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**Mediating the European ideal:  
Cross-border programmes and conflict  
transformation in Ireland**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to assess the impact of the European Union on the transformation of the conflict in Ireland through cross-border activity. The primary data for this research is taken from a series of semi-structured interviews with individuals directly involved in the implementation of EU cross-border programmes. Interviewees include politicians, policymakers, and representatives of the community and voluntary sector – all of whom may be viewed as ‘mediators’ of the European ideal of cross-border cooperation as a means to peace-building. Analysis of this data is conducted within the theoretical framework of the ‘EUBorderConf project’. This framework concentrates on pathways of influence of the EU in the conflict, allowing for a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the EU’s cross-border initiatives to date. The analysis contained here covers five main dimensions of the EU’s role, namely the conditions, context, effects, methods, and consequences of its approach to the border conflict.

**Key words**

European Union, conflict resolution, cross-border cooperation, Ireland, INTERREG, PEACE.

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## *Outline*

1. Introduction: five areas for analysis
2. Pathways of influence for the EU
  - 2.1 The four pathways
  - 2.2 The enabling impact of the EU in Ireland
  - 2.3 The connective impact of the EU in Ireland
  - 2.4 The constructive impact of the EU in Ireland
  - 2.5 The EU as perturbator: conditioned by local politics
3. Perception of the EU as an external actor
  - 3.1 The EU: material benefactor not peace-maker
  - 3.2 The EU in comparison to the US
  - 3.3 The wider international dimension to conflict resolution
4. The process of conflict transformation
  - 4.1 Marooned at the stage of an identity conflict
  - 4.2 Progress in cross-border relations
5. Cross-border and cross-community reconciliation
  - 5.1 The EU ideal: development, cooperation and peace
  - 5.2 Conflict and the southern border region
  - 5.3 Inter-community boundaries, north and south
6. Positive and negative effects of the EU's involvement
  - 6.1 The EU and community development
  - 6.2 Limitations of funding criteria
  - 6.3 Problematic measurement of project outcomes
  - 6.4 EU projects successful but not sustainable
7. Conclusions

## **1. Introduction: five areas for analysis**

The border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has constituted a focal point of the European Union's approach to conflict transformation in Ireland. This is at least in part related to the model of European integration itself, which links cross-border cooperation, economic development and political reconciliation together as a 'European ideal'. On its grandest scale for EU member-states, this ideal functions through the operation of the Single Market and Eurozone. Yet, to be applied in such a way as to affect a regional conflict, this ideal must be 'mediated' through a network of agents at a range of levels. The primary data for this particular paper is drawn from interviews with individuals who may be seen to 'mediate' this European ideal through their roles in implementing EU cross-border programmes in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This includes politicians, policymakers, and representatives of the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland and the southern border counties, most particularly from the Derry/Donegal region which has formed the focal case study for this research. This analysis of the EU's approach to cross-border conflict transformation in Ireland covers five main areas. First, what 'pathways of influence' have been used by the EU and what the conditions of this 'perturbation' has been (see Diez, Stetter and Albert 2004). Secondly, how the EU's role as an external actor is perceived in Ireland/Northern Ireland in light of other international players and factors. Thirdly, the main changes that have taken place in relation to the role of the EU, particularly in terms of moving the conflict towards a less violent stage. Fourthly, the relationship between cross-border and cross-community work in a process of conflict resolution. Finally, positive and negative aspects of the EU's cross-border programmes in Ireland. The opinion of key players in the implementation of EU cross-border programmes regarding these five dimensions of the EU's role – conditions, context, effects, methods, and consequences – provides an invaluable insight into the mediation of the European ideal in Ireland.

## **2. Pathways of influence for the EU**

### *2.1 The four pathways*

Diez, Stetter and Albert (2004:7) define conflict as the product of an 'incompatibility of subject positions'; if the European Union is to have influenced the conflict it must have 'helped to fundamentally change these subject positions'. Building on Barnett and Duvall's (2003) categorisation of power types in terms of direct/diffuse power and actors/social relations, Diez *et al.* (2004:22-26) contend that there are four 'pathways'

through which the EU can impact on border conflicts (see Table 1 below). The first pathway – ‘compulsory impact’ – is the most obvious direct influence the EU has on the political leadership of conflict parties. This can take the form of ‘carrot’ and ‘stick’ instruments used to persuade political leaders to engage in a peace process. The second pathway – ‘enabling impact’ – also affects the political leadership in conflicting parties, yet it is not directly applied. The participation of political leaders in the process of European integration can indirectly alter their approach to the conflict. Crucial here is the institutional and discursive context provided by the EU, including the socialisation of policy-makers. The third pathway – ‘connective impact’ – covers the points at which the EU’s institutional and discursive framework is connected to the conflict society. This includes policies and initiatives through which the EU can directly affect social actors and activities in the conflict region, such as through project funding. The final pathway – ‘constructive impact’ – is defined by Diez *et al.* (2004:25) as the ‘most indirect but also most persuasive mode of transformation’. This is also the most long-term and ambitious pathway of influence for the EU, given that it principally aims to affect the subject positions involved in a conflict through ‘a (re)-construction of identities’. This pathway is thus centrally concerned with the EU’s influence on communication and discourse, rather than policies or structures. The validity of each of these pathways to the Irish case is considered below.

Direction of incentive vis-à-vis conflict parties		Approach by EU	
		Actor-driven	Structural
	<b>Primarily political leadership</b>	(1) Compulsory impact	(2) Enabling impact
	<b>Principally wider societal level</b>	(3) Connective impact	(4) Constructive impact

Table 1. Diez, Stetter and Albert’s (2004) model of pathways of EU influence

## 2.2 The enabling impact of the EU in Ireland

Despite the fact that interviews were conducted with individuals who have had regular direct contact with the European Union (mainly through the Commission, specifically DG Regio), none of the interviewees identified the ‘compulsory impact’ of the EU as a significant factor in the Irish case. This supports other evidence that it has not been a policy of the EU to directly influence political leadership in relation to the peace process. This is partly because the compulsory power of the EU is most effective prior

to membership – a fact borne out in the case of the EU’s approach to Greek-Turkish relations (Rumelili 2004; Diez *et al.* 2004:29). Moreover, the EU did not attempt to make any direct stand on the conflict in Northern Ireland until the Haagerup Report of 1984, and this position was not explicitly supported by policy change towards the political leadership of Britain, Ireland or Northern Ireland (Hayward 2004b). Rather, the most distinct example of a ‘carrot’ being used by the EU (with Commission President Delors’ announcement of funding packages after the first ceasefires in 1994) is aimed towards the conflict society rather than the political leadership.

More significant for the border conflict in Ireland have been the structural changes arising from EU membership which have influenced the political leadership, north and south. The first of the three main ways in which the EU has been seen to have an ‘enabling impact’ on the conflict in Ireland is the broadest, namely the relevance of the EU for *policy development*. So important is the EU context that one regional-level policymaker states that ‘Europe leads the way now in the development of policy’ (Interview 12). This interviewee argues that policymakers need to ‘build on foundations provided by the EU, adding value as opposed to parallel tracking’, because of the primary importance of the EU policy context for the Irish case:

European policies are all about addressing the negative impact of borders and creating parity for border regions. The EU is therefore totally relevant to our role and to the actions we take. It provides a bigger framework and support. There is no point in a development policy that doesn’t tie in with European as well as national policy. (Interview 12)

Arising in tandem with this new policy context has been the growth of *multilevel political structures*. As a consequence, political actors at a regional level now have new roles, new responsibilities and new relationships – illustrated by the proliferation of partnership boards, regional networks and agencies in the past decade. Many of these are cross-border and many have direct links with officials from the EU Commission (Interviews 11, 12).

The third dimension of the EU’s enabling impact in Ireland is the *inspiration* that the EU has provided for local politicians. This includes the specific drawing of parallels between the impact of European integration on relations on the continent and its relevance for the border in Ireland. For example, former SDLP leader and MEP John Hume cites his first visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg as a defining

moment, due to the experience of standing on a bridge on the Franco-German border and realising that ‘the European Union is the best example in the history of the world of conflict resolution’. This, Hume claims, inspired him to study ‘the philosophy behind the European Union’ in order to learn lessons for the conflict in Ireland (Interview 9). The inspiration of the EU as a model of conflict resolution had an undoubtedly crucial influence on the ideology espoused by Hume and the SDLP over the past twenty-five years, during which time the politician and his party played a central role in redefining nationalist politics in Ireland and in the peace process that led to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (Cunningham 1997). However, as Hume has recently retired from national and European politics and the SDLP has been supplanted by Sinn Féin as the largest nationalist party in Northern Ireland, the endurance and pervasiveness of this aspect of the EU’s enabling impact is debatable. Indeed, another interviewee (who asked this comment to be anonymous) says that the difficulties faced by the SDLP made it ‘questionable as to whether its ideology made an impact’:

People don’t relate to the European perspective which presents big ideals and is not the “on the street, what can we do for you” which Sinn Féin has.

The lack of popular identification with the SDLP’s pro-European ideology and with the EU in general is reflected in the fact that only elite-level interviewees (politicians, policy-makers) mention the ‘enabling impact’ of the EU at all. This does not discredit the experience of these interviewees or detract from our recognition of the importance of the enabling impact, yet it does highlight the lack of wider societal awareness of the EU’s influence on political leadership.

### *2.3 The connective impact of the EU in Ireland*

The most widely recognised and obvious pathway of the EU’s influence in relation to the conflict in Ireland is the connective impact. Every interviewee explicitly acknowledges the importance of this pathway and its broadly positive influence on the conflict in Northern Ireland. Of all the interviewees, only the politicians identify the Single Market as having a direct effect on the pertinence of the Irish border for the conflict:

The European Union is now a single market and, as I say, if you look at the border in Ireland now, if you drive across the border there’s no stopping, so in that sense, physical borders all over Europe have gone, not just in Ireland. (Interview 9)

The funding given by the EU to community groups in Northern Ireland and the border counties is, however, recognised as profoundly important due to its direct impact at

grassroots level and its implications for peace-building.<sup>1</sup> The specific benefits of this funding are outlined in a later section (*Section 6.1*), yet it is worth noting here that the connective impact of the EU through community funding is seen as having a directly positive influence towards conflict transformation. A number of interviewees draw explicit connections between projects being funded by the EU and a decrease in the level of sectarian violence in those localities (Interviews 2, 4, 6, 7).<sup>2</sup> Others trace a more indirect route for the impact of PEACE funds. For example, in projects that develop skills in individuals enabling them to become social actors themselves, first as contributors to their local community and then as lobbyists for peace (Interview 1). Certain claims are made of EU Community Initiatives (such as INTERREG and LEADER) and the Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE) distinguishing them from other funding available for peace work in the region. In facilitating ‘innovative, risk-taking projects’, that ‘come[ ] in at the bottom level’, the EU has not only helped build a strong culture of partnership and peace-building at a community level, it has ‘changed the nature’ of voluntary work itself (Interviews 13, 11, 7).

#### *2.4 The constructive impact of the EU in Ireland*

Whilst the connective impact of the EU is seen to be the most obvious in the Irish case, the constructive impact is the most unique and, for a number of interviewees, most significant. Interviewee 12 contends that this pathway is the most important of the four because the main strength of the EU lies in its indirect influence in ‘draw[ing] people in from across divides’. One indirect consequence of the opportunities provided by EU funding for community development to this effect is the growth in confidence of ‘previously silent section[s] of the population’ (Interview 8). This has been particularly evident for the Protestant community in the southern border counties, not least because they began with a weak concept of ‘community’ and only applied for EU funds at a late stage and after much encouragement (for example, from the Derry and Raphoe Action Group). The overwhelmingly positive outcome of the applications under PEACE I from this was to be ‘a huge investment of confidence in the Protestant community’ (Interview 8). The constructive impact of the EU is not confined within the bounds of different communities or localities but is multilevel, reflected in new networks of contact and communication. One Donegal TD notes that, just as fishermen and farmers in Northern Ireland have been known to lobby the relevant Irish (rather than British) ministers to support their interests at the EU level, she now receives almost as many representations

from people across the border in the north as from her own constituents on the big issues. She attributes the way in which people now gravitate towards the politician who best represents their needs, regardless of the border, to the impact of the EU (Interview 10). Unsurprisingly, the Special EU Programmes Body director interviewed sees the development of such cross-border links as the reinstatement of ‘the normal physical, economic and emotional links between regions’ previously hindered by partition (Interview 11). Regarding these ‘emotional links’, John Hume’s argument is that the true value of European integration and the peace process is that it addresses the ‘real border’ which lies not on a map but ‘in the hearts and minds of the Irish people’ (Interview 9). The consequences of Hume applying his vision of the EU’s model of conflict resolution – respect for difference, institutions that respect difference, a healing process in working together for common interests – to the 1998 Agreement may be seen as the clearest evidence for the constructive impact of the EU. It also points to the central role played by local conditions and actors in determining the effectiveness of the pathways of influence for the EU in any particular context.

### *2.5 The EU as perturbator: conditioned by local politics*

Diez *et al.* (2004:26-28) acknowledge that ‘the form and success’ of the EU’s perturbation of a conflict is influenced by the ‘structural environment’ of the conflict (including the role of other perturbators) and ‘the relationship between the EU and actors within the conflict setting’. The research performed in this case study to date suggests that these local conditions do not merely ‘influence’ the impact of the EU but actually serve to determine it. This flexible character of the EU is exacerbated by the fact that the EU ‘is not a homogenous actor but rather a complex political organisation which includes a diverse set of collective actors’ (Diez *et al.* 2004:27). When the EU is taking on the role of an external actor to a conflict, it is open to the influence of various actors at a range of levels. Ultimately, however, it is the opinions of core elite-level actors with access to the main EU institutions (and, therefore, generally from moderate ideological and mainstream democratic positions) that become integrated into the EU’s approach. John Hume, for example, explicitly acknowledges that his leading position in the largest political grouping in the European Parliament provided him with regular meetings with ‘prime ministers and European commissioners’. As a consequence, Hume asserts that:

...the European Union conception of the conflict in Northern Ireland is the conception put to it by both governments and by representatives from Northern Ireland. (Interview 9)

Thus, even the most ardent advocate of the EU as the most relevant model and context for conflict resolution in Ireland acknowledges that its position as a perturbator regarding the conflict is decided not so much by neutral, transcendent European ideals but as by physical proximity and personal relations between elite actors.

It was only ten years ago that the EU can really be said to have come into its own as an external perturbator of the conflict, with its actions (in establishing the PEACE programme) at last mirroring its assertion that the conflict in Northern Ireland could not be viewed as an internal domestic problem of the United Kingdom. This action came on top of the first paramilitary ceasefires in Northern Ireland, themselves product of political progress made within Irish republicanism/nationalism and loyalism. These political changes in Northern Ireland were facilitated by a new (albeit tentative) climate of cooperation between the British and Irish governments. In fact, the symbiotic relationship between member-state governments and European integration is reflected in the links between British-Irish relations and the EU in the Irish peace process (see Hayward 2002). As discussed in detail elsewhere, the context of European Union membership played a key part in enabling the positive British-Irish relationship that forms the foundation of the peace process (Arthur 2000; Guelke 2001; Meehan 2000). Yet a coherent approach from the European Union that treated the conflict as a cross-border issue depended on agreement between the two governments. Indeed, Hume goes so far as to say that, 'had the two governments been quarrelling about it, we wouldn't have got a united European Union approach' (Interview 9). Hume sees this as the major limitation to the EU's role in conflict resolution:

...at the end of the day it is for the different sides of the conflict to reach agreement and the European Union can support them in creating the process for agreement and can support their agreement. But the European Union can't impose an agreement on them. (Interview 9)

So, the EU's access to the conflict situation (and specifically its connective impact) came *in response to* joint proposals put to it by the British and Irish governments. Moreover, the way in which local conditions determine the direct impact of the EU on the conflict is illustrated by the fact that cross-border initiatives from the EU are enacted differently between the two jurisdictions of Northern Ireland and the Republic of

Ireland, for example as a consequence of differing national legislation, regulations and civil service cultures north and south (Interviews 11, 13). This particular condition is gradually changing as a result of the institutional and structural changes implemented by the 1998 Agreement, for example the Special EU Programmes Body is working to ensure a more even implementation of EU cross-border initiatives. This is another example of the symbiotic relationship between European integration and its constituent parts: the context of the EU enabled unionist to agree to the cross-border bodies as economically rational rather than politically significant, now these bodies facilitate a greater influence for the EU north and south. The influence of the EU is thus clearly mediated through, and restricted by, the conditions of local politics. This suggests that the EU is not so much an independent force for conflict resolution but rather that *its main role is to build upon and facilitate further change* within the conflict society.

### **3. Perception of the EU as an external actor**

#### *3.1 The EU: material benefactor not peace-maker*

Popular perception of the European Union in Northern Ireland and the border counties bears out the finding that the EU is a facilitating (as opposed to driving) force for conflict transformation. For a start, the EU is not necessarily directly associated in people's minds with either conflict resolution or with cross-border relations. One interviewee suggests that the connective impact of the EU is limited to non-governmental organisations simply because they are the only ones aware of the EU's role at community level (Interview 3). Ignorance of the EU's activity persists despite the requirements to advertise receipt of EU funding and the willingness of those involved to acknowledge the importance of these funds ('we try to advertise the EU dimensions as much as possible', [Interview 7]). Certainly, even some interviewees directly involved in gaining EU funding for community projects admit that even they 'wouldn't really know a whole lot about the EU' (Interview 2). There is concern that 'society is not aware of what the EU does', that people are unclear about 'the impact of what goes on in Brussels and how it affects them where they are' (Interviews 3, 2). In addition to a generally poor level of national public knowledge about the EU, the geographical isolation of the constituencies most affected by the conflict from central government also works against strong identification with the EU. As one interviewee comments, 'whenever you live in the backend of nowhere like Donegal, Europe might as well be Argentina' (Interview 6). This reinforces the point made above about the crucial mediating role of local and national political conditions for the EU's influence.

The EU may be said to be viewed in popular opinion as politically insignificant to the conflict, as legislatively and bureaucratically antagonistic ('We say EU, but there's our EU and their EU... when you are getting all these rules and regulations from the EU and yet don't seem to be getting any of the advantages' [Interview 10]), but as economically vital. Although the EU is 'not consciously linked with cross-border relations' in the minds of local people, it is generally seen as 'a resource for infrastructure' (Interview 10).<sup>3</sup> Yet perception of the EU as a material benefactor rather than a peace-maker may be seen as one of its most unique and positive assets. As one interviewee in Derry notes, the development focus of the EU enables it to be accepted as a key player in the otherwise controversial area of cross-border relations:

Looking at what we have here, the EU has had a direct impact. People may not be aware of the extent of its reach partly because it has been seen as non-threatening... Cross-border cooperation was a product or by-product [of economic development], therefore it was natural as opposed to staged. (Interview 12)

The fact that the EU is "'expected" to support Irish infrastructure' gives it a passport to peace-building through economic development (Interview 10). This subtle influence of the EU stands in contrast to the role of other external actors in relation to the conflict, most particularly the USA which is recognised as 'winning the publicity stakes' in this regard (Interview 10).

### *3.2 The EU in comparison to the US*

...every time you switched on the TV it always seemed that it is America that is trying to solve the conflict in Ireland. (Interview 10)

The high profile role played by the United States in the peace process in Ireland, particularly during the 1990s, stands in such contrast to the European Union's role because it is, first and foremost, a very different type of 'perturbator'. The story of the role of the US in the peace process is primarily that of key individual political figures. President Bill Clinton, for example, 'put Northern Ireland right at the top... of his agenda of support for peace', and his political decisions (such as granting Sinn Féin's Gerry Adams a visa to visit the US) as well as personal involvement in negotiations are widely acknowledged as giving him a 'major role' in the peace process (Interview 9). Whilst Senator George Mitchell played an important part in facilitating de-securitisation of the conflict, the so-called 'Four Horsemen' (Senator Ted Kennedy, Speaker Tip O'Neill, Governor Hugh Carey and Senator Pat Moynihan) helped bring Northern Ireland to an international stage. Their work laid the foundation for President Jimmy

Carter's presidential statement on the subject in 1977, promising economic support from the US if the two governments worked together to resolve the conflict. John Hume recalls a phonecall from Tip O'Neill the day after the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 in which he said, 'we keep our promises, we're setting up the International Fund for Ireland' (Interview 9). The EU may not be an homogenous actor, but its identity is collective and defined more by institutions than individuals. This means that it lacks the media-friendly face of US politicians and the 'natural interest in Ireland' s stimulated by Irish-Americans. Yet these features bring with them certain risks, and, as one interviewee (who wished this comment to be anonymous) notes, the impact of the US on the conflict has not always been constructive ('Noraid', for example), and many unionists view US politicians attempting to appeal to an Irish-American electorate with a certain degree of suspicion.

### *3.3 The wider international dimension to conflict resolution*

There is a certain sense of urgency in maintaining a profile for N.Ireland/Ireland on the international stage. The peace process provided 'an opportunity to sell ourselves', but it also opened the possibility of valuable two-way connections with players in other conflict situations (Interview 10). For example, a number of interviewees mention contacts they have with groups in South Africa. The well-established links between these two cases exist not only between non-governmental organisations but also between politicians and negotiators from Ireland, north and south, and South Africa. Even those non-governmental organisations that are purely locally-based, as opposed to international, recognise the value of a wide network of support (as well as South Africa, interviewees mention specific contacts in Israel/Palestine, Nigeria, Germany, Austria, and the US). This includes funding support, and a number of NGOs appear to be well-versed in sources of funding beyond local government and the EU. The government of Ireland, and specifically the Department of Foreign Affairs, is acknowledged by a number of groups in Northern Ireland, including those working in the Protestant community, to be an important funding source. Groups based in the southern border counties, however, do not generally have access to funding sources from the United Kingdom and this can restrict cross-border projects.

Funding sources other than the EU are important because they can be easier to access (particularly for smaller grants) and, unlike the EU, they are able to facilitate projects venturing outside the region of Northern Ireland and the 6 border counties. As

interviewee 3 notes, 'those most active in peace and reconciliation here are those who have left Northern Ireland and got a wider perspective'. Yet, whilst happy to fund a southern Catholic youth club's visit to the Shankill, for example, the EU funds could not even contribute to a cross-border, cross-community trip to the Somme. This trip (made separately by women's groups and youth groups) was viewed as one of the most valuable and successful cross-border and cross-community projects performed in the Derry/Donegal region and yet it was only made possible by private funds and fund-raising (Interview 4). A number of interviewees note that, although expensive, such visits to Europe (Flanders, Brussels, Berlin, Eastern Europe) would serve both to bring individuals outside the context of conflict and to educate and inspire them with the ideals of European integration.

#### **4. The process of conflict transformation**

##### *4.1 Marooned at the stage of an identity conflict*

Diez *et al.* (2004:15) conceive this 'vision of European integration as a motor for peace' being essentially about 'the re-articulation of subject positions so that they are no longer seen as incompatible', i.e. conflict resolution. In line with a 'process model' of conflict, Diez *et al.* (2004:9-15) outline four 'stages' in the (de)escalation or resolution of conflict, each distinguishable by the way difference is communicated – episode, issues, identity, subordination. A fundamental lesson to be drawn from analysis of the Irish case study is that the process by which a conflict is transformed is gradual and uneven. Interviewees from every sector are keen to emphasise the slow pace of change and the patience needed to achieve real transformation. This is particularly true given the diversity of experience and contexts within the conflict society, which makes it impossible to classify the conflict as being at any certain overall 'stage'. As interviewee 3 notes, even within Derry city, people's conception of where the conflict is at 'varies according to whom one is working with and in which part of the city'. Nonetheless, in the private opinions of the interviewees themselves, the conflict is seen by the majority to fit the definition of an 'identity conflict' (because 'everything is compared to the other side' [Interview 5]) and by the only the most optimistic to be 'in between a conflict of identities and issues' (Interview 1). The lack of inter-communal violence is not interpreted by any interviewee as representing the achievement of peace in Northern Ireland, not least because of the overt divisions between the two communities that persist at all levels, from increasing residential segregation to the shrinking 'middle ground' in local politics.

I know we're supposed to be post-conflict but we're not....We're still stuck in a conflict situation without the conflict. The animosity, hatred and sectarian side is still here though missing is the actual conflict. (Interview 5)

Ultimately, the response of the interviewees echoes a sense of caution prevalent in society; many attribute this 'lack of a buzz, like there was before, of a positive vibe' to the political stalemate (Interview 2). The suspension of devolution means that the peace process is viewed as currently inconclusive, not least because NGOs see the success of their work at community level as inseparable from the wider political context: 'there is no point in telling people there should be reconciliation if the politicians are not working together' (Interview 2). The sense of caution is heightened by the fact that the 1998 Agreement centred on the crucial role played by local politicians:

...until the Northern Irish politicians are engaged in the process, you can't impose a solution – that's what people have been trying to do for centuries, impose their solution on other people, it doesn't work like that. (Interview 10)

Yet no interviewee is entirely pessimistic regarding the prospects for peace because of the very real changes that have occurred in the past decade, not least in the way in which 'how people communicate on a personal level, even at the top of the political heap' has altered since the ceasefires (Interview 1). However, the longer the political stalemate persists, the more entrenched the polarisation becomes and the harder it will be to find an agreed solution; as one interviewee (5) warns, 'people want to move forward *on their own terms*'.

#### *4.2 Progress in cross-border relations*

One area of substantial and ongoing change in Ireland is that of cross-border relations. At an individual level, the reduction in violence in Northern Ireland as a result of the peace process means that a wider range of people in the south are more confident in crossing the border (Interview 7). With regard to economic and political cooperation, the European Union may be seen to have 'normalised' cross-border activity. Although some level of cross-border cooperation occurred prior to the EU initiatives in this area, it was not 'fashionable' and bodies such as the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG) did not formalise or announce their activities (Interview 12). Now, in line with the aims of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), 'north/south relationships have been made real and impacting, plus there is a greater degree of integration and north-southerly now' (Interview 11). Increasing partnership is made all the more significant by the fact that the SEUPB has encouraged 'collaborative working across

sectors... as well as across borders' (Interview 11). The focus of the work of the SEUPB has been 'not for geography but for the benefit of people in the area by encouraging economic activity' (Interview 11). This is similar to other cross-border bodies, such as the NWRCBG, 'established to create a better region', with the understanding that 'physically advancing the region and its profile etc. all creates a stability which goes towards creating peace and enhancing it' (Interview 12). Elite-level interviewees place an emphasis on the economic dimension, arguing that 'on cross-border relations, if we put the infrastructure there... people will use it' (Interview 10). An example used to illustrate this is that of the car ferry established in June 2002 on Lough Foyle between Donegal and Co. Londonderry, part-funded through PEACE I via the Irish government, which had half a million passengers in its first fifteen months of business (Interview 10). The belief that 'conflict resolution happens in tandem with economic and social development activity' has underpinned the approach of many policy-makers and politicians to cross-border relations (Interview 12).

Reconciliation is almost a by-product of what we do, it has never been a conscious statement. In fact, that may well be why conflict resolution has been a successful by-product of our activity, because it is not the focus or aim. (Interview 12)

A primary emphasis on economic gain has been fundamental to the success of cross-border activity in Ireland; this reinforces the point made above, namely that the EU's greatest asset as a perturbator of the conflict is its economic credentials.

## **5. Cross-border and cross-community reconciliation**

### *5.1 The EU ideal: development, cooperation and peace*

The EU, therefore, may be viewed as a successful and significant perturbator of cross-border relations in Ireland. Questions remain, however, as to how cross-border relations relate to and affect the conflict itself. As noted in earlier papers from this research, the EU has conceived of the conflict in essentially binary terms: British/Unionist/Protestant and Irish/Nationalist/Catholic (Hayward 2004a, 2004b). This dualist conception of the conflict lies at the heart of the 1998 Agreement, hence its three 'strands' of British-Irish, north-south and unionist-nationalist cooperation. According to this approach, the conflict is not fundamentally about religion or ideology or class, it is about the contested sovereignty over the island of Ireland. Historically competing visions of Irish and British nationalism are embodied in the Irish border and in every part of society in Northern Ireland that replicates this dual divide. The logic of the Agreement, as that of the European Union, is to move the conflict from one of violent subordination, through

an identity conflict, to a conflict about issues articulated through political debate. The assumption here is that interests on both sides can be best met through cooperation, and that cooperation increases mutual understanding. Development, cooperation and peace are thus tied together in the ‘European ideal’ and, specifically, in the EU’s approach to borders. This is seen in the two major programmes of the EU relating to cross-border relations in Ireland, namely PEACE and INTERREG. The broad aims of the Europe-wide INTERREG programme are to ‘support cross-border cooperation, social cohesion and economic development between EU regions’ ([www.eugrants.org](http://www.eugrants.org)). In the context of Ireland/Northern Ireland, the ‘economic and social disadvantages which can result from the existence of a border’ are tackled in INTERREG IIIA through the promotion of ‘cross border networks involving, and also benefiting, local communities’ (SEUPB 2003:1).<sup>4</sup> Through INTERREG and other Community Initiatives such as LEADER, URBAN and EQUAL, the Special EU Programmes Body considers it possible to ‘develop *cooperation, understanding and action* between people and organisations in Ireland and Northern Ireland’ ([www.seupb.org/about](http://www.seupb.org/about), emphasis added). The Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE) established in 1995 exclusively for Northern Ireland and the six southern border counties is similarly founded on a connection between development, cooperation and peace. Its aims are:

To reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by increasing economic development and employment, promoting urban and rural regeneration, development of cross-border co-operation and extending social inclusion (ADM/CPA 2000:iv).

Hence, the EU’s approach to the conflict in Ireland/Northern Ireland stands or falls on the strength of its core assumption: cross-border cooperation is fundamental to economic development, and both are fundamental to the achievement of peace. A criticism made by Harvey in a report on PEACE I is valid here:

The links between peace and reconciliation, community development, community relations and economic development were ambiguities buried deep in this Programme from the very start and remain unresolved. (Harvey 1997, quoted in McDonald 2000:8).

Assessing the integrity of the development/cooperation/peace nexus is a task that lies beyond the immediate requirements of this particular paper. Nonetheless, the evidence produced by this research project suggests that the ambiguities that Harvey refers to do have consequences for the practical implementation and success of the EU programmes in Ireland.

## 5.2 *Conflict and the southern border region*

Priority 5 of the PEACE II Programme concentrates exclusively on cross-border cooperation, with measures covering reconciliation and understanding, education and training, public sector cooperation, and economic development. The Programme's inclusion of the southern border counties has been justified on the grounds that it is a region disadvantaged as a direct result of its location on the border, both through being on the Irish periphery and through being 'inextricably bound up with the Northern situation' (PEACE I Programme Document, quoted in McDonald 2000:27). This perception is reiterated by those interviewed in this research, which has concentrated on the north-west border region of Derry/Donegal. The evidence produced here would reiterate the finding of the ADM/CPA (2000:4) report on the southern border counties that groups involved in reconciliation work in Northern Ireland are generally less inclined than their southern counterparts to focus on cross-border work. This is not surprising given that, for the duration of the Troubles, popular perception in the Republic (supported by the official and media discourse) was that the conflict was a 'northern problem'. Interviewees generally acknowledge that the conflict had a detrimental effect on the southern border counties in economic terms (the major industry of tourism, for example, was directly affected). According to a Donegal TD,

...the border hasn't been seen by people in Donegal but it has been felt by people in Donegal... because they are close to this traditionally hostile territory, as seen by people from outside... There wouldn't have been that many bombs of course, but the impact of people not coming into an area because there were potential bombs nearby or potential danger nearby had the same economic downturn for our region. (Interview 10)

But although the border was permeated by the transference of economic disadvantage, it was reinforced through the Troubles as 'not only psychological but physical...strongly maintained by the army' (Interview 6). Even in Donegal 'where people can look across the river and see the North... people would have avoided going to Derry unless they had to during the conflict' (Interview 6). Such was the psychological distancing from the conflict made by those in the southern border counties that,

After the 1994 ceasefires, people in Donegal felt relieved and relatively unscathed by the physical conflict in Northern Ireland and hoped that peace moved forward in Northern Ireland. They didn't see it involving them. (Interview 8)

Given the association of the conflict with 'the north', any reconciliation work that took place in the south was, therefore, naturally more likely to have a cross-border dimension.

### *5.3 Inter-community boundaries, north and south*

It would be a mistake, however, to accept popular perception as fact and view the conflict as essentially confined to Northern Ireland. To disagree slightly with the ADM/CPA (2000:3) report's assertion that 'cross-community models for contact and reconciliation are almost always more appropriate in Northern Ireland' and cross-border models more effective in the south, it is worth noting that deep-rooted problems exist in community relations in the Republic. Criteria for community development funding in EU programmes have actually served to bring such issues to the fore. The fear and denial that characterised the southern response to the Troubles led to cross-community difference being further suppressed, and 'for a long time in Donegal, there was a lack of recognition that there was an issue in relationships between the two traditions' (Interview 6). This persists to some degree, with the regular breaking of windows in a Protestant hall in a Donegal village being labelled as an act of 'vandalism rather than sectarianism, although the windows of the Catholic chapel are never broken' and the burning of an Orange Hall in another Donegal village in July 2002 being blamed on 'individuals who had come from Derry' (Interview 6, Anon.). Yet, interviewees involved in the community sector in Donegal admit that, 'sectarian comments are made all the time', 'Protestants sometimes see themselves as second class citizens', 'the "us" and "them" mentality remains', 'young people aren't mixing' (Catholics and Protestants go to different schools, with some of the latter crossing the border to attend Protestant schools in Londonderry), and there is a 'stigma attached' to Catholic/Protestant cooperation in the south (Interviews 6, 7, 8). As a consequence, these interviewees recognise the value of 'examples and links with groups in the North to get ideas about reconciliation' (Interview 7).<sup>5</sup> It remains 'a lot more difficult to get into some of these issues here than in the North', but this is partly because 'community' and 'community development' are underdeveloped concepts in Donegal (Interview 6). A further complicating factor is that 'the whole connotation of "community" is different for Protestants and Catholics (Interview 8). Combined with the fact that experience and interests differ widely between communities on both sides of the border, it is not surprising that a primary problem faced by community groups seeking cross-border links, such as those facilitated by measure 5.3 of the PEACE II Programme, is finding common ground for cooperation.

The most successful cross-border projects are those between groups that share specific interests or identities (for example, single mothers or early school leavers); relationships built around shared issues can later develop into ones able to tackle points of difference

(Interviews 3, 13). However, finding such similar groups across the border can be difficult, not least because ‘huge differences exist’ between the Protestant and Catholic communities north and south (Interview 8). In contrast to their co-religionists in Northern Ireland, for example, many Protestants in the Republic have a ‘strong Irish identity’ (Interview 8). Or compare the ‘close and compact’ Protestant community in the Fountain enclave in the centre of Londonderry to the dispersed rural Protestant community in East Donegal (Interview 6). Thus, even when similar groups come together across the border, finding topics of common interest that may lead to deeper understanding or reconciliation is problematic. Issues which stimulate heated discussion around identity in cross-community workshops in Northern Ireland, such as sectarianism, racism or policing, are simply seen as irrelevant by groups from the south (Interview 2). Yet the perception that those in rural Donegal ‘don’t carry any agenda’ because of their different location and experience can actually facilitate cross-community work across the border. Whereas links between a Protestant youth group in the Fountain and a mainly Catholic youth group from St. Johnston and Carrigans in Donegal have proven productive, similar contact between the same group in the Fountain and a Catholic youth group from the Bogside in Derry would be inconceivable (Interviews 4, 6).

The border is certainly still a major dividing line. Donegal would be seen as ‘alien territory’ to many Protestants in Londonderry who simply wouldn’t see themselves as having a ‘need to go there’ (Interview 6). At a more sinister level, a van was shot at recently in a loyalist estate in Londonderry apparently for no reason other than having Donegal registration plates (Interview 5). In contrast, Derry is not seen as in any way ‘foreign’ by those in Donegal and ‘there is little fear among border counties citizens of crossing the border’ (Interviews 10, 8). Nonetheless, the boundaries that appear to be most significant for defining identities and social interaction on a daily basis in Northern Ireland are those *between* the communities. These borders have become generally more entrenched and more physically visible in recent years, as seen in the growth of residential segregation that has accompanied the peace process.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Derry, the river Foyle which divides the city into east (Waterside) and west (Cityside) is seen as the most significant border for Protestants in the city, some of whom have never crossed over it (Interview 5). The migration of Protestants from the Cityside at the start of the Troubles was, it seems, ‘permanent’; those who remained as part of a small minority on the west side are now afraid to venture out of their enclave

even a few hundred yards to the city centre (Interviews 8, 1).<sup>7</sup> The dividing lines are not only between Protestant and Catholic communities; factionalism within communities, particularly in loyalist areas, mean that different housing estates in Derry/Londonderry are dominated by particular paramilitary groups, making movement between different parts of the city even more difficult.<sup>8</sup> The overt and violent sectarian conflict that is manifest on a regular basis at interface points within Northern Ireland cannot be ignored. As one interviewee notes, one night's stone-throwing in an interface area can more than undo any good done by a six week cross-community project (Interview 6). Because any cross-border or cross-community project is so vulnerable, plus necessarily limited to a particular time or location, the long-term success of reconciliation work must depend on the confidence and security that individuals have 'within their own community'. Thus, interviewees admit that their priorities lie in developing their 'own community and area', addressing 'conflict within [their] own community', and getting individuals to 'engage in [their] local community' (Interviews 1, 7, 8). The indirect way in which EU funds (including applications for and use of) stimulate these very processes of community awareness, participation and development is seen as one of the most positive consequences of the EU's activity in the region.

## **6. Positive and negative effects of the EU's involvement**

### *6.1 The EU and community development*

Even prior to receipt of EU funding, the process of applying for a grant can be highly valuable for a group in at least two ways. First, the large amount of information and support required by groups in order to even get to the stage of applying for an EU grant means that networks are formed between various community and voluntary organisations. For example, in Derry, a small community group can get advice from, to name but a few sources, the Holywell Trust, the North West Community Network, the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, the Local Strategy Partnership, and the Community Relations Officer of Derry City Council. These networks can produce vital contacts between individuals when it comes to enacting the project, and many interviewees emphasise the importance of personal relationships between project managers etc. when it comes to arranging cross-community and cross-border events. Secondly, completing the application form requires detailed consideration of not only the aims for future reconciliation but also of the legacy of the conflict. This has been particularly important for the Protestant community in Donegal, as recalled by the development officer of the Derry and Raphoe Action Group:

Whilst they often begin by saying it didn't affect them, just the other side of the border, soon things such as the burning of buildings during civil war, flying of black flags during the hunger strikes, the closing of businesses during funerals related to the conflict, even loss and injuries caused by bomb blasts on the border, are shared. There is a fear of digging it up again, yet in encouraging people to do so by the application process, the PEACE programme has done a lot to allow people to tell their story and giving room to get someone to listen. (Interview 8)

This interviewee views the discussion of the conflict in the application for EU grants as crucial to a wider process of reconciliation, not least because it helps develop a sense of common need and identity among the applicants.

Even aside from the direct impact of EU funds in specific areas, EU funds have played a vital part in strengthening the community sector. In contrast to 'slow progress at the political level, there's a whole group in the middle, the community groups, who've made great progress' through EU funding (Interview 8). As the community/voluntary sector has become more organised and 'professionalised' in line with the requirements of EU funding, community development has also become an area of growth, expanding to include those outside the 'education system and regular economy' and thus beyond the reach of the state (Interviews 7, 1). Of course, there are other sources of funding for community development (particularly in Northern Ireland) but EU grants are seen as having unique benefits. For example, EU grants tend to be larger and more long-term than others, thus allowing for 'vital' 'core funding' such as salaries of full-time workers or buildings (Interviews 4, 3). In addition, the 'special' nature of the EU programmes is that they have a north/south dimension, and the EU is noted for its facilitation of cross-border projects (Interview 11). However, the crucial role played by the EU in shaping community development in Northern Ireland and the border counties – in addition to the fact that so many projects and groups simply would not exist without EU funding – brings with it huge responsibility. The strengths of the EU in this area are, therefore, intrinsically connected to its main weaknesses.

### *6.2 Limitations of funding criteria*

There have been many comprehensive reports written, with a far greater resource base than this paper, to specifically address the question of how to improve the effectiveness of the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes. This section will, therefore, concentrate on points specifically related to the interviewees' experience as mediators of the European ideal, showing how certain aspects of EU programmes can actually serve to

counter their intended aims. Criticisms regarding the EU's role made by the interviewees centre on the delivery of EU funding and cover three main areas: access, measurement of outcomes, and sustainability. First, the 'grinding' and 'complicated' application process, with long and detailed application forms that require months of preparation to complete, means that 'many groups haven't the ability or capacity' to access EU funds (Interviews 1, 3, 4). Some voluntary groups have to undergo major institutional change in order to be able to apply for EU funds (for example, some become limited companies with directors, constitutions etc.) whilst others have to rely on the benefaction of large groups already familiar with EU funding (Interviews 7, 1). The complexity of the application process does not ensure that funding goes to the most deserving or even best-organised projects. Even well-established organisations with paid administrators struggle to gain funding; small groups are further disadvantaged by the lack of time their members have to complete the funding application and by a lack of experience with the process itself. For example, the specialist language used in and expected from the application forms can deter many prospective applicants. There is, interviewees contend, a need to 'de-jargonise', because at the moment 'the funding doesn't seem to go to areas that need it most but to whoever can fill in the form right, who can use the right words and terminology', which is problematic given that the 'people who can word a form well aren't necessarily those who do the best work' (Interviews 13, 5, 3).

As a consequence, some groups see the only way to survive being to 'adapt their real project to suit the funding criteria':

You find sometimes that people are making up a project according to the criteria as opposed to having a need addressed. They play the game so that they can get the funding. (Anon.).

Meanwhile, a 'particularly important programme may not be able to get money because it doesn't fit the criteria, it doesn't matter that it's doing a really good job and is needed' (Interview 5). The amendments made to the latest rounds of PEACE and INTERREG funding actually served to worsen this situation by narrowing the funding criteria. For example, capacity building, noted above as one of the greatest assets of EU funding, could be included within PEACE I but is harder to justify under PEACE II criteria (Interview 8). This has major implications, given the 'agenda-setting role' of EU programmes that arises from their significance for cross-border community work in Ireland (Interview 7). Cross-border projects funded by the EU can only include groups

from within Northern Ireland and the six border counties. This means that the EU often ends up funding ‘artificial partnerships’ created in response to programme criteria, whilst strong pre-existing cross-border links between groups across the island go unrewarded (Anon.; Interviews 11, 13).

### *6.3 Problematic measurement of project outcomes*

Another change between PEACE I and PEACE II is that the monitoring of the use of the money has become much stricter. In practice, this means a huge (‘excessive’, ‘unbelievable’) amount of paperwork for the recipients to complete. Although all interviewees acknowledge the importance of auditing, they also bemoan the time consumed by this paperwork. For it inevitably detracts from the impact of the project itself, with more time being spent on ‘accounting for every penny, every piece of paper’ than actually ‘doing the work the funding was secured for’ (Interviews 1, 3). Similarly, interviewees also question the focus of this auditing and the way in which the success of a project is assessed. They contend that projects need to be ‘evaluated in terms of outcome, what the work is achieving rather than accounting for every penny’ (Interview 3). Much criticism is made of the quantitative nature of the assessments, which require grant recipients to ‘tick boxes’ and give numbers of participants from each community or from each side of the border in order to show the value of a cross-community or cross-border project. For example, PEACE II funding for a project in Donegal requires that a third of young people participating in events have to be Protestant (Interview 7). This has two major problems. First, it can lead to ‘artificially contrived situations’ being established in order to meet the criteria of EU funds (one interviewee, who wished this comment to be anonymous, mentions the promise of a ‘good supper’ being used to attract individuals to participate in an event and thus raise the numbers required). Of even greater consequence is the fact that categorising individuals as in one community or another serves to reinforce the dividing line that reconciliation work intends to transcend. General estimates would surely fulfil the purpose for which the boxes currently have to be ticked, and would avoid reifying identity boundaries; as those involved in cross-community work are particularly aware, ‘people do object to being labelled’ and the EU would do better to assess ‘good practice’ on more flexible and appropriate grounds (Interview 3).

### *6.4 EU projects successful but not sustainable*

The final aspect of EU funding identified as problematic arises directly from the success of the EU programmes. The position of the EU as a core funding source across various sectors of society means that a vast range of projects and organisations are dependent on EU grants. Particularly in the community sector, the success of projects funded by EU programmes has given rise to further expectations and to further needs, as groups become larger and take on new roles in community development (for example, in the way that an after-school homework club might produce a literacy class). Groups suffer from the unpredictability of funding, both in the short-term (when they receive payment promised) and in the long-term (how to pay the salaried staff once the PEACE II funds dry-up in December 2004). One interviewee (who wished this comment to be anonymous) summarised the problem thus:

...you can set up a community centre, you can put a beautiful big hall there and all the rest, but there's no understanding of how you're going to train a person to be the manager of that hall, how you're going to pay for them in five or ten years' time when the funding's not there any more. And what happens is you're building people's expectations up and that's fine and they love the idea of the big hall being there but reality dawns at some stage – the big hall has lights and heating and all sorts of bills attached to it and running costs. *The last thing you want in a few years' time is for the money to have dried up and all these white elephants to be around.*

Intermediary bodies, such as ADM/CPA, attempt to prepare the groups for sustainability whilst at the same time lobbying for gap funding for 2004-2006 and for a smaller, more flexible PEACE III Programme within Structural Funding (Interview 13; EU Cross Border Management Committee 2003). However, expectations that proving the worth of projects funded by the EU to date will lead to them being 'mainstreamed' are, according to one politician, misplaced (Interview 10). This is not least because EU funding, as intended, has been additional to government funding and because local, regional and national government in Ireland has itself benefited from EU funding. There is a particular fear amongst groups in the southern border counties that they will be forgotten should funding for EU programmes aimed at resolving the conflict be reduced to narrower specifications (Interview 7). In this sense, the biggest threat facing the work of projects funded by EU cross-border programmes is that PEACE and INTERREG be deemed to have successfully achieved their goals.

## **7. Conclusions**

The most significant realm of direct action for the EU as a perturbator of the conflict in Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland has been in cross-border relations. Its role in this

area has been facilitated by its credentials as a powerful, and neutral, economic actor or, more specifically, material benefactor. Thus, the direct ‘connective’ impact of the EU on the conflict society through EU cross-border programmes is broadly recognised as the chief pathway of influence for the EU in the conflict. By funding projects in the community sector as well as in the private and public sectors, the EU has become a major stimulant for community development on both sides of the border. Although not acknowledged in public opinion as a ‘peace-maker’ in Ireland, the EU’s support of growing community confidence and activity on both sides of the border is intrinsically connected to conflict transformation. For many see long-term reconciliation as coming from building relations ‘not between individuals but between communities’ and will argue that ‘community development and peacebuilding are the same thing’ (Interviews 6, 7). This fits in well with the EU’s own approach to the conflict, which is to view it as a conflict of identities that needs to move to a non-violent conflict around issues.

Bringing different communities together – permanently ending conflict – is the very essence of what the European Union stands for. (Santer, CEC President 1995-1999, quoted in McDonald 2000:34).

According to the logic of the European ideal, the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland thus becomes increasingly irrelevant as a cause of conflict, as common interests are met through cooperation. Certainly, at the level of economic development, cross-border trade and partnership are generally viewed as positive and productive, and the context as well as financial support provided by the EU has been a crucial facilitator of this change.<sup>9</sup> However, the assumptions that the same principles of development/cooperation/peace apply at a community level need to be questioned. For a start, the re-iteration of identity difference that precedes cross-community and cross-border cooperation can be counter-productive. Moreover, the different experiences and priorities that groups have on either side of the border mean that finding common grounds for cooperation, let alone reconciliation, can be difficult. The risks involved in cross-community and cross-border work are heightened by the fact that the EU is not an independent force for change, but is vulnerable to conditions determined by the political context. Political stalemate and worsening polarisation at a community level in Northern Ireland have so far prevented the 1998 Agreement from moving beyond the institutionalisation of difference to achieve the ‘healing process’ of ‘working together in our common interest’ (Interview 9). If conflict resolution requires subject positions to be rearticulated as compatible, then increasing the awareness and significance of

community identity is obviously problematic. Subject positions in Northern Ireland have become more entrenched in a binary divide and the institutions that were intended to facilitate cooperation across this divide at the regional level are currently suspended. The unique example of the EU shows that ‘cooperation’ needs to be multilevel, multi-sectoral, self-perpetuating, change-inducing and, furthermore, that ‘common interests’ need not be confined to purely economic gain. Whilst it may be relatively powerless to influence the elite-level directly, the EU does have a pathway of influence through the community-level. The challenge facing the EU now is to use its influence in community development as an impetus for change rather than a hindrance to progress beyond an identity conflict in Ireland.

### **Interviews**

1. O. Donnelly (Project co-ordinator), Holos Project. Interviewed by author in Derry, 27 April 2004.

2. J. Devine (Project trainer) and J. Kelly (Project co-ordinator), Right to Hope Project. Interviewed by author in Derry, 27 April 2004.

3. S. Gallagher (Community relations officer), Derry City Council. Interviewed by author in Derry, 28 April 2004.

4. J. Warke (Project manager), Cathedral Youth Group/ Shared City Project. Interviewed by author in Derry, 28 April 2004.

5. Anon. (Vice-chair of a youth and community association in a loyalist estate on the Waterside). Interviewed by author in Derry, 5 May 2004.

6. J. Doherty (Youth worker), St. Johnston and Carrigans Resource Centre. Interviewed by author in St. Johnston, 6 May 2004.

7. P. Muldoon (Community youth worker), Ballintra/Laghey Youth Project. Interviewed by author in Ballintra, 6 May 2004.

8. I. McCracken (Development officer), Derry and Raphoe Action Group. Interviewed by author in Raphoe, 20 May 2004.

9. J. Hume (former MP, MEP, MLA), Social Democratic and Labour Party. Interviewed by author in Belfast, 1 June 2004.

10. C. Keaveney (TD, former county councillor), Fianna Fáil. Interviewed by author in Dublin, 1 July 2004.

11. J. O’Connor (Director of Community initiatives), Special EU Programmes Body. Interviewed by author in Monaghan, 14 July 2004.

12. E. Molloy (Development officer), North West Region Cross Border Group. Interviewed by author in Derry, 14 July 2004.

13. C. Nulty (Development officer), Area Development Management Ltd./ Combat Poverty Agency. Interviewed by author in Monaghan, 24 August 2004.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note, however, that this result is no doubt affected by the fact that all of the community-level interviewees were linked to projects that had received EU funding.

<sup>2</sup>For example, Interviewee 4 is a highly experienced project manager, interviewed in her capacity both as an employee of Derry City Council (Shared City Project) and as leader of the main youth club in the Protestant Fountain area of Derry city. She says that the Club would not have existed without EU funding, ‘There’d have been much more violence if we [the Youth Club] hadn’t been there. We cut interface violence by 65% in the two months of the summer scheme’.

<sup>3</sup> ‘People assume we’re going to get money on the basis that we’re a border region with Objective One status etc. but I don’t know if they really associate that with cross-border relations.’ (Interview 10)

<sup>4</sup> The priorities of INTERREG IIIA are integrated local development strategies, supporting physical infrastructure, and civic and community networking. (SEUPB 2003:1).

<sup>5</sup> Although, as one community worker in Derry notes, there is still resistance to cross-community work in Northern Ireland.

<sup>6</sup> In many parts of Northern Ireland, Catholic and Protestant areas have become increasingly segregated since the ceasefires. An estimated two-thirds of the population now live in areas that are either 90% Protestant or 90% Catholic, and the number of ‘peace walls’ separating residential communities is nearly three times that of ten years ago (Shirlow 2001, Wilson 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Comparing census data from 1971 and 1991 from the city of Derry/Londonderry, Smyth (1996) shows that during the Troubles the Protestant population on the Cityside (west) has decreased by 83% and increased by 27% on the Waterside (east). Overall, the city itself has

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become less mixed, having seen a 36% increase in the Catholic population and a 31% decrease in the Protestant population

<sup>8</sup> Interviewee 5, for example, notes that, of Protestant estates on the Waterside, Lincoln Courts is associated with the Ulster Defence Association, Irish Street with the Ulster Freedom Fighters, Nelson Drive with the Ulster Volunteer Force and the UDA. Thus, paramilitary groups have dominance within certain territories defined to the nearest house, marked by wall murals and jealously guarded.

<sup>9</sup> Ian Paisley Jr.'s, Democratic Unionist Party, description of a cross-border cooperative established by farmers north and south to save a chip factory in Ballymoney as 'a fine example of genuine economic co-operation' illustrates the relatively recent acceptability of cross-border partnerships across the political spectrum (12 March 2004, BBC N.Ireland).

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