition to our wider stakeholders consultations.

The Hospital Services Study Day outlined the draft findings and recommendations of the role of community involvement strand and provided the opportunity to hear work in progress in respect of the hospital modelling strand being carried out by HBC. The audience was small, at less than 10, but represented a diverse group of stakeholders in hospital/health services on the island, including clinic staff, administrators and local representatives with a particular interest in the cross-border dimension.

Following the Study Day, and as agreed with the Centre, the Indecon team designed an online consultation exercise aimed at obtaining external attendees’ views on the draft findings and recommendations of the INICCO research on the role of community involvement in planning hospital services in the cross-border region and on the Study Day as a whole. While only seven responses were received, the findings are consistent with other evidence and Indecon’s own assessment:

- The Study Day was viewed as successful in terms of its relevance and usefulness and that the draft findings and recommendations of the community involvement strands received positively.
- The first strand of the Hospital Services INICCO project raised a number of important issues in respect of inclusion of patients groups getting access to acute hospital services in the border region, including CF treatment and radiography services. There are also potential lessons and synergies for the second strand of the Hospital Services project arising from the first strand, including the areas of CF and mental health services in the border area.
- The report provides new evidence on the potential importance of the cross-border dimension to planning hospital services in the border region.

There was also agreement among the attendees at the Study Day that the draft community involvement paper provided new insights and evidence and practical recommendations:

- The research was seen as having the potential to be recognised by policy makers, planners, health professionals and by the wider community as contributing to more effective participation in decision making by local communities in planning hospital services in the border region. Realising this potential will however in our view be an on-going challenge;
- Provides insights into the issues and problems encountered by community groups in relation to planning hospital services in the border region (e.g. lack of information);
- Provides new evidence on the potential importance of the cross-border dimension to planning hospital services in the border region (e.g. enhanced cross-border cooperation in certain areas of health services);
- Provides new case-study evidence into how community groups can influence the planning of hospital services in the border region;
- Provides practical recommendations relating to the promotion of patient needs in planning hospital services in the border region;
- Provides practical recommendations that may ameliorate the tendency for community groups to be disillusioned with planning hospital services in the border region.
- Most attendees agreed that the Study Day provided a useful opportunity to gain new information and to exchange information on the role of community involvement in planning hospital services in the border region.
- Study Day provided useful discussion and feedback that will help to enhance the quality of the research on community involvement in planning hospital services in the border region.
- Study Day helped to raise awareness of the Centre for Cross-Border Studies.
- Study Day raised awareness of the overall INICCO research initiative being led by the Centre for Cross-Border Studies.
- Study Day enhanced the reputation of the Centre for Cross-Border Studies as an authoritative research and information agency on cross-border issues on the island of Ireland.

The table below presents some of opinions of Study Day attendees who offered suggestions for future events of this type; most importantly, the need to give more time for focussed inputs by participants.

| Table 5.1: Views of Attendees at the INICCO Hospital Services Study Hosted by the Centre for Cross-Border Studies (April 2010) – Qualitative (Open-Ended) Views |
|---|---|
| The day was right in terms of length as people had to travel and had other commitments, however not enough attention was paid to the participation strand of the project and the initial findings of that research. Much more was included in the day, and the Participation strand was left to last. |
| Specific questions should have been devised for participants to address, as the discussion involved rambling inputs not directly related to the task in hand i.e. community participation. |
| HBC presentation very good but should have been shortened and directed at connection between it and the participation strand. |
| Good range of participants but light on border communities |
| Format needs to facilitate more discussion by attendees. |
| Research needs to focus on the environmental factors that influence decisions including political considerations. |
| Research needs to focus on innovative delivery models capable of supporting convergence on standards and funding methodologies. |
| Research needs to explore the views of the key clinical managers and service managers from Carlingford to the Foyle and at the highest levels in Belfast and Dublin. |
| The format probably needed to be extended to allow a little more time for discussion. Otherwise it was an excellent opportunity to meet individuals representing many facets of services North and South. The work of the CCBS only really came to the attention of this service through the Hospital Services Research Project which suggests a need to publicise its activity to a greater extent. |
| Excellent presentations. |
| Mental health requires more attention. |
| Communications and engagement strategy needs more clarity - it is insufficient just to say leave it to the politicians who can be influenced by uninformed or vested interests. |

Source: Indecon Consultation Feedback from Attendees at INICCO Hospital Services Study Day, Carrickdale Hotel, Co. Louth, 20 April 2010.

Note: There were 5 responses to this question.
5.4.2 Hospital Prototype Modelling Toolkit

Given that the final report from HBC was published relatively recently, in December 2011, it is too early at this stage to be definitive regarding the impacts of this strand of the Hospital Services project, although we believe that the new information contained in the report will be of use to health planners and professionals in the future.

We consider that the report:

- provides a framework for considering cross-border cooperation that can be applied across different areas of acute hospital services;
- provides an indication of the ‘journey’ that needs to be taken in respect of the exemplar services;
- emphasises CAWT as the relevant body to take forward cross-border cooperation in hospital services;
- has facilitated a strengthening of the relationship between the Centre and CAWT;
- raises international profile – referred to positively at the Mental Health Day run by the Mental Health Commission in October 2011 and submitted to the NI Compton Review on Health and Social Services; and
- Might also be scope for impact with the medical profession regulatory bodies North and South (to help address barriers to greater integration, which would otherwise benefit patients).

Indecon’s consultation with stakeholders confirms some of the research report’s key findings:

- There are significant potential savings from better cross-border cooperation on hospital services, so there is a great incentive to find solutions, and the hospital services prototype modelling tool provides an invaluable resource in this respect;
- However, the very complexity of, and disparity between, the two health services provides an enormous challenge in finding areas of common ground where co-operation can take place; but, as HBC point out in the report, these are not insurmountable.
- The absence of an agreed strategic framework for cross-border co-operation in health has been one of the most important barriers to practical cooperation – although now that the long delayed report on potential areas of cross-border cooperation has recently been published by the two Departments of Health, new opportunities may open.

Following the Hospital Services Emerging Findings Conference (Dundalk) in May 2012, we received feedback from a number of persons who attended this major event. These people gave views regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the modelling framework at that time:

- Strengths:
  - Methodology that can be used across disciplines within acute hospital services;
  - Provides a structure, with consideration of both broad and specific issues;
  - The framework might have impact through teaching on medical courses to make new practitioners more aware of the opportunities from cross-border collaboration.
Weaknesses:

- Not what was initially envisaged and the ambitious initial terms of reference had to be revised;
- Did not meet expectations (which may have been overly ambitious in hindsight).

5.5 Core Issues

5.5.1 List of Core Issues

The core evaluation issues are:

- Rationale;
- Relevance;
- Efficiency;
- Utility and effectiveness;
- Sustainability.

5.5.2 Evidence on Core Issues

In relation to rationale and relevance, we consider that both strands of the Hospital Services Project meet both have a rationale and relevance given the importance of acute hospital services along the border region, which is recognised by the wider policy content and in the work of CAWT.

In relation to the other core issues, the community involvement strand was completely in a very timely manner and benefited from significant inputs from the Hospital Services Advisory Group. The Advisory Group also provided significant inputs into the prototype modelling tool, which shifted direction and took longer to complete than originally envisaged, partly due to difficulties in arranging consultations with key health officials and partly because the originally terms of reference may have been too ambitious in hindsight.

5.6 Cross-Cutting Themes

5.6.1 List of Cross-Cutting Themes

The horizontal or cross-cutting themes common to all INICCO projects are:

- Equality;
- Sustainable development;
- Poverty;
- Partnership.
5.6.2 Evidence on Cross-Cutting Themes

Our analysis suggests that community involvement research addresses the equality/poverty and sustainable development themes. A benefit of the work was the relationships enhanced by members of the Advisory Group including CAWT. Also of value was the partnership with IPH e.g. their expertise on Health Impact Assessment contributing to PIAT and Jane Wilde’s participation in CCBS Board. The Study Day (April 2010) served to promote cross-border partnership and enhanced the reputation of the Centre in this respect. Responding to Indecon’s written questions after the event, some of those attending suggested that, the research has the potential to promote greater equality of access to hospital services in the border region, including among the poor and socially disadvantaged.

The research has the potential to facilitate the development of sustainable hospital services in the border region.

Study Day was a useful opportunity to build relationships with colleagues from both jurisdictions.

Study Day enhanced the relationships between the Centre for Cross-Border Studies and external stakeholders (users) of cross-border research on the island of Ireland.

5.7 Synergies

The Study Day (April 2010) and the Emerging Findings Seminar (September 2010) hosted by the Centre brought together both strands of the Hospital Services project with presentations to the project leaders (HBC and the Centre) and external users. Both reports focused on the specialties of cancer and Cystic Fibrosis care. The level of support for cancer care and CF services in the border area reflected in the community involvement research demonstrates the demand for such services to be provided on a cross-border basis.

Mr Tom Daly, of CAWT, a member of the INICCO Hospitals project advisory group, chaired the 12 May 2011 Emerging Findings conference. CAWT made a presentation at the conference and were also involved in the 18 May workshop on Impact Assessment. Mr Daly also chaired the North South Research Forum in December 2011 at which the report on the prototype modelling framework was launched.

Both the April 2010 and December 2011 North South Research Forums were focused on the “Exploring the Potential for Cross Border Hospital Services in the Irish Border Region” research findings.

As noted elsewhere, the HBC report was launched at the December 2011 NS Research Forum.
5.8 Summary

The Hospital Services project has comprised two strands – the role of community involvement in acute hospital care in the border region and the hospital modelling prototype tool. The impacts are summarised as follows:

- **Role of community involvement in acute hospital care in the border region:**
  - Provides insights into the issues and problems encountered by community groups in relation to planning hospital services in the border region (e.g. lack of information);
  - Provides new case-study evidence into how community groups can influence the planning of hospital services in the border region; and
  - The research has the potential to be recognised by policy makers, planners, health professionals and by the wider community as contributing to more effective participation in decision making by local communities in planning hospital services in the border region, including in relation to cystic fibrosis and cancer care.

- **Hospital modelling prototype tool:**
  - Provides a coherent framework for considering cross-border cooperation that can be applied across different areas of acute hospital services;
  - Provides an indication of the ‘journey’ that needs to be taken in respect of the exemplar services;
  - Emphasis on CAWT as the relevant body to take forward cross-border cooperation in hospital services; and
  - Strengthened the relationship between CAWT and the Centre.

Both projects are consistent with the objectives of the **core issues** and **cross-cutting themes**. There have also been **synergies** among the two strands and there are potential synergies to come between this and the Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation.
6 Border Economy Project

6.1 Introduction

The original aim of the border economy project, which includes four inter-related research projects, as set out in the application to INTERREG, was to find ways of understanding and increasing the accessibility, size, transparency, competitiveness and profitability of Irish border region markets in a context where peace and normality have finally arrived in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The original title of the project was ‘Normal Business Restored: Reviving the Border Region Economy in a New Era of Devolved Government’. A further element of an international economic recession has been added since the application was first written in 2007. This project – in which the Centre is partnered by InterTradeIreland – began in autumn 2009. The constituent research projects are as follows:

- **Peripherality: help or hindrance?** – exploring the specific challenges the region faces due to its peripheral location, with an exploration of how it might become less peripheral through new business communication technologies, optimal use of supporting institutions (including higher education institutions) and the experience of more economically advanced border regions elsewhere in Europe;

- **Consumer behaviour in the cross-border region** – looking at how the border region’s retail and wholesale markets might be made more efficient drivers of regional growth (and more robust in the face of currency changes) in the longer-term;

- **Producer behaviour in the cross-border region** – examining how micro-enterprises (with under 10 employees), which are the mainstay of so much economic activity in the region, might be enabled to expand by exploiting increased access to larger cross-border markets on their doorstep (and to learn from the experience of successful ‘niche’ producers in other parts of Ireland and Europe); and

- **Tourism in the cross-border region** – how the region’s tourism ‘product’ (including ‘green tourism’) might dovetail with strategic plans for tourism in Ireland as a whole, and how border towns might learn from ‘good performers’ elsewhere on the island to bring more visitors to the region.

The fourth research topic ‘Tourism in the Cross-Border Region,’ includes a comparative piece on the German-Polish border region.

6.2 Inputs

The Centre was partnered on this project by InterTradeIreland. The research programme was undertaken by economists and researchers from Economic Modelling and Development Systems (Dublin), the University of Massachusetts and the University of Cambridge, and the Wroclaw Regional Development Agency, Poland.

This unprecedented research involved two senior economists, Dr John Bradley and Professor Michael Best, working on the ground in a peripheral, European border region, undertaking detailed research with individual entrepreneurs and managers.
The members of the Border Economy Steering Group, which played an active role in reviewing and commenting on the research, included representatives from Forfás, University of Ulster, the NI Department of Enterprise, Trade & Industry, Invest NI, an independent economic consultant based in NI as well as a senior representative from ITI and the CCBS Director. The Steering Group met on four occasions, namely November 2009, April 2010, November 2010 and May 2011.

The Indecon team noted during 2010 that the Steering Group had a majority of NI members and we made some suggestions for a possible additional (RoI) member. As a result of our suggestions in this regard, an additional RoI-based member was added to the Steering Group.

### 6.3 Activities and Outputs

#### 6.3.1 Research Topic 1: ‘Peripherality: help or hindrance?’

The research team completed its work on the first topic (‘Peripherality: help or hindrance?’) and presented its report to the Border Economy Steering Group in April 2010. The report entitled ‘Normal business restored: reviving the border region economy in a new era of devolved regional government’ examined peripherality as a major factor constraining border region economic development even in the present era of peace, devolved government and wider North-South (island of Ireland) and East-West (UK-Irish as well as UK-Irish-EU) policy co-operation and harmonisation. It also examined the role that the global recession is playing in further exacerbating cross-border development barriers and challenges. Comparison with the situation in the Polish-German border area was provided in order to facilitate the identification and study of ‘generic’ aspects of peripherality in cross-border regions, and to assist in the isolation of any special factors unique to the Irish cross-border situation which may require unique policy initiatives. This research also provided the organising and encompassing framework for the whole Border Region Economy research project.

The researchers drew the following broad conclusions from the first research topic:

- The weakness of regional development policy in both NI and the RoI has left the border area “stranded”;  
- The major infrastructural improvements have eased Belfast-Dublin communication on the East Coast “Corridor”, but have not changed much else;  
- The outward orientation of RoI FDI at the national level to global markets has resulted in a skewed N-S trade pattern (few “modern” but more “traditional” goods);  
- The border policy fault line placed constraints on the evolution of NI manufacturing and has resulted in a continuing British orientation of NI inward investment and export destinations;  
- There is significant support for “island” cross-border activities, but less understanding of the structure of the border region economy and the challenges that it faces due to its peripheral character and rural structure; and  
- The structural characteristics of the less advanced border counties of the RoI derive mainly from their peripherality, low level of urbanization and “missing” hinterland.
6.3.2 Research Topic 2: ‘Consumer behaviour in the cross border region’ and Research Topic 3: ‘Producer behaviour in the cross border region’

The researchers worked on these two topics in parallel. An interim report on both was made to the Steering Group in November 2010 and two detailed Working Papers were presented to the Steering Group in May 2011. Further research was undertaken, particularly on the producer behaviour topic, and the research findings were presented and discussed at a Policy Workshop in September 2011 and then at an Emerging Findings Conference in November 2011.

In the consumer behaviour research, the research team examined both the supply side of border consumer markets and the demand side of cross-border consumption. They sought to address the importance of cross-border shopping to the border region economy and whether it is a serious problem to wider regional development.

The research findings from this topic suggest the following:

- Official data is thin on the ground but it is possible to examine the structure of market service enterprises using the FAME database;
- These data show that the number of “shopping-related” enterprises per unit of population is fairly constant in NI, but is both higher and rises with population density in RoI counties;
- The normal market forces that bring about diversification in the supply of consumer-relates establishments in the RoI may be weaker in NI;
- The generally South to North flow of cross-border shopping is mainly a demand-side phenomenon;
- There have been three main bouts of cross-border shopping in the last three decades:
  - the mid 1980’s, mainly South to North, after RoI joined the ERM and became mired in recession
  - The mid 1990’s, both ways, as the RoI grew fast and the emerging peace in NI
  - After 2008, mainly South to North, with the onset of the current recession and as sterling weakened against the euro.
- Exchange rate differentials are the main driving force of cross-border shopping, with excise and VAT differentials being secondary drivers; These differentials often conceal an underlying competitiveness gap between what are normally “non-internationally traded” activities;
- Dramatic exchange rate and tax shifts can be very disruptive and have undesirable medium term consequences on both sides of the border (the border “trading post” phenomenon); and
- Few of the goods sold in the border region are produced in that region.

The producer behaviour research formed the core element of the research project and the researchers worked from two complementary perspectives. Dr Bradley started at the level of the UK and Ireland economies and worked in to the border region economy. Professor Best started with an understanding of the kinds of individual enterprises operating in the border region and worked outwards to the wider arrangements needed for enterprises to grow and prosper.
Four issues were addressed by the research team:

1. What frameworks can be used to guide us in elaborating regional development strategies?
2. What are the characteristics of the existing enterprise sector in the border region?
3. What can we learn from the individual experiences of specific enterprises?
4. How can we evaluate the “productive potential” of the border region economy?

An analysis of producer characteristics was undertaken using the FAME database, due to limitations on official data for border regions of NI. Three distinct border sub-regions were identified with rather different production characteristics:

1. **NE sub-region** (Down & Louth) - Advanced manufacturing, participating in spill-overs from Dublin and Belfast “poles”;
2. **Mid-border sub-region** (Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim & Fermanagh, Armagh and S-Tyrone) - More “traditional” manufacturing, but traces of pre-partition manufacturing activities; and
3. **NW sub-region** (Donegal, Sligo & Derry, N-Tyrone) - Underdeveloped manufacturing, with Derry not playing a role commensurate with its size.

Two control regions outside the border region – Galway and Mayo – were selected. A number of business case studies were undertaken within these three sub regions, looking both at clusters of related activities amid selected small towns. The cluster analysis suggested the following conclusions:

- **NE Region**: Analysis suggested manufacturing base dominated by FDI. Emerging financial services “cluster” in Newry. High-Tech activities, but this region is dominated by Dublin and Belfast “poles”;
- **NW Region**: Analysis suggested the general absence of cluster development in a context of a weak manufacturing base;
- **Mid-Border region**: Clear identification of “wood processing/furniture”; “food processing”; “light engineering”.

The bottom-up analysis of the enterprise sector in the border region examined six “entrepreneurial firms” across the area to understand better their strategy and aspirations. The traditional furniture cluster in the Monaghan area was also considered in detail and it was concluded that new entrepreneurial firms were emerging from this cluster. New emerging clusters in sustainable built environment and in renewable energy & clean technology were also identified.

The lack of entrepreneurial firms in the border region, compared with the German Mittelstand, was attributed first to the lack of “extra-firm resources”, such as capital goods infrastructure, technology research agency networks and education & skill formation that target engineering and design. It was also suggested that there was a greater need for a subtle coordination of inter-relationships amongst government, industry, and knowledge agencies. The suggested missing factors in industrial policy were identified as follows:

- Strategic analysis of global competitive forces;
- Primary research on Entrepreneurial Firms to identify emerging sub-sectors;
- Alignment of business, government and education spheres (vs. stand-alone);
- Focus on populations of companies as experimental industrial laboratories; and
- Integration of finance and industry.
The overall conclusions of this research topic have been summarised as follows:

- The border region faces more threats and suffers from more internal structural and organizational weaknesses than it enjoys by way of opportunities and internal strengths;
- Spatial development strategy for this region has been minimal;
- It is essential to reconcile “top down” national strategies with the “bottom up” desire of regional authorities and local communities to have a greater say in determining their destinies; and
- The revitalization of the border region is essential both for itself and if the wider island economy is to achieve its potential.

6.3.3 Research Topic 4: ‘Tourism in the cross-border region’

The research for this topic included a review of a study of the outcome of the new arrangements for North South cooperation on tourism following the Belfast Agreement, an examination of how tourism has evolved on the Polish-German border, an overview of the current state of the tourism industry both north and south and how the island is being established as a jointly marketed destination.

Drawing on an evaluation carried out by other researchers in 2006, it is reported that, because of the different structure of the tourist market on both sides of the border, any claims that the sector is ready-made for deeper cross-border cooperation should be treated with caution, despite the intuitive appeal of this position. The evaluation study concludes that cross-border cooperation had increased since the signing of the Belfast Agreement but that this had not led to any radical change to the business or institutional dynamics of the sector on either side of the border.

The researchers have then looked at the current situation and conclude that the tourism industries on both sides of the border face common challenges in marketing the island and securing new large-scale investment. They also comment on the constraints within which Tourism Ireland operates and note that neither region features seriously in the strategic thinking of the other, except in terms of a source of demand for services.

6.3.4 Policy Workshop (September 2011)

A Border Region Economic Policy Workshop was held in InterTradeIreland offices in September 2011 to discuss the research findings. At this the research team presented to a group including representatives from Invest NI, Forfás, InterTradeIreland, Louth Economic Forum, Newry & Mourne Borough Council, ESRI and CCBS.

The researchers made a verbal presentation of their research findings under the following headings (a copy of the latest draft of their report on ‘Producer Behaviour in the Border Region’ was circulated in advance):

[1] Essential structural economic data for policy: Why macro-regional (RoI) and sub-regional (NI) data are needed. What do you lose if – as in Northern Ireland – there are none?

The research team described the difficulties they had encountered in obtaining data at sub-regional level for the border region on both sides but especially NI. It was argued that without this data it is difficult to understand how the economy is functioning.
[2] Why do we need a decent company-level database? What the FAME database offered and where FAME is weak. What can be done? And why must we do it?

The study accessed the FAME database which comes from a group of researchers in Cambridge and is in sufficient detail to allow them to observe some patterns of production in the border area – clusters of furniture/wood products, food processing. FAME has certain weaknesses for example not 100% coverage, lack of postal codes in South, existence of multiproduct firms.

[3] Beyond conventional (SIC/NACE) sectoral classification systems: Why clusters based on conventional sector disaggregation don’t tell the whole story and often mislead policy makers.

A problem is that SIC/NACE puts firms in certain categories but does not examine connections between them. These connections are seen as often more important than those between firms within a sector. There has been a lot of difficulty in developing cooperation programmes for furniture firms. The study suggests that policymakers and industrial development agencies should look at these other connections.

[4] Why do you need to knock on the door of individual firms and listen to their stories? What does it teach you?

This was led by Michael Best who has experience of studying small firms at micro level. These small firms in border region are highly innovative but are resistant to the agencies pushing innovation on to them in the way they do. Some of these firms were seen as old fashioned in the way they do things. It was suggested that the lessons are not captured in the official way of looking at firms. It requires a more open-minded approach.

[5] What did we learn during our research about the current strategy of the development agencies, North and South, for indigenous manufacturing and services?

The research suggests that there have been good initiatives at national level and some good efforts at local level e.g. Dundalk/Louth Economic Forum. However the researchers believe there are problems with the County Development Plans as they are primarily planning documents.

In NI the study had difficulty in identifying sub-regional initiatives, except what Councils do on a small scale. The study suggests there is a huge gulf in focus between attracting FDI and growing indigenous firms.

[6] What gaps did we find in the strategy of the development agencies, North and South?

Their study suggested that was that there is a lack of a sectoral focus and that sectoral analysis is not sufficiently integrated with overall strategies. Examples of issues raised were where there are linkages between FDI firms and indigenous firms.
Given the need for better understanding of the border region economy (as identified in the study), how can the development agencies, North and South, better assist indigenous firms — and particularly indigenous manufacturing firms — in the region?

The research team argued that there is in general a lack of analysis and understanding of the process of dynamic change at firm level. All the firms they visited in the border region are deeply networked and the challenge is how to scale up these networks and this innovative activity.

The debate covered a number of issues:

- How do we find and develop more of these good small firms.
- The study suggests there is a lack of focus in NI in the sub regions, or in the border region.
- The research suggests that there should be a different approach to the border region.
- The research suggests that any new policy for the border region needs to embrace tourism.

### 6.3.5 Statistical Data issues

The researchers experienced significant challenges during their work on Topic 1 and also on Topic 3 with accessing statistical data on businesses located in the border region, particularly of Northern Ireland. The problems revolved around the fact that in Northern Ireland the source of official statistics on numbers of firms by sector at District Council level comes from the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) which is a sample survey of 5,000 firms and when this is disaggregated by Council and sector the numbers are too small to be useful for sub-regional data analysis. In Ireland, the Census of Production has, at least until recently provided Census data on all firms employing more than three persons.

The ABI sample approach is adopted across all the UK regions but the researchers indicated that they were able to obtain access to more detailed data on firms at sub-regional level in Scotland than they were in Northern Ireland, even though it was also sample based. The researchers utilised the FAME database, of UK firms maintained by the Judge Institute at Cambridge.

In order to address the issue for future research in this area, the researchers wrote to the NI Statistics Advisory Committee, which discussed the issue at its September 2011 meeting. NISRA statisticians presented a paper on options for improving sub-regional estimation from the NI Annual Business Inquiry (NI ABI) to the Committee. The paper noted that, in order to facilitate users, NISRA now produces sub-regional estimates, including District Council estimates which can be aggregated to provide data for the border region with associated confidence intervals, thereby enabling users to decide if they are fit for their specific purposes. However, some of these intervals are still very wide as the sample sizes are quite small when disaggregated by industrial sector.

The ABI sample for Northern Ireland of around 5,000 businesses per year is designed to provide specified levels of precision for each industry sector. The NI ABI samples almost 10% of the eligible business population which is much higher than for Great Britain (3.4%) and the Scottish sample, which is only slightly larger numerically than the NI sample and represents only 6.4% of the business population of Scotland. NISRA understands that the NI and Scottish samples are approximately the same size for the manufacturing sector.
In contrast, the CSO surveys all manufacturing businesses in Ireland employing 3 or more persons in the Census of Production, which is the nearest equivalent to the ABI. In Northern Ireland the ABI includes a census of all multi-site businesses with more than 20 employees and all single site businesses with more than 50 employees but samples firms employing less than 50.

Nevertheless, in view of the interest of users in improving the data, a range of options has been considered for boosting the sample in the NI ABI from 5,000 businesses to 8,000 businesses, either on a yearly or triennial basis, with the choice of precision by industry or geography. Inevitably there are additional costs for both business and government of increasing the sample size in this way. NISRA has now decided to increase the sample size to 8,000 firms which should improve the availability and level of confidence of statistics at sub-regional level and this has been recorded as an impact.

6.3.6 Emerging Findings Conference (November 2011)

The results of the research were presented to a wider audience of more than 110 delegates at an Emerging Findings Conference in Cavan on 17-18 November 2011. In addition to presentations by the research team, the conference also heard presentations from the three of the entrepreneurs who participated as case studies in the research. These presentations were well received. Other sessions included: ‘Other regions and borders, other challenges’ with presentations from Eastern Germany and the Highlands & Islands of Scotland; ‘The border region economy: a view from local government’; and ‘Rethinking approaches to the border economy’.

In the final session of the conference, Mr Padraic White, Chair of Louth Economic Forum, presented a paper on ‘The border region economy – a way forward’. Building on the findings of the research, he proposed the establishment of a ‘Border Development Zone’ involving County Councils and District Councils along the border. The zone is estimated to have a population of around 1 million people. Recognising that immediately adjoining border areas have common economic threats but have a strong common interest in maximising their joint strengths, it was suggested in that presentation that County & District Councils along this Border Development Zone can drive economic development by co-operation and sharing successful ideas. A strategy for the Zone might incorporate some of the following elements:

- Current bilateral networks /initiatives would form a basis for a Strategic Plan along entire Border zone
- Financial support could be sought from EU sources
- Technical support to be provided by ICLRD & Centre for Cross Border Studies
- Focus of Strategic Plan should be on four growth areas:
  1. SME enterprise with export potential
  2. Tourism & leisure
  3. Agriculture, Food & Fish
  4. Low Carbon initiatives and renewable energy.
6.4 Results

Working Papers were circulated to the Steering Group on each of the first three research topics under the general heading ‘Normal Business Restored: Reviving the border region economy in a new era of devolved government’;

- Topic 1: ‘Peripherality: help or hindrance?’, April 2010

The final report of the Border Economy project launched on 30 March 2012 reflects the expansion of the research from the original terms of reference and the four topics set out as the focus of the research. The title of the report – Cross-Border Economic Renewal: Rethinking Regional Policy in Ireland – likewise reflects both the changing economic and political environment in which the research was conducted and the final conclusions and recommendations arising from the research. The final report is divided into five sections: Chapter 1 reflects on the relationship between history and economics on a “Divided and divisive island” and sets out the researchers’ “logic of analysis”. Part I: “The Past”, contains two chapters; one on “The origins of Ireland’s two economies: 1750-1960” and one on “Economic consequences of the Troubles: 1968-1994”. Part II, “The Present” sets out the political and policy contexts with chapters entitled “The Belfast Agreement and the island economy”; “Development strategy frameworks: what do they tell us?”; “The Border: national and international context”; “The island economy context for the border region”; and “Stranded? The border region economy”. Part III. “Inside the Border Economy”, contains the researchers’ findings on the three key economic sectors: “The cross-border shopping phenomenon”; “Producing in the border region economy”; and “Tourism and the border”. In Part IV, “The Future” the report concludes with a final chapter considering the need for and recommending “A new approach: the Border Development Zone”.

A summary of the research findings of the Border Economy project was published in The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland (2011), resulting in significant media coverage and interest from policymakers and others. This dovetailed with other initiatives in the border region (in response to the economic crisis), such as the establishment of a new LinkedIn discussion group on the border counties by Clones-based solicitor Brian Morgan, who has also contributed to User Groups within the Border People project.

At the Border Region Economic Policy Workshop in September 2011, the research findings were discussed with policy-makers from both North and South and this was followed up by the Emerging Findings Conference in Cavan (November 2011).

The completed research projects combined to form the final report of the project. This was launched in Dublin on 30 March 2012 under the title ‘Cross-Border Economic Renewal: Rethinking Regional Policy in Ireland’. A second article based on the conclusions of this report was published in the 2012 edition of The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland.

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7 The title of the project’s Emerging Findings Conference in November 2011 was ‘Reviving the Border Region in a time of Peace, Devolved Government and International Recession’ to reflect the most recent context.
6.5 Impacts

With regard to the impacts of the Border Economy project, we consider that it has resulted in a better and deeper understanding of:

- The three distinct border sub-regions of the border region and their different producer characteristics;
- The identification of clusters of activities within these sub-regions;
- The behaviour of firms located in these areas and their views of the border; and
- Suggested policy implications of these findings.

The study has also contributed to highlighting data gaps studying small firms in the border region, in particular the paucity of sub-regional economic data in NI. As a result the NI Statistics & Research Agency issued a consultation paper on the possibility of boosting the Annual Business Inquiry sample in NI from 5,000 to possibly 8,000 businesses either annually or triennially. A new sample size of 8,000 firms has now been agreed.

The publication of interim results in *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland* (2011) took place in March 2011. This article prompted an invitation to Dr Bradley to participate in an event organised by the Joint Business Council of IBEC and CBI(NI), held in Derry on April 14th 2011. The presentation (entitled “EU Regional Policy and Competitive Cross-Border regions”) drew on the Topics 2 and 3 research findings that pointed to the development challenges that face the border region and specifically, the serious challenges faced by the NW region of the cross-border area.

The research has also attracted interest from other groups – for example, the presentation by Professor Bradley at a Sinn Fein conferences in Dublin (June 2011) of a paper entitled “The Irish Business Sector: Its Role in Building an All Island Economy.” This was part of a panel discussion on the island economy which included contributions from Mr Liam Nellis (CEO of InterTradeIreland) and Dr Pádraic White. Similarly, Dr Bradley was also a speaker at a Sinn Fein conference in Newry in November 2011.

A key potential future impact of this project is the extent to which it affects policy and influences policymakers in relation to the border region. We have discussed possible indicators of these impacts with the researchers, who have made a number of points about the link between this research project and the potential policy impacts including the following:

- The research is looking at the underlying structure of the economy of the border region and this research needs to inform any policy considerations;
- Any policy decisions need to be rooted in a comprehensive understanding of what is happening in the border region and the constraints to development;
- The question of how development can be promoted in this peripheral region, at a time when the entire economy of the island is suffering very significant economic difficulties, needs very careful consideration; and
- Any policy solutions should take account of the structure of the border economy, towards advice that blends a top-down view of the region with a micro or enterprise-centred bottom-up view.

The emerging findings were discussed at both the Policy Workshop in September 2011 by a number of individuals involved in policy development and at the Emerging Findings Conference in November 2011. In general the findings generated debate.
We have received some informal feedback from external stakeholders on this project and the following observations have been made to us:

- The research being undertaken is valuable in terms of understanding what the important issues are in the border region;
- The research is detailed but some stakeholders highlighted the importance of considering the policy implications; and
- The various strands of research will be useful to policymakers

Given the nature of this research project it may not be appropriate to expect it to produce an immediate policy response. As the researchers have suggested, it is work that needs to be absorbed and reflected upon before any policy solutions are developed.

### 6.6 Core Issues

#### 6.6.1 List of Core Issues

The core evaluation issues are:

- Rationale
- Relevance
- Efficiency
- Utility and effectiveness
- Sustainability

#### 6.6.2 Evidence on Core Issues

In respect of **rationale**, the original application to SEUPB made a case for the need for this research. At the time the driving rationale was considered to be the return of peace and devolved government to NI and the implications for the development of the border economy. In fact the economic recession, developments in the financial sector and the state of public finances on both sides of the border have become important issues for the whole island economy. This has been carefully explored in the Topic 1 research paper produced by the researchers, who have placed their study of the structure of the border region economy in the context of wider developments in the island and further afield.

With regard to **relevance**, the research to date is relevant to the objectives that were set. It is hoped that this research will highlight the need for a greater understanding of the economy of the border region.

Turning to **efficiency**, the outputs and results of the research, which are contained in three detailed working papers, represent new research and in our views represent an efficient use of the funds involved.

In relation to **utility and effectiveness**, as discussed earlier, it will take time for the research to be absorbed and for any policy implications to emerge. This however will be a key potential impact and requires on-going focus.
Finally, regarding **sustainability**, the research needs to be disseminated and discussed as part of the way forward for the border region.

### 6.7 Cross-Cutting Themes

#### 6.7.1 List of Cross-Cutting Themes

The horizontal cross-cutting themes common to all INICCO projects are:

- Equality;
- Sustainable development;
- Poverty;
- Partnership.

#### 6.7.2 Evidence on Cross-Cutting Themes

Beginning with **equality**, there is limited evidence that consideration has been given to equality issues in the project to date which is not surprising given the nature of the research. In respect of **sustainable development**, the research undertaken for Topic 3 is directly addressing issues of sustainable development of manufacturing business in the border region.

Turning to **poverty**, this is directly addressed in the Topic 1 research, which examines GDP per head and personal disposable income per head in the border region and sub-regions as part of the examination of the structure of the border region economy.

Finally, with regard to **partnership**, the opportunity was taken to strengthen the balance of representation on the Steering Group. In addition there was value arising from the partnership between CCBS and ITI and the contribution of other partners.

### 6.8 Synergies

#### 6.8.1 Synergies within the Project

There are synergies within this project with the topics linked together by the overarching nature of Topic 1, as illustrated overleaf.
6.8.2 Synergies with other INICCO Projects

Synergies have been strong with the CroSPiaN project and Professor Bradley made presentations to two of the executive training seminars in Newry/Dundalk and the North West. The project has also helped to stimulate an on-going discussion with chief executives/county managers and other stakeholders in the border region on the possible creation of a Border Development Zone. There is also the possibility of synergy with the CroSPiaN project on the review of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), which will have sight of the economic performance of the three border sub-regions in its review of the strategic planning policies.


Eoin Magennis, Steve MacFeely and Aidan Gough of InterTradeIreland contributed an article, “A sense of proportion in cross-border shopping: what the most recent statistics show,” to the April 2010 issue of the Journal for Cross Border Studies. InterTradeIreland is CCBS’s partner on the Border Economy projects.

The development of a Linked-in discussion group for the border counties has also contributed to User Groups within the Border People project.
6.9 Summary

The original title of this INICCO project was ‘Reviving the Border Region Economy in a time of Peace and Devolved Government’ but because the international recession has impacted on the research this project has taken on added significance. One of the main overall contributions of the Border Economy project, which has been led by Dr John Bradley, an economic consultant and formerly a member of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), and Professor Michael Best of the University of Massachusetts, is that it has brought a rigorous empirical basis to its research on the characteristics and performance of the border economy. In the course the work, Professors Bradley and Best have highlighted the need to improve sub-regional data and this is something that is being acted upon by the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency (NIRSA). From our engagement with external stakeholders, there is evidence that research facilitated by this project has brought to the understanding of the border region and how the productive sector operates within it.

The results take the form of four completed research projects, which constitute the final report of the project and which it is hoped will form the basis for a publishable book later this year:

- **Peripherality: help or hindrance?** – which looks at the international and national contexts for the border economy, the island economy context, the structure and performance of the border economy and the development potential of the border economy;
- **Consumer behaviour in the cross-border region** – that looks at ‘shops’ (the supply side of border consumer markets) and ‘shopping’ (the demand side of cross-border consumption) and considers the importance of cross-border shopping to the border region economy and whether it is a serious problem to wider regional development;
- **Producer behaviour in the cross-border region** – which looks at the frameworks that can be used in elaborating regional development strategies, the characteristics of the enterprise sector in the border region, learning from the individual experiences of specific enterprises and how we can evaluate the ‘productive potential’ of the border region economy; and
- **‘Tourism in the cross-border region’** including a comparative piece from the German-Polish border region has recently been made available in draft form.

Summaries of the research findings of the Border Economy project were published in *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland* in both 2011 and 2012, resulting in media coverage and interest from policymakers and others. This dovetailed with other initiatives in the border region (in response to the economic crisis), such as the establishment of a new LinkedIn discussion group on the border counties.

At the Border Region Economic Policy Workshop in September 2011, the research findings were discussed with policy-makers from both North and South and this was followed up by the Emerging Findings Conference in Cavan (November 2011). This included an innovative proposal by former IDA head Padraic White’s proposal for Border Development Zone which Mr. White suggested could “drive economic development by co-operation and sharing successful ideas”. These well-attended events have provoked much interest. For example, Padraic White, former CEO of the IDA and Chair of the Louth Economic Forum, has aired the possibility of designating the border region as a special development zone (SDZ) (like the Shannon Development Zone).
In regard to the **impacts** of the Border Economy project, it has resulted in:

- A better and deeper understanding of:
  - The three distinct border sub-regions and their different producer characteristics;
  - The identification of clusters of activities within these sub-regions;
  - The behaviour of firms located in these areas and their views of the border; and
  - Suggested policy implications.

- Highlighting of data deficits required to study small firms in the border region, in particular the paucity of sub-regional economic data in NI – NISRA are consulting users on the possibility of boosting the sample in NI from 5,000 to possibly 8,000 businesses either annually or triennially.

Like the other INICCO projects, the Border Economy project has succeeded in addressing the **core evaluation issues** and **cross-cutting themes**.

In addition, **synergies** have been strong with the CroSPlaN project. There is also synergy with the proposed/recently underway CroSPlaN project on the review of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and the Regional Development Strategy (RDS).
7 Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation

7.1 Introduction

As part of the integrative work of a cross-border observatory, CCBS, in partnership with the Euro Institut in Kehl, Germany, has developed the Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross-border Cooperation in Ireland. Impact assessment is a continuous process to help the policy-maker fully think through and understand the consequences of possible and actual interventions. It has been used particularly in the health and environmental sectors in Ireland, North and South, but not until now in cross-border cooperation. This project, the last of the INICCO projects began in summer 2010 and the Toolkit was launched at the end of October 2011.

The background to the Toolkit is well described in the Foreword to the project document:

“Cross-Border Impact Assessment is intended to be a practical method to assist people planning cross-border programmes and projects. Many of the core problems of the Cross-Border Territory do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. The Toolkit will help to determine, first, whether a cross-border approach is the appropriate level of intervention, and if so, to identify the ‘added value’ of cross-border cooperation. This means that a cross-border approach will be more efficient and/or effective than action taken in one or both jurisdictions separately. Crucially, however, it will also support the identification of the added value that has come about as a result of the cooperation process itself: for instance, the benefits derived from developing new cross-border relationships and new ways of working that contribute to the cohesion and sustainability of the Cross-Border Territory.”

The document also suggested that:

“This Toolkit is particularly timely in light of the European Commission’s increasing focus on ‘Territorial Cooperation’ and ‘Territorial Cohesion’. The Toolkit will be an aid to meeting the criteria of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes and developing stronger projects that can contribute to significant social, economic and environmental change. Of course, development of a Cross-Border Impact Assessment Toolkit for use in the island of Ireland must also take into account the imperative for cross-border cooperation enshrined in the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.”

The toolkit was designed to help determine whether a cross-border approach is the appropriate level of intervention and, if so, to identify the ‘added value’ of such cooperation. It also had the objective of identifying whether the proposed activities could have a greater overall impact – socially, economically or environmentally – if undertaken on a cross-border basis than separately within each jurisdiction.

The Toolkit is a ‘user-friendly’ guide to applying a methodology based on six key analytical steps:

- Identifying the problems of the cross-border territory;
- Defining general and specific objectives;
- Identifying and choosing cross-border policy approaches and instruments/actions;
- Identifying expected impacts;
- Choosing and developing appropriate indicators; and
- Designing an appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework.
The Toolkit also provides a number of practical case studies to illustrate its use in practice. The Toolkit is accompanied by a training programme that the research team has developed as part of the project.

7.2 Inputs

The Centre for Cross Border Studies was partnered on this project by the Euro-Institut, a French/German organisation based in Kehl, Germany, that specialises in continuing education and consulting on cross-border cooperation. The Director of Research at the Centre worked with the Director of the Euro Institut and they were supported by an intern from the University of Kehl who was based at the Centre for a six month period from September 2010 to February 2011.

The Steering Group for the project included public officials and other experts with an interest in cross-border impact assessment, namely representatives from INCORE International Conflict Research Institute, Co-operation Ireland, SEUPB, NISRA, the Victims Commission (NI), IPH and Pobal as well as the Director, Deputy Director (Research) and the IT Manager from the Centre. The Steering Group met in September 2010 and February 2011.

7.3 Activities and Outputs

The research team undertook this project in a short period of time from commencement of the project in May 2010 to the launch of the Toolkit in October 2011, a period of less than 18 months. The work was undertaken in a series of stages:

- A baseline study which took as a starting point EU Territorial Cohesion policy and EU Impact Assessment Guidelines. This research also looked at impact assessment across a number of other sectors in Ireland/Northern Ireland. It used the three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental. It added a fourth pillar of ‘cooperation’ which addressed cross-border impacts and became embedded in the Toolkit.

- A review of existing cross-border programmes and actions in Ireland/Northern Ireland to identify their strengths & weaknesses, their objectives and their coherence.

- The results of this work were presented at a Workshop held in November 2010 in Newry. The workshop covered exercises in identifying problems of border regions, defining objectives and developing options. The workshop was well-attended although it was not possible to complete what was a fairly ambitious agenda within the timescale of the day. The workshop helped to focus the next stage of the work on the Toolkit.

- Further work was undertaken on the development of the model and also looking at other impact assessments that are undertaken in RoI, NI and Europe.

- A number of case studies were undertaken with existing projects to test the model and to provide examples of how it could be applied in practice. These proved to be a particularly valuable activity as it helped to ensure that the Toolkit was practically useful and applicable to a range of situations.
7.4 Results

The key result from the project has been the production of the Toolkit itself in the form of a printed document and it is also available as a soft copy for downloading from the Centre’s website. (The SEUPB and INTERACT, the programme that supports EU Territorial Cooperation programmes across Europe have also made the Toolkit available on their websites.) The document provides a detailed 150 page guide to the application of the Impact Assessment tool. For ease of application it has been colour coded.

The second result of the project was the two-day International Conference in Cavan in October 2011 at which the Toolkit was formally launched. This generated considerable interest and was attended by 125 participants, including academics and researchers from border regions all over Europe: the Upper Rhine region between France, Germany and Switzerland; the south-eastern Alpine region between Austria, Slovenia and Italy; the Czech-Polish border region; Catalonia and the Basque Country.

The final formal results of the project are the piloting of a training programme with six cross-border projects in January 2012 and a further session for implementing bodies (March 2012).

7.5 Impacts

In our view this project has had a number of which are discussed below.

7.5.1 Partnership with the Euro Institut

One of the developments arising from the Impact Assessment Toolkit project has been the relationship that has been developed with the Euro Institut (EI), based in Kehl, Germany. The Centre for Cross Border Studies had previously worked with the EI (for instance, the Institute’s Director, Dr Joachim Beck had contributed to the Journal of Cross Border Studies). Based on this prior relationship, the EI agreed to be CCBS’s partner organisation for the pilot IA Toolkit project.
This partnership has benefited both the Centre and EI, and contributed to the roll-out of the impact assessment framework.

On the recommendation of Dr Beck, Mr Sebastian Rihm, a post-graduate student at the Universities of Kehl and Ludwigsburg, worked with the Centre for Cross Border Studies from 13 September 2010 until 25 February, 2011 as an Intern. During this period, Sebastian’s primary role was as Research Assistant on the Pilot Impact Assessment Toolkit. Following his internship with CCBS, Sebastian Rihm has now been employed by the Euro institut. He is continuing to work with CCBS on the Pilot IA Toolkit and also on the Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network (TEIN).

In our consultations some of the strengths of the project were highlighted, which are set out below:

These include the fact that this is it is the first time that the Impact Assessment approach of the European Commission has been applied in a cross-border context. By developing a fourth pillar, which directly tries to identify and capture the specific cross-border cooperation impacts (mostly not captured by the existing EU-indicators) the Toolkit offers a new perspective on how to capture the added-value of cross-border cooperation projects and programmes. As it was explained during the Cavan conference by the representative of DG REGIO, this meets a concern of the Commission for the future: how to better demonstrate the value-added and the durability of cross-border cooperation policy approaches. Thus the Toolkit is not only a pilot for the Irish context but for other cross border territories in Europe.

In the Irish context, the Toolkit offers an integrated method to plan cross-border programmes and projects grounded in the identified problems and opportunities of the Irish cross-border region. How to improve the quality of future projects is even more important in a situation of financial and economic crises. This innovative Tool has been well received by both potential EU-funded projects and programme managers and implementation bodies. In particular, the Toolkit methodology has been adopted by SEUPB for the final call of the INTERREG IVA Programme.

The Toolkit as developed under INICCO is a place-based methodology, grounded in the specific context of an analysis of the core problems of the Irish cross-border territory. As noted in Ruth Taillon’s presentation to the Cavan conference, the method is transferable to other border contexts, but not transposable, in that an integral part of the process is the identification of the core problems/opportunities of a specific cross-border territory.

While it was not possible to develop and pilot the training course in the summer/autumn of 2011 as originally planned, the training was piloted within the extension period and an additional training session for programme implementation bodies delivered as part of the revised targets.

One issue identified by Indecon is that the IA-Toolkit is qualitative and has not been integrated with methods and techniques on how to quantify problems and impacts. This was not however an objective under the current project, but may be an issue for the future.
7.5.2 Impact of Toolkit in European Commission and in other EU border regions

The project has resulted in interest at European level from very early on. An attendee from overseas who attended the May workshop commented that:

“I would like to thank you sincerely for the opportunity to attend the CCBS event last week and commend you on a very successful seminar. It was interesting to hear about the great work being produced and to witness the Toolkit in action during the very engaging workshop session.”

Following the International Conference, the project leader was invited to make a presentation the following week to a seminar organised by INTERACT, the body that supports Managing Authorities and Joint Technical Secretariats from all the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes. There had already been presentations at two other INTERACT seminars and the Eastern Europe and Central Europe Programmes both indicated an interest in the Toolkit and training. CCBS and the Euro Institut plan to make a proposal to INTERACT to support their work in planning for and developing INTERREG V Programme indicators. CCBS and the Euro Institute are both founding members of the Transfrontier Euro-Institut (TEIN) Network, funded under the EU Leonardo Programme. The TEIN gathers training organizations and universities and aims at facilitating cross-border cooperation and at giving concrete answers to the need of Europe for professionalizing actors on transfrontier issues. Founding TEIN members represent partnerships in the Austrian-Slovene-Italian border; the Czech-Polish border; the Caribbean space; Catalonia; the French-Italian border; the French-Belgian border; the German-Danish border; and the French-German-Swiss border as well as Ireland-Northern Ireland.

A TEIN working group, led by CCBS, will be developing a version of the IA Toolkit that can be used in other European border contexts. CCBS will also be contributing to the adaptation for use in different border contexts of other tools that have been developed by other TEIN partners. It is intended that this shared portfolio of tools will then be ‘marketed’ by TEIN partners within their own catchment areas.

The October 2011 meeting of the TEIN took place in Ireland immediately preceding the INICCO International Conference, “Cross-Border Training and Impact Assessment in Ireland and Europe”. This arrangement facilitated the attendance at the conference of the TEIN partner organisations and several of the TEIN partners were speakers at the conference.

TEIN is jointly organising (with Mission Opérationnelle Transfrontalière (MOT) and the European Association of Border Regions (EABR) a major international conference on the theme of territorial cohesion. The conference, in Brussels on 10 July 2012, will involve a number of high level speakers, such as Commissioner Hahn, will also have a presentation by Ruth Taillon on Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation.

The Centre has been requested to submit an article on the new impact assessment framework to a journal published by the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Administration (Slovenia), one of the Euro Institut Network (TEIN) partners, and to contribute to a seminar there in 2012.
7.5.3 Impact of Toolkit on Delivery Bodies in Ireland and Northern Ireland

The Toolkit has also generated interest in the public sector and in programme delivery bodies on the island of Ireland. According to the opening speech by the Irish Minister of State with Responsibility for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton T.D., at the conference on Cross-Border Training and Impact Assessment in Ireland and Europe, Cavan, 27 Oct 2011:

“This toolkit promises to become an invaluable resource for practitioners right across Europe – not just in the border regions of Ireland. In the past, EU-funded cross-border programme and project promoters have often found it difficult to demonstrate impact: i.e. the changes that have taken place as a result of the activities undertaken. Hopefully this new Toolkit can help to define and clarify the extent to which a programme or project is likely to contribute to the desired changes, as well as to identifying the added value of cross-border cooperation.”

The Victims and Survivors Commission NI has used the draft impact assessment framework (Mr Adrian McNamee is a member of the project advisory group for the INICCO project and Head of Policy at VSCNI) to design the new Victims and Survivors Service for NI. He commented as follows: “The toolkit was a great help and aid to taking this forward to this stage”. Subsequently, Ruth Taillon has been requested to join an expert group to advise on the development of the Service’s monitoring and evaluation framework.

The impact assessment framework potentially enhances the quality and impact of future projects funded by PEACE and INTERREG Programmes. In recognition of this potential, the SEUPB has redesigned the INTERREG application form to correspond to the steps of the Toolkit and commissioned CCBS to facilitate a number of workshops in December/January for potential applicants to the final call of INTERREGIVA. The guidelines issued by SEUPB advise:

“2.0 Focus of the Call

Applicants are invited to clearly identify a problem in the cross border territory and demonstrate that this is best addressed through the INTERREG IVA programme. Applicants are advised to refer to the ‘Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross Border Cooperation’ in preparing their applications. This toolkit has been developed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies, as part of an INTERREG IVA funded project and is intended to be a practical guide to assist with planning cross border projects. All applicants will be provided with a copy of the guide and training will be provided. A copy of the toolkit can be downloaded from the SEUPB website at: www.seupb.eu.

In addition, SEUPB distributed over 225 Toolkits along with other Programme documents on memory sticks to everyone who attended their development workshops for potential applicants. Mr Shaun Henry of SEUPB introduced the training course on 17-18 January. Six projects participated – Cavan County Council, Blackwater Partnership (Armagh, Dungannon and Monaghan Councils), Proteus; ConneXions; Community Workers Coop; Women into Political Life (reserve: Teach Oscail Positive Relations Project).

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8 Details of the Call, Application and Approval Process Information and Guidance for Applicants, SEUPB, 2011.
Other indications of the impact of the Toolkit are as follows:

- Ruth Taillon has been invited to join the Community Relations Council (NI) evaluation panel, which brings together evaluation professionals from both sides of the border.
- A member of public sector and other agencies are also interested in using the Toolkit. Ruth Taillon has made a number of presentations to organisations including:
  - Community Workers Coop Seminar (21 October 2011)
  - CroSPlan Executive Training Programme (27-28 October 2011) (this resulted in two Council-led projects attending the Pilot Training Course
  - Community Relations Council NI Evaluation Panel, (2 December 2011)
  - Northern Ireland Regional European Forum (9 December 2011)

### 7.5.4 Feedback from external stakeholders

Some feedback from external stakeholders has highlighted some of the relevance of this Toolkit.

- **The extent to which the Impact Assessment project is relevant to users’ and policymakers’ needs**
  
  The project was perceived by stakeholders consulted as addressing a deficiency in the INTERREG programme by providing a potential mechanism for linking the objectives and actions of ‘on the ground’ projects with the high level aims of the programme. Under INTERREG, and PEACE, there has been an on-going challenge to assess and collate the contribution of individual projects to the overall programme goals. The toolkit has the potential to fill this gap, by providing organisations with a structured process to develop proposals which align with programme analysis of the needs of the cross-border territory.

  More generally, the toolkit is seen as a valuable resource for project development and evaluation, providing a robust and coherent process which links project activities and desired outcomes to established need/problems, and encourages promoters to both consider and clearly state the potential/perceived benefit of cross-border co-operation in addressing the issue at hand.

  Overall the toolkit is seen as a readable, well-presented, document – this is essential for facilitating its use among users and policy makers. For example, the use of case studies to illustrate (concretely) how the toolkit can be used enhances practical/ hands-on knowledge among potential users. However, there is also something that should be said about the potential users of the toolkit. The timing of the IAT project is important – as the current development of EU programmes presents the opportunity for it to be taken up and refined in these new programmatic contexts.

- **The wider impacts of the project**

  The impact of the project, in terms of uptake of the toolkit, will largely depend on securing the buy-in of funding bodies and government. If widely adopted, it has the potential to considerably enhance the design and assessment of INTERREG and other cross-border projects, both in Ireland and internationally.
While this will be a longer-term process, Indecon understands that a number of organisations are already looking at using the toolkit as a resource for project development.

One of the potential contributions/impacts of this project is to mainstream evaluative thinking across the broadest spectrum of projects and programmes in very different sectors, and very different country contexts. Such an “impact” will of course take a considerable amount of time, and will be affected by many factors. However, the availability of such material is the essential first step towards that longer term impact.

Stakeholders also suggest that the next steps for the project should focus on dissemination, including providing training and support in use of the toolkit, and promoting buy-in among key stakeholders. While the toolkit has been developed in an Irish context, there is potential to adapt it for co-operation in other countries. It was also pointed out that:

“A toolkit is a necessary, but not sufficient, ingredient for change (for example any training in the use of the toolkit and training should include an explicit dimension of capacity building.”

It was suggested that while there is important potential for the toolkit, it was not clear what this toolkit would replace. It was further suggested that the toolkit would be more attractive if it was designed to replace an existing hurdle rather than adding a new one (Indecon notes, however, that the toolkit has replaced the application form for INTERREG IVA and we understand that the SEUPB may use this for future programmes). It was noted by stakeholders that the toolkit considers co-operation to be an outcome rather than a method, but that cooperation is extremely difficult to assess quantitatively or qualitatively. The toolkit provides the useful insight that many projects with a cross-border component are addressing a common set of quantifiable problems and that the underlying facts and arguments will be the same for many projects. This leads towards the idea that it might be possible over time to consolidate the common facts into a single resource which would be of value to policymakers and to project planners.

### 7.6 Core Issues

#### 7.6.1 List of Core Issues

The core issues of the PIAT project are:

- Rationale
- Relevance
- Efficiency
- Utility and effectiveness
- Sustainability

#### 7.6.2 Evidence on Core Issues

In respect of rationale, the original application to SEUPB made a case for the need for a toolkit of this nature and the Indecon team considers that this is valid.

With regard to relevance, a toolkit will be relevant to the on-going development of cross-border projects and programmes in INTERREG IVA and elsewhere. It is also timely given the recent developments in EU Impact Assessment guidelines which are becoming increasingly important.
It is too early in the life of the project to comment on the other core issues.

### 7.7 Cross-Cutting Themes

#### 7.7.1 List of Cross-Cutting Themes

The horizontal cross-cutting themes common to all INICCO projects are as follows:

- Equality
- Sustainable development
- Poverty
- Partnership

#### 7.7.2 Evidence on Cross-Cutting Themes

As this is an impact assessment tool, by its nature the cross cutting themes have been built into the assessment of impacts. The Toolkit integrates the “three pillars” of EU sustainable development policy – economic, social and environmental – with the four “cooperation pillar” as the basis of its methodology. It also specifically addresses issues of ensuring inclusively of all relevant actors and starting from the identified core problems of the cross-border territory, including economic disadvantage and social exclusion.

As discussed above, the partnership with the Euro Institute has been very important not only for the successful delivery of the Impact Assessment Toolkit and training course, but also in laying the foundations for a much deeper relationship with the Institute and with other members of the TEIN.

The contribution of their time and high level expertise by members of the project advisory group has been invaluable both to ensure the quality of the Toolkit and in promoting the dissemination of the Toolkit to a wider audience than might otherwise have been possible in the relatively short life of the project.

### 7.8 Synergies

There is evidence of synergies with other INICCO Projects. These involved linkages with ICLRD Executive Training Programme, the Hospital Planning Project and the INICCO North South Research Forum.
7.9 Summary

This INICCO project, originally entitled ‘Pilot Impact Assessment Toolkit’ has been given the new name of ‘Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation’, reflecting the impact of this initiative, currently and in the future – as the new methodology becomes ‘mainstreamed’ into the policy infrastructure. This project, which was undertaken in a period of less than 18 months, has resulted in the development of a new tool capable of being applied by policymakers in both parts of the island of Ireland and in Europe working on projects and initiatives with a cross-border or transnational dimension.

The results of the project are:

- Presentation of baseline analysis and review of existing cross-border programmes and actions to workshops;
- Impact Assessment Toolkit published in hard copy;
- Impact Assessment Toolkit available on the CCBS, SEUPB and INTERACT websites for download;
- Two Day International Conference in October 2011 for launch of Toolkit; and
- Pilot training course delivered with 6 projects (January 2012) and implementing bodies (March 2012).

The impacts are:

- The Impact Assessment Toolkit has been mainstreamed into the largest INTERREG programme in Europe, with its adoption by SEUPB for use in the INTERREG IVA Programme.
- It applies for the first time the European Commission’s own impact assessment approach in a cross-border context;
- Strengthened the relationship between the Centre and the Euro Institut (EI), based in Kehl, Germany;
- EU interest in the impact assessment framework from INTERACT, the organisation that has responsibility for sharing expertise across European Territorial Cooperation programmes;
- Establishment of the TEIN working group to develop a version of the impact assessment framework to be used in different border contexts across Europe; and
- A number of public sector and other agencies are also interested in using the Toolkit.

The impact assessment project has delivered on some of the core issues and cross-cutting themes, and has yielded synergies, more of which are likely to also arise in the future, as complementary toolkits are developed by CCBS and partners. Further, the North South Research Forum, which has been important in helping to disseminate the impact assessment framework, is also funded under INICCO.
8  Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Policy

8.1  Conclusions
The INICCO projects commenced at different times in 2009/2010 and were successfully completed by the end of March 2012. The overall conclusion of this report is that the INICCO projects have exceeded the targets set in terms of their activities and impacts on issues confronting the Irish cross-border region. These impacts will be strengthened in the years ahead as the full benefits of INICCO are realised. Our findings indicate that INICCO has produced information, insights and networking which are of use to informing cross-border cooperation.

Among the contributions of the INICCO projects is that they have brought expertise, from outside the island of Ireland as well as from within the island, to bear on a variety of North/South cooperation. INICCO conferences, seminars and workshops are valued by policymakers, professionals and other users consulted during our research. The beneficiaries of INICCO also include the international community whose research interests are focused on cross-border cooperation.

From an evaluation perspective, our analysis suggests that the INICCO projects have delivered on their ‘core issues’ – rationale, relevance, efficiency, utility and effectiveness, and sustainability – and their ‘cross-cutting themes’, namely equality, poverty, sustainable development and partnership. Notwithstanding the diverse nature of the INICCO projects, they have resulted in some synergies among the projects as well as within the projects. These synergies, which originally were not a focus of INICCO, have become more apparent in the past year.

The table overleaf presents the monitoring indicators for the INICCO group of projects, as set out by the SEUPB in its revised Letter of Offer of February 2012 Offer Letter to the Centre of 2009. These indicate that in the majority of instances targets have not only been achieved but surpassed.
Table 8.1: INICCO Group of Projects – Progress and Achievements Against Agreed Monitoring Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 4 cross-border research projects with final reports (1 of which will be an online service), 4 completed | 1. Border Region Economy:  
- Peripherality: Help or Hindrance  
- Consumer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region  
- Producer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region  
- Tourism in the Cross-Border Region  
2. Hospital Services:  
- The role of community involvement in planning hospital services  
- Unlocking the Potential of Cross-Border Hospital Planning on the Island of Ireland  
3. CroSPlaN:  
   - Action research projects:  
     - Inter-jurisdictional planning and governance study (2010)  
     - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional spatial planning and regional development (2010)  
     - Sustainable spatial development in respect of river basin management plans, (2011)  
     - Best practices in cross-border and inter-jurisdictional river basin / watershed management and spatial planning, (2011)  
   - Evidence-Informed Planning  
     - Data capture projects on evidence-based cross-border planning (carried out by AIRO of NUIM in tandem with ICLRD) (2011)  
     - Island of Ireland Housing Monitoring Tool  
     - All-Island Deprivation Index  
     - All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool  
4. Border People:  
- online service established and under continuous development |

1 impact assessment toolkit developed for piloting.  
The toolkit is complete and is being disseminated.  
Pilot Training Course completed.

Results

Target for all of research projects to be completed.  
166% of the research projects completed.

1 International conference (90 attendees).  
International conference 27-28 October 2011 attended by 125 people.

7 emerging findings' conferences (with 475 attendees).  
7 conferences undertaken with 717 attendees.

3 CroSPlaN conferences (300 attendees).  
360 attendees achieved  
1. ICLRD/CroSPlaN international conference ‘Preparing for Economic Recovery: Planning Ireland, North and South, out of Recession’. 21 Jan 2010 (135 attendees)  

1 Border Economy conference (100 attendees).  
113 attendees achieved  
- ‘Reviving the Border Region Economy in a time of peace, devolved government and international recession’ on 16-17 November 2011 in Cavan. (113 attendees)

1 Hospital Services conference (75 attendees).  
62 attendees achieved  
- 2 Impact Assessment Toolkit (50 attendees)  
- 54 attendees achieved  
- Workshop, 25 Nov 2010 (25 attendees)  
- Workshop, 18 May 2011 (29 attendees)

Target 22 seminars (with 565 attendees) of which:  
14 Seminars and User Groups over 375 Attendees

3 technical workshops within CroSPlaN Spatial Planning Development and Training Network (100 attendees)  
4 technical workshops / 120 attendees achieved + additional seminar / 100 attendees achieved  
1 Border Economy (30 attendees).  
15 attendees achieved

2 Hospital Services (60 attendees).  
54 attendees achieved

7 Cross-Border Mobility Information events (225 attendees).  
243 attendees achieved

1. Study Day, 20 April, 2010 (14 attendees)  
2. Launch of executive summary Strand 1 & seminar 14 October 2010 (40 attendees)  
3. Better Understanding of Cross-Border Mobility Statistic, 2 June 2009 (20 attendees)  
4. The Cross Border Consumer, 14 December 2009 (10 attendees)  
5. The Cross-Border Worker, 20 May 2010, (27 attendees)  
7. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 15 June 2011(36 attendees)  
8. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 2 Sept 2011(61 attendees)  
9. Developing Your Cross Border Business, 8 March 2012 (40 attendees)
Table 8.1: Progress Against Agreed Monitoring Indicators (Contd.)

| 6 North/South Research Forums (150 attendees) | 1. What is the Future for Local Economic Development in the Context of the Global Economic Crisis? 9th December 2009 (24 attendees) |
| 215 attendees achieved | 2. Cross-Border Innovation and Creativity, 24 June 2010. (29 attendees) |
| | 3. The Future of Public Sector Cross Border Co-operation in a Difficult Financial Climate, 9 December 2010 (31 attendees) |
| | 6. INCCO Closing Event (60 attendees) |
| 2 impact Assessment Toolkit training programmes developed and implemented with 40 participants | IA Training programme piloted with 6 projects on 17/18 November (18 participants) |
| 30 attendees achieved | IA Training for programme implementing bodies 23 March 2012. (12 participants) |
| 90 Central and Local Government officials, local Councillors and community leaders trained through CroSPiN | Newry and Mourne & Louth Local Authorities Executive Training Programme November 2009 – May 2010 |
| Theme of Shaping and Managing Cross-Border Development | Six modules delivered to council officials, elected representatives and members of the private sector in the Newry-Dundalk region. |
| Immediately followed by ‘The Functionality of Territory’ – half day workshop with keynote presentations from government officials, North and south. Audience largely representatives from local and regional government | North West Region Executive Training Programme September 2010 to April 2011 |
| Theme of Fostering Growth through Cooperation in the North-West Region | Five modules delivered to councillors and public and private sector representatives in the Derry-Donegal region. |
| ICBAN Region Executive Training Programme October – December 2011. | Theme of Harnessing diversity in a shared future |
| Target: 14 publications/reports | Six modules delivered to senior management across all ten ICBAN councils; intensive programme delivered every two weeks |
| Of which: 4 research journals | 2009 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin (by Taoiseach Brian Cowen) and Belfast (by Head of NI Civil Service Bruce Robinson); |
| • 4 CCBS journals 4 achieved | 2010 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin (by Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheal Martin) |
| | 2012 Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland launched in Dublin by Secretary General to the Irish Government Martin Fraser |
| • 2 CroSPiN journals 2 achieved | 2011 Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland, was launched January 2011. |
| + 3 additional reports | 2012 Borderlands: The Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland, launched January 2012 |
| +3 briefing papers | CroSPiN: final studies published on ICLRD website; including |
| | proposed governance and planning reforms in both jurisdictions |
| | the (non)integration of spatial planning and river basin management policy across the island of Ireland |
| | practical ways in which the shared services agenda can be pursued, with a particular focus being placed on the Irish border region |
| | (all supplemented by international case studies) |
| | 5 Border Region Economy reports issued 5 achieved |
| Final report launched in March 2012, consisting of the following elements | a) Peripherality: Help or Hindrance – completed |
| | b) Consumer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region |
| | c) Producer Behaviour in the Cross-Border Region |
| | d) Tourism in the Cross-Border Region |
| | e) Overview |
| | 2 Cross-Border Hospital Services reports 2 achieved |
| Hospital Services: report on “The Role of Community Involvement in Planning Hospital Services” complete and published on CCBS website Oct 2010 | Executive Summary report on “The Role of Community Involvement in Planning Hospital Services” published & launched 14 Oct 2010 |
| Prototype Modelling Framework for cross-border hospital planning launched 15 December 2011 | 1 Impact Assessment Toolkit report 1 achieved |
| Impact Assessment Toolkit: launched 28 Oct 2011. | 1 Website service on Cross-Border Mobility Information 1 achieved |
| Border People Website service functioning – continuous development www.borderpeople.info currently has over 300 pages of information with over 1000 external links to sources of public information north and south. | Monthly averages of 7,792 visitors, 8,518 visits and 17,575 page views during the reporting period.
8.2 Evidence-Based Solutions

One of the important objectives set for INICCO was that at least 14 innovative, evidence-based solutions to problems in public sector cross-border cooperation would be completed. Our analysis of results shows that 28 evidence based initiatives were completed as outlined below. Some of this such as new data resources or the development of journals will contribute to a range of policy issues rather than dealing with one specific problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8.2: Selected Evidence-Based Solutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Border People – unique signposting service for cross-border workers/residents/businesses/students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Border People User Group Meetings – serving the border business community as well as other groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Border People – Case Studies on solutions to real life cross-border mobility problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Border People – Recommendations on sustainable integrated public service information infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Border People – Integration of Border People with NI Direct</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Border People – Engaged with the private sector, accountants, solicitors and the Credit Review Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CroSPlaN Professional Executive Training Programme/ICLRD – Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Charter of Commitment to Cross Border Collaboration in Louth/Newry and Mourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. CroSPlaN Professional Executive Training Programme – contribution to NW Partnership Board (Derry/Letterkenny – Fort George and CoLab at LYIT – and Derry City of Culture 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. CroSPlaN Professional Executive Training Programme – contribution to ICBAN Strategic/Spatial Planning Initiative and Vision Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. CroSPlaN – All-Island Housing Monitoring Tool (new data resource)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. CroSPlaN – All-Island Deprivation Index (new data source)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. CroSPlaN – All-Island Accessibility Mapping Tool (new data source)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. CroSPlaN – recommendations on the implications for inter-jurisdictional spatial planning policies and the operation of planning legislation in the two jurisdictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. CroSPlaN – recommendations on shared services across local authority boundaries and the Irish Border</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. CroSPlaN – recommendations on management of cross-border river basins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. CroSPlaN – recommendations on establishing a monitoring framework for the island of Ireland in terms of NSS and RDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. CroSPlaN – briefing paper series on examples of innovative practice in planning and regional development in other countries and regions (complements the Borderlands journal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Hospital Services – recommendations regarding acute hospital services planning in the border stemming from new, evidence-based research on the role of community involvement in hospital services</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Hospital Services – cross-border hospital planning prototype modelling tool (new planning tool)</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Hospital Services – Recommendations for the collection and collation of healthcare data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Hospital Services – Recommendations on service-user involvement in the planning of hospital and related health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Border Economy – problems in accessing/lack of reliable and comprehensive sub-regional economic data for the border region of Northern Ireland have resulted in consideration being given by NISRA to a larger sample size of businesses covered by the Annual Business Inquiry and the publication of sample sizes and confidence limits for data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Proposal by Padraic White (former MD, IDA Ireland) for a Border Development Zone (at November 2011 conference): initial research undertaken with a view to including it in a follow-up INICCO-2 application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross-Border Cooperation – multiple potential applications in other European border regions as well as on the island of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation Training Course – instructing users and potential users on this new policy/research toolkit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland – important vehicle for policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations and contains journal articles based on INICCO research (Border Economy and, hospital services)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indecon’s examination of the evidence suggests our overall assessment is that the INICCO projects have worked well, notwithstanding the challenges in meeting some interim deadlines during the period, for such a large and diverse research undertaking.

8.3 Recommendations for Future Policy

Indecon believes that it is very important for measures to be continued to support the historical achievements of peace on the Island of Ireland. Part of this should comprise of activities to increase cross border research and facilitate networking. Aside from the core benefits of supporting peace, such activities between neighbours have the potential to enhance policy development in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, and to maximise the value for money of public expenditure.

Suggestions for 2012 and Beyond

It will be important that post-2011 the next phase of the work of the Centre and INICCO builds on the achievements to date. Indecon believes the following potential areas for this work should be considered:

- **Border People**: The proposal is that the Centre would provide training and capacity-building to the citizens information providers, North and South, so that they are able to confidently respond to complex cross-border mobility problems (with the Centre continuing to provide strategic and management support).

- **CroSPlaN**:
  - Opportunity to use the discussion and networking gained at the ICLRD Annual Conference (2012) to maximise the benefits of research opportunities;
  - Review of planning and governance at regional and local level in the context of the economic crisis and emphasis placed by central government on communities ‘doing it for themselves’ – and growing debate around shared services;
  - Future action research projects Future action research projects should continue to be focused on directly addressing policy problems facing the cross-border region;
  - Building on the data and mapping resources developed under INICCO and creating others—these are widely welcomed because they are practical and can be used by planners and local authority officials, senior management within local government, elected representatives, and policy-makers.

- **Focused training and development** should build upon the application of the tools developed through INICCO, including Impact Assessment, as well as those developed by CroSPlaN Hospital Services:
  - One of the conclusions of the HBC report is the need to undertake more research on applying the prototype framework and there may be scope to act in this regard;
  - Scope for the Centre to assist CAWT with fact-finding, tailored research on enhanced cross-border cooperation in health services on the island.
Border Economy:
  - Possibility of carrying out a feasibility study on designating the Border Region a Special Development Zone and dovetailing with future CroSPiAN work. Initial work has already been undertaken involving discussions and consideration of this issue.

Impact Assessment for Cross-Border Cooperation:
  - Continued dissemination of the toolkit to ensure its potential is maximised and it is properly used;
  - Development of companion toolkits with Euro Institut;
  - Possible development of European cross-border impact assessment tool in collaboration with INTERACT;
  - Specific exemplar projects could be undertaken using the toolkit.

Other opportunities:
  - Active ageing and voluntary sector (European Years 2011 and 2012);
  - Cross-border initiatives in terms of addressing the long-term unemployed.

As indicated previously, Indecon supports the suggestion from stakeholders that assembling and developing the extensive data built up by the Centre should be a priority. Indecon also believes that given the constraints on funding, the importance of continuation of the Centre’s on-going projects must be taken into account in any consideration of new projects.

8.4 Overall Conclusion

The conclusion of this report is that the INICCO projects have exceeded the targets set in terms of their activities and the impacts on issues confronting the Irish cross-border region. Our findings indicate that INICCO has produced information, research and networking which is of value in facilitating cross-border cooperation.

Our overall assessment is that the INICCO projects have worked well, notwithstanding the challenges in meeting interim deadlines during the period, and the fact that the projects involved a large and diverse range of research activities. Based on our analysis, Indecon believes this work merits continued funding and support.