



Project part financed
by the European Union
Peace and Reconciliation Programme

Research for Sustainable Peace

Summary of Research
Projects funded through the
European Union Peace II and
Peace II Extension Programmes



Community Relations Council



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Measure 2.1 – Reconciliation for Sustainable Peace

The information contained herein has been extracted from the funded organisation's original grant aid application form, supplementary documentation and subsequent letter of offer.

For further information on any of the projects listed in this document please contact:

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Introduction

This publication highlights research funded through Measure 2.1 of the European Union's Programme for Peace and Reconciliation, which is administered by the Community Relations Council. The overall aims of Measure 2.1 are to provide opportunities for civil society to promote reconciliation and peace building efforts and to encourage communities in areas which had previously experienced violence or its consequences to develop strategies and activities which promote reconciliation as a means to sustaining peace.

The 25 research projects represented in this booklet are undertaking or have completed focused academic work that has the potential to impact the daily lives of people in Northern Ireland. Research can accomplish this through equipping a number of areas, groups and sectors with valuable data that can inform them of the structures, attitudes and practices that may need to be addressed in order to promote social change and peace building.

Research can make (and, indeed, has made) ground breaking contributions to peace building work in Northern Ireland, but often this work may pass under the radar of the general public. The purpose of this publication is to make such work more accessible, more visible, and more influential.

The research funded through Peace II is listed in the first section of this booklet, followed by more recently funded Peace II Extension projects. All Peace II research projects were completed in mid-2006, and details on how to access any publications emanating from these projects are listed with each project's contact details. Peace II Extension research projects are ongoing as of April 2007, with publications from these projects likely to be available in mid-2008.

The research projects listed here represent a valuable and extensive body of academic work focused on promoting peace building, and it is my hope that this work can have practical, strategic impacts for peace building and reconciliation in Northern Ireland for many years to come.

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Research Officer – European Programme

April 2007

ARK Young Life and Times Survey

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Project Website: www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

A survey based research project on changing attitudes to community relations among young adults.

AIMS:

To monitor changing attitudes to community relations issues among 16 year olds across Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To monitor changing attitudes to community relations issues among a random sample of 16 year olds across Northern Ireland;

To contribute to policy-making on community relations and evaluation of policy over the longer term;

To increase research knowledge of these issues;

To monitor the views of young people in other key areas such as education and to publicise these;

To work with partners and otherwise feed our results into the range of activities now taking place around the needs and wishes of young people in Northern Ireland.

A number of publications from this project are available and can be found on the website listed above.

Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland

The Future of the Church in the Public Square

Authors: John Keiss and Alwyn Thompson

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Project Website: www.contemporarychristianity.org

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This project is an exploration of the relations between political, human rights and community relations processes in European transitional societies and the potential for enhancing the degree of integration between these processes, with particular reference to the role of religious communities.

AIMS:

To address the question of the interaction between churches in Northern Ireland and the public debate concerning peacemaking in Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To explore the interaction between the church and the field of community relations;

To explore the interaction between the church and the field of human rights;

To explore the interaction between the church and the political process.

The final report for this project is available. Please contact Libby Smit at lsmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.

City Bridges Building a New Inclusive Society – An Action Plan for the Trade Union Movement

Author: Brian Gormally

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Project Website: www.citybridges.com

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This research aims to assess how the Belfast and District Trade Union Council and the trade union movement in general can best contribute to a peaceful and inclusive society.

OBJECTIVES:

Explore perceptions of the composition, structures, activities, values and future role of the trade union movement;

Identify any barriers to the full participation in the movement of, in particular, Protestants, Catholics, Nationalists, Unionists, Women and, in general, other potentially excluded groups of people;

Agree actions for the Belfast Trades Council and proposals for the wider movement that will ensure equity, diversity and interdependence within its structures and activities;

Agree actions for the Belfast Trades Council and proposals for the wider movement that outline a positive role in the broader community.

The final report for this project is available on the project website.

Democratic Dialogue *Community Reconciliation in Northern Ireland: Realising opportunities, meeting challenges and ensuring new innovation into the future*

Authors: Brandon Hamber and Gráinne Kelly

Contact Names: Brandon Hamber
Gráinne Kelly

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Project Website: http://www.brandonhamber.com/pubs_reports.htm

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This research seeks to examine the role that community organisations and voluntary groups play in facilitating reconciliation processes at a community level, and their relationships with local councils.

OBJECTIVES:

To audit community relations processes within specific council areas and examine how local councils have supported and developed reconciliation initiatives in three case study areas;

To examine how local councils have constrained or supported community initiatives to promote reconciliation;

To examine how community projects have impacted on local council attitudes towards - and initiatives on - reconciliation, and vice versa;

To produce detailed examinations of specific reconciliation initiatives in case study areas with analysis of how reconciliation is conceptualised, how it is put into practice and how effective the projects are in achieving their objectives;

To produce comparative reports on how the case study projects and councils in the different areas conceptualise and operationalise reconciliation, and how this can be understood in terms of local differences, histories and cultural practices, noting how effective these initiatives are in promoting reconciliation;

To develop a comparative understanding of the meaning of reconciliation between the case study areas;

To extract practical lessons for community based reconciliation interventions through greater conceptual understanding and transference of knowledge between the different areas;

To develop recommendations to guide local council attempts to enhance reconciliation.

Project reports are available and can be found on the website listed above.

INCORE *Politicians and Community Relations*

Authors: Gillian Robinson and Frank Foley

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Project Website: <http://www.incore.ulster.ac.uk/research/projects/pcr/>

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This project aims to acquire a greater understanding of the perspectives of Northern Ireland's politicians on community relations work in order to ensure a more cohesive and agreed approach to the further development of such work with practitioners and policy makers.

OBJECTIVES:

To outline how NI politicians understand and define 'community relations';

To achieve an understanding of how current CR work is viewed by NI politicians, and the variety of such views;

To achieve an understanding of the kinds of CR work politicians are willing to support and assist, and in which they will participate;

To achieve an understanding of the kinds of work they are reluctant to support, and about which they have reservations in terms of their participation;

To achieve an understanding from CR practitioners about their perceptions of the kinds of support they believe could be helpful from politicians on CR issues.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research
Interface Violence in East Belfast in 2002
Author: Jonny Byrne

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Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk/documents/Interface%20Violence.pdf

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The research seeks to explore the impact of the outbreak of violence in 2002 at the Short Strand/East Belfast interface, the initiatives used to end the violence, and the lessons that can be learned from this context.

AIMS:

To identify the understandings of residents in the lower Newtownards Road – Short Strand - Albertsbridge Road area, as to why the interface violence erupted so violently in 2002;

To determine the impact of the violence on the lives of adults and children living in the area, on local voluntary, community and commercial networks and on the wider community of interest in East Belfast;

To identify the factors that have helped to prevent the violence from continuing or recommencing in 2003.

OBJECTIVES:

To document the recent history and nature of the interface violence in the Short Strand/Inner East area from the perspective of local residents and other local interested parties;

To identify the various types of impact that the violence has had on the lives of residents and other local people in terms of feelings of safety, health, sense of well-being and community relationships;

Record and analyse the initiatives that have been put in place to try to stop or reduce the violence;

Highlight lessons that can be learned from recent events and actions for statutory bodies and local community and voluntary groups.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research *Shared Living – Mixed Residential Communities in Northern Ireland*

Authors: Jonny Byrne, Ulf Hansson and John Bell

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Project Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The research focuses on auditing the existing mixed residential communities across Northern Ireland and researching how they have survived, developed, prospered, and/or struggled through the conflict and current peace process to identify lessons that can benefit future strategic planning and development.

AIMS:

To provide base line quantitative data on the scale and location of non-segregated residential communities in Northern Ireland;

To offer an analysis of quality of life issues and the nature of social relationships in mixed residential communities;

To explore the value and relevance of the theoretical concepts of bonding, bridging and linking social capital in creating sustainable, integrated residential communities.

OBJECTIVES:

To identify the NIHE estates and properties which are defined as mixed or non-segregated residential areas;

To map the location of non-segregated residential communities across Northern Ireland;

To identify the make up of the population of non-segregated residential communities;

To identify a small number of mixed residential communities for more detailed qualitative research;

To map the range and variety of organisations and networks operating in the selected communities;

To interview selected residents, community activists and representatives of local organisations and statutory bodies to elevate quality of life issues in selected communities;

To explore how residents in mixed communities respond to tensions and conflict and how tensions and conflict from outside might impinge upon communities in mixed residential areas;

To identify issues around the levels of support provided for mixed residential areas by statutory and governmental bodies and agencies.

A project report is available and can be found on the website listed above.

Institute for Conflict Research *Troubled Youth? Young People, Violence and Disorder in Northern Ireland*

Author: Ulf Hansson

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Project Website: www.conflictresearch.org.uk
www.conflictresearch.org.uk/documents/Troubled%20Youth.pdf

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This research aims to explore the situation of young people in communities worst affected by sectarian division, to document their roles in relation to violence and to identify ways in which marginalized young people can be positively engaged and involved in building social capital and inter-generational alliances.

AIMS:

To investigate the role played by young people in inter and intra community disorder and violence;

Explore the factors facilitating their participation in disorder and violence;

Determine the nature of their attitudes towards their own and neighbouring communities.

OBJECTIVES:

Ascertain the factors that contribute to young people becoming involved in street violence, rioting and forms of anti-social behaviour;

Investigate community responses to such violence;

Establish the range of options for help for communities and young people;

Assess alternative forms of response to such behaviour.

A project report is available and can be found on the websites listed above.

Public Achievement *Democratic Civic Practice: Building Democratic Communities Together – A Training Curriculum*

Author: Dr. Ross VeLure Roholt

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Project Website: www.publicachievement.com

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The Training Educators for Change research is designed to develop and evaluate a new pedagogy and curriculum for active citizenship. Individuals engaged in youth worker and teacher training would act as ‘coaches’ for the active citizenship projects, and would be involved in the action research process.

AIMS:

To develop through action research new pedagogical models for active learning and civic engagement cross community.

OBJECTIVES:

Development of action projects: This project will pair students in teacher and youth work training programmes (in cross-community pairs where possible) to coach young people on action projects within a variety of communities¹ around issues they indicate are meaningful and important and that result in public outcomes. These projects will also be publicly evaluated.

Training of coaches: All participating coaches will be trained on action research methods and their use in responding to issues of practice. Of particular emphasis will be how and if this methodology can be useful when working in contested and divided societies². In addition, coaches will receive training on democratic civic practice, youth work in contested and divided societies, basic group work, and building reconciliation.

1 These communities are generally areas that face significant social disadvantage – high on NTSN indicators, and also areas that have suffered disproportionately through the conflict – including a number of ‘interface’ communities

2 This will include an examination of local and international effective practice in these areas

Development of curriculum: An important objective of this project is to develop a curriculum to use in both teacher and youth work training programmes to develop future teacher and youth workers' skills and knowledge in coaching young people on action projects in a contested and divided society and understand at an intermediate level the orientation and ethos necessary to successfully coach young people on a cross community basis.

Field tested curriculum: This curriculum will be field tested over three years, with improvements and suggestions coming from young people engaged in action projects within their schools and communities and from the coaches working with them. The objective is to provide a research based curriculum for adults working with young people across communities in Northern Ireland that has been thoroughly evaluated.

Development of resources: Guides, evaluation reports, training exercises, and any other resources used in this project will be gathered and organised so that others can have supportive materials on engaging young people in action projects.

Dissemination of learning: This methodology and curriculum will be disseminated through a summer institute and through ongoing conversations and trainings with faculty at teacher and youth worker training programmes throughout Northern Ireland.

A final report for this project will be launched in May 2007.

University of Ulster *An Analysis of Attitudes to Official Truth Recovery Processes – A Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey*

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Project Website: <http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/results/polatt.html>

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The project will undertake a quantitative research survey carried out by the Northern Ireland Life and Times with a representative sample (1,800 responses) in order to provide an analysis of attitudes towards official, or formal post-conflict truth mechanisms.

AIMS:

The central aim of the research is to provide an analysis of attitudes toward official, or formal post-conflict truth mechanisms.

OBJECTIVES:

To examine and provide policy-relevant information on attitudes toward formal post-conflict truth recovery mechanisms;

To explore and provide information on the ways in which an official truth recovery process might (or might not) contribute to conflict resolutions intra/inter community reconciliation;

To critically analyse and provide information on how various sections of society comprehend concepts such as 'truth', 'justice', 'healing' and 'reconciliation';

To critically analyse and provide information on levels of knowledge, fears and expectations of such a process amongst different sections (and at different levels) of society;

To critically analyse and provide relevant information on how civil society feel they could (or should) directly participate in the shaping, structure and delivery of a truth recovery process;

To provide comparable data on attitudes, which can be measured and assessed over time in relation to relevant policy initiatives;

To provide important data relevant to societies undergoing transition and exploring similar policy interventions internationally.

The final report for this project is available. Please contact Libby Smit at lsmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.

University of Ulster *Breaking Down Barriers: Sectarianism, Unemployment and the Exclusion of Disadvantaged Young People*

Authors: Prof Owen Hargie, David Dickson and Aodheen O'Donnell

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Project Website: www.socsci.ulster.ac.uk/research/comms/communication/report.pdf

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This research focuses on social marginalisation/exclusion amongst young adults and its relationships to unemployment as a feature of sectarianism and the ongoing legacy of the conflict.

AIMS:

To explore the role of sectarianism in creating social exclusion through the perpetuation of unemployment amongst young adults in interface areas of Belfast;

To identify ways of helping employers overcome barriers to the recruitment and retention of a representative and harmonious work force.

OBJECTIVES:

To document and profile three groups (unemployed, once employed, employed) of young people (16-24 years) in Belfast exploring what those in low investment, high unemployment areas perceive to be barriers to social inclusion;

To compile a comparative profile of each group, which will highlight differences across groups in terms of reasons for not seeking or securing employment, and catalogue positive and negative experiences of employment;

To explore barriers to employment and inclusion, including inter alia, perceived and actual incidents of sectarian harassment, community and familial pressures, issues of threat, organisational culture, and personal profiles;

To investigate current employment practices and procedures in NI and highlight how they impact upon the recruitment and retention of young people across the sectarian divide;

To capture the views, opinions, and experiences of those who work closely with unemployed young people in fulfilling a formal training role in relation to sectarianism, unemployment, and social exclusion.

Copies of an Executive Summary and a full report are available on the website listed above.

University of Ulster *A Critical Evaluation of Community Based 'Truth-telling' Processes in Conflict Resolution: A case study of the Ardoyne Commemoration Project*
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SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

This project uses Ardoyne as a case study of a community that has recently undergone a 'truth-telling' process (Ardoyne Commemoration Project). The research aims to examine the usefulness of such processes for post-conflict transition and to evaluate the methodologies and mechanisms employed by the Ardoyne Commemoration Project in order to develop a model of best practice for possible use by other community groups.

AIMS:

To provide insights into and an understanding of the methodology and processes adopted by the Ardoyne Commemoration project;

To provide an understanding of the positive and negative implications and impact of engaging in such 'truth-telling' processes for peace-building in Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES:

To critically evaluate the methodology and research processes employed by the ACP in carrying out its work and develop a model of best practice for conducting community-based 'truth-telling' processes;

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of engaging in the ACP for participants (family, friends, eyewitnesses);

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of the ACP for the wider Ardoyne community;

To critically evaluate the impact and perceived value of the ACP outside the Ardoyne community;

To critically evaluate the ways in which community based 'truth-telling' projects might or might not contribute to conflict resolution and intra/inter community reconciliation;

To carry out a systematic review of international examples of 'truth telling' processes and innovative approaches to measuring the supposed benefits;

To develop a model of 'best practice' for conducting community-based 'truth-telling' projects.

The final report for this project is available. Please contact Libby Smit at lsmit@nicrc.org.uk or 02890 227 500 for details.

University of Ulster *Politically Motivated Former Prisoner Groups: Community Activism and Conflict Transformation*

Authors: Peter Shirlow, Brian Graham, Kieran McEvoy,
Félim ÓhAdhmaill and Dawn Purvis

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SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This project seeks to determine, via research, the structures and media necessary in order to promote the socio-political inclusion of the politically motivated former prisoner community. Key research themes include:

- 1) Examining the impact of victim-hood as well as social, cultural, economic, legal and educational structures which undermine inclusivity;
- 2) Analyse the role and capacity of the former prisoner community to encourage and promote conflict amelioration.

AIMS:

To evaluate the extent to which two distinct former prisoner groups (Tar Isteach & EPIC) have developed models of conflict resolution/transformation both within and between them.

OBJECTIVES:

To study the knowledge and practical experience among the former prisoner community in relation to conflict resolution/transformation;

To appraise the potential of the former prisoner community to challenge community tensions and the upsurge in recent violence;

To measure and evaluate the extent and nature of conflict resolution/transformation and cross community relationships between members of the loyalist and republican former prisoner communities;

To explore the notion of former prisoners as agents of social and communal transformation away from the reliance upon violence as a mechanism for dealing with crime and anti-social activity.

The final report for this project is available. Please contact Libby Smit at
lsmit@nicrc.org.uk or 028 90 227 500 for details.

University of Ulster *Voluntary Action and Community Relations in Northern Ireland*

**Authors: Dr. Nicholas Acheson, Prof Arthur Williamson,
Prof Ed Cairns and Prof Maurice Stringer**

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Project Website: **<http://www.ulster.ac.uk/cvas>**

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The proposed research looks at the capacity of already functioning voluntary groups to use their work to improve community relations as well as how the work of these organisations has been hampered by structures built around sectarianism and mistrust.

AIMS:

To establish the extent to which voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland (organised around issues that in themselves have nothing to do with the conflict, (which is true of much of the voluntary and community sector) nevertheless have the potential to contribute to improved community relations;

To identify the contribution that voluntary and community organisations currently make to the resolution of inter-communal tensions in Northern Ireland;

To provide new knowledge and understanding of the voluntary and community sector by providing an ethnic and socio/political breakdown of the sector;

To identify the extent to which ethnic and identity questions within organisations adversely affect their work and thereby impact negatively on beneficiaries, staff and volunteers and/or inhibit contact or joint working with other organisations;

To provide guidance and information as to how voluntary and community sector organisations may more effectively contribute to promoting peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and may more effectively contribute to reducing sectarianism and ethnic tensions.

OBJECTIVES:

To provide valid and reliable data on the extent and impact of inter-communal contact within the voluntary and community sector;

To provide new ways of thinking about the relationship between voluntary activity and ethnic/socio political divisions in Northern Ireland;

To showcase evidence of good practice;

To provide an opportunity for reflection and learning among voluntary and community organisations and within the policy community;

To enhance the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to be effective agents of change in a deeply divided society.

The final report for this project is available. Please contact Libby Smit at lsmit@nicrc.org.uk or 028 90 227500 for details.

Introduction to Peace II Extension Research

A total of 11 research projects were funded through Measure 2.1 of the Peace II Extension Programme. When considering how to ensure that all newly funded projects could make a contribution to the goals of Measure 2.1, the Community Relations Council devised a list of the following four themes for which it would seek applications:

- (1) The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life; the dynamics and structure of segregation;
- (2) The rules, rights and codes of conduct for a diverse society – protecting minority participation;
- (3) Practically implementing A Shared Future;
- (4) Giving voice to new voices – minority ethnic representation in Northern Ireland.

These themes were selected to try to ensure that all funded research projects would have the capacity to encourage peace building work in Northern Ireland.

Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages

Giving Voice to Africans West of the Bann

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Theme:	Giving Voice to New Voices – Minority Ethnic Representation in Northern Ireland

AIMS:

The aim of the project is to give a voice to the African Community in Northern Ireland. The project will seek to explore the manner in which the African community can articulate its views and become involved with local communities as well as with political representatives. The project will work with community groups etc. to explore opportunities for them to offer help/assistance to the African community.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

First Quarter

1. Establish Research Advisory Group, ensuring African community representation and that of councils and policy-makers whom the work is partly seeking to influence;
2. Hire primary research assistant of African background;
3. Undertake literature review (as appropriate) on the African community and public participation and representation;
4. Establish contacts for data collection through formal and informal means as appropriate;
5. Organise symposium;
6. Begin participant observation of support group;
7. Creation of project webpage by the Academy of Irish Cultural Heritages (AICH).

Second Quarter

1. Collect data from organisations and analyse;
2. Continue participant observation;
3. Hire second research assistant of African background;
4. Undertake 10 pilot ethnographic interviews;
5. Update of project webpage (by AICH).

Third Quarter

1. Undertake 40 ethnographic interviews and analyse;
2. Continue participant observation;
3. Hold “story evening”;
4. Update of project webpage (by AICH).

Fourth Quarter

1. Produce final report;
2. Produce materials to assist support group;
3. Organise final symposium;
4. Update of project webpage (by AICH).

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

ARK

Cross-Community Schemes: Participation, motivation, mandate

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Theme:	The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life; the dynamics and structure of segregation

SUMMARY OF PROJECT:

The proposed research project has two interwoven parts, a quantitative survey (a) and a qualitative follow-up (b): a) A module of approximately 15-20 questions on experiences of cross-community schemes within the 2007 Young Life and Times (YLT) survey, to be undertaken in August/September 2007; and b) An explorative follow-up project consisting of five focus group discussions and four one-to-one interviews to be conducted in youth and community projects that are involved in cross-community projects.

AIMS:

The aim of the project is to investigate in-depth young people's experiences of and attitudes towards cross-community projects.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. To survey in detail a large scale sample of 16 year-olds about their attitudes towards and experiences of cross-community projects (August/September 2007);
2. To train young people from socially disadvantaged interface areas as peer researchers and involve them in the data collection, analysis and dissemination of the study. (Oct/Nov 2007);
3. To investigate in-depth the experiences of young people from four cross-community projects in interface areas (Dec 2007-Feb 2008);
4. To conduct in-depth interviews with the youth leaders and/or grant holders organising the cross-community schemes (Dec 2007-Feb 2008);
5. To disseminate findings widely and inform policy-making in the area of cross-community projects (April/May 2008).

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

ARTS *Realising Integrated Sustainable Communities in Deconstructed Interface Environments*

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Theme: Practically Implementing a Shared Future

AIMS:

To carry out research which will define and promote a 'model approach' to the realisation of community directed, shared vision, integrated social and built environments in interface locations, incentivising and empowering cross-community collaboration at all levels of the development and statutory decision making processes.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

Two levels of objectives: Project legacy and Project process.

Project legacy is listed as:

1. To enable and accelerate change in market conditions, design thinking and procurement and construction processes towards community led development of integrated sustainable communities in Northern Ireland, developing mutually dependent cross community prosperity and providing tangible benefits to active citizenship in building sustainable peace.

Project process is listed as:

1. To establish relevant existing community initiatives and experience, academic research and appropriate precedent;
2. To develop appropriate measurement techniques to evaluate, compare and test cross community "profit" in terms of social, economic and ecological (sustainable) value of current construction industry norms against alternative shared future development forms in interface areas;
3. To explore and identify the "ideal" conditions (model) for the creation of an integrated sustainable community in the Riverview/Bishop Street Area in Derry/Londonderry, through comparative study, consultation and theoretical proposal;
4. To quantify and evaluate the scope and impact of necessary "step changes" required in existing social legislative and economic conditions in order to realise this "ideal";
5. To establish through consultation, practical applications of the research findings and disseminate this information to the widest possible public, academic, professional, statutory and construction industry audience.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland

Faith in a Plural Society: The values, attitudes and practices of churches in protecting minority participation

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Theme: Rules, rights and codes of conduct for a diverse society –
Protecting minority participation

AIMS:

This research project aims to work with the churches sector in seeking to understand the new realities of living in a plural and multi-cultural society and in building understanding of how the many disparate communities within Northern Ireland can work together to create a peaceful and successful future.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. To highlight issues of diversity requiring serious attention from the churches in relation to ethnicity, religion and sexuality;
2. To provide a critical analysis of the churches' stance towards diversity;
3. To identify current resources within the churches' sector that address diversity issues;
4. To produce a resource for the churches on dealing with diversity.

The above will be achieved by conducting research that will:

1. Assess how the churches think about concepts of civic society (such as equality, human rights, tolerance, and democracy);
2. Look at how these concepts relate to the churches' theological and religious values and mindsets (such as their understanding of human personhood, individual conscience, truth, morality);
3. Analyse how churches are relating to social diversity;
4. Ask what the churches are doing to help their members play a constructive role in an increasingly diverse society.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

Institute for Conflict Research

Segregated Life and Sectarianised Lives

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Theme: The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life; the dynamics and structure of segregation

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This research is designed to document and analyse the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their every day lives.

AIMS:

The aim of this research is to identify the ways and means that sectarian attitudes and experiences impinge on daily routines and how such daily routines in turn help to sustain and extend sectarian attitudes and segregated patterns of living.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. Analyse how patterns of sectarianised behaviour differ according to factors such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, nationality and residential location;
2. Identify recurrent patterns of sectarianised behaviour, which do not appear to be affected by factors such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, nationality and residential location;
3. Identify the relative importance of factors such as personal experience, family experience, family learning, community experiences, political and religious beliefs, cultural traditions etc. that contribute to patterns of sectarianised living;
4. Consider the impact of segregation on people in mixed relationships, people who were not born in NI and people who have returned after a period of living elsewhere;
5. Assess and analyse the broader patterns of communal and social behaviour that restrict and restrain people from moving beyond patterns of sectarianised living;
6. Determine how far and in what contexts people are willing and able to break with broader cultural and communal patterns of behaviour;
7. Identify the patterns of communal and social behaviour, which facilitate a desire to move beyond the structures of sectarianised living;
8. Determine how patterns of sectarianised behaviour are imposed upon, adopted by, or resisted by people who are not part of the two main population groups;
9. Propose a range of measures that might help to reduce levels of segregation, facilitate greater mixing and sharing and support the aims and objectives of A Shared Future”.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

Queen's University Belfast *Education and a Shared Future: Structural and Procedural Changes to Promote Reconciliation and Good Relations in Northern Ireland Schools*

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Theme: Practically implementing A Shared Future

AIMS:

The aim of this project is to critically analyse the content of the ISRE [Independent Strategic Review of Education – Bain Review] and ERO [Education Reform (NI) Order] 2006 as delivery mechanisms for ASF and make a number of informed recommendations aimed at improving structures and procedures concerning the development of education policy and promotion of shared education in practice.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. To seek out the opinions of key educational stakeholders to identify a series of opportunities for the promotion of shared education in two identified local area case studies where falling rolls within schools and cross-community sharing and cross-sector collaboration are live issues. The two areas will be chosen so as to reflect general population trends. The first will have a majority of Catholics in the locality. The second will have a majority of Protestants in the locality. This methodology will enable the research team to compare and contrast attitudes and preferences to shared education.
2. To build upon the findings of two projects aimed at promoting good relations in schools. The first is a deliberative polling exercise funded by Atlantic Philanthropies which engages the parents of children who are of school age and all of the key educational stakeholders in a defined local area to consider options for structural sharing by agreeing models for sharing in and between schools. The second, run by the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education, is a two-year integrating education project, funded by the International Fund for Ireland which aims to promote procedural good practice in 50 schools of different types – Catholic, integrated, controlled, grammar, Irish medium and special schools.
3. To undertake comparative research by engaging the key stakeholders in the UK and Ireland to identify models of good practice in shared education. This element of the research project will focus on 4 models of shared education: a) shared campuses in Scotland b) jointly managed church schools in England c) non-denominational schools in Ireland d) models for collaboration between specialist schools in England and Wales.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

Queen's University Belfast

Fears, facts and feelings: The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life

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Theme: The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life;
the dynamics and structure of segregation

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The project seeks to be an ethnographic and personalised exploration of some of the most mundane and tacit factors that influence the upcoming generations in some of the most socially deprived urban areas in Northern Ireland. The project will seek to involve between 80 to 120 young people living in deprived areas aged between 16 and 30 in intricate and personal conversations. These structured and semi-structured interviews will assist the applicant in identifying trends concerning the factors and facets of sectarianism, the results of which will then be tied together.

AIMS:

The overall aim of this project is to promote reconciliation and to assist in creating a peaceable society by engaging as many young people as possible from deprived, urban areas to uncover the impact of sectarianism in their everyday lives.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. To organise one-to-one and group interviews with 80-120 young people, aged 16-30 (male & female) from Catholic and Protestant areas in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry;
2. To conduct a series of structured and semi-structured interviews;
3. To engage in one to one and group work with the young people and incorporate/integrate aspects of creative expression by participants;
4. To analyse the feedback from the semi-structured interviews to identify at least five of the most prominent aspects of their lives that sectarianism affects and influences;
5. To produce a comprehensive research report and policy analysis outlining the results of the research in full and incorporating the young people's creative expressions etc.;
6. To produce a one page report/flyer to promote the "Stop and Think" campaign;
7. To launch the research report and its findings;
8. To launch the one page flyer and the 'Stop and Think' campaign.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

SPACE – School of Planning, Architecture and Civil Engineering

Planning Shared Space for a Shared Future

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Theme: Practically implementing A Shared Future

AIMS:

This project has two linked research aims: 1) to examine the relationship between changing demography, identity and territory in Belfast and 2) to explore the role of planning in promoting shared space as a crucial component of a sustainable shared future for the city.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. Interrogate the patterns of demographic change in Belfast from 1971-2001, beyond the traditional simplicities of Catholic advance and Protestant retreat (months 1-3);
2. Analyse the patterns of residential segregation, assessing the evidence for claims about increasing polarisation, while addressing the link between socio-spatial segregation and residential concentration by religion (months 4-6);
3. Identify key developments that have helped to create shared space, and those 'seminal' sites, that offer the prospect for either deepening segregation or for an integrated alternative (months 7-9);
4. Investigate the strategies of government and community agencies, responsible for planning and regeneration, for the implementation of a 'shared future' agenda (months 10-13);
5. Examine the role and views of the private sector – such as developers and estate agents – with regard to shaping social space in the city in these more market-driven times (months 14-17);
6. Explore the operation of spatial and community planning elsewhere to devise a customised model for their operation in Belfast to optimise their effective intervention for the creation of shared space;
7. Contextualise this study of Belfast contested space and the city's planning system in a comparative appraisal of similar issues in two other divided cities: Jerusalem and Chicago (months 10-13).

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

St. Columb's Park House/Rubicon Consulting

Minority Inclusion in Decision-Making in New Super Councils

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Theme: Rules, rights and codes of conduct for a diverse society – Protecting minority participation

AIMS:

To identify the main issues and behaviours that may inhibit inclusive, democratic and fair decision-making in the new Super Council structures and make recommendations for how to avoid and/or manage those inhibitors

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. Identification of existing bias and concerns on both sides of the community divide – minority/majority interests;
2. Identification of key issues and decisions for the Super Councils relevant to those bias or concerns;
3. Identification of checks and balances and guidelines relevant to Super Councils to avoid bias and unfairness and ensure adequate minority participation and influence in decision-making;
4. Identification of appeals and redress mechanisms that are applicable in local authority context;
5. Identification of training and development needs post-2009;
6. Identification of central and local government relationship and collaboration needs pre- and post- 2009.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

University of Ulster Elected representatives/political parties and minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland

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Theme:	Giving voice to new voices – minority ethnic representation in Northern Ireland

AIMS:

The aim of the project is to examine the attitudes of elected representatives and political parties in Northern Ireland towards minority ethnic communities. It will assess elected representatives' awareness of their respective parties' policies, and of statutory policy, relating to minority ethnic communities. It will explore the levels of party and elected representatives' engagement with minority ethnic communities and concerns. It will seek to ascertain to what extent the above matters are mainstreamed within political parties in Northern Ireland.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. A review of essential literature: including political party manifestos, policy statements, conference resolutions and initiatives relating to minority ethnic communities (completed by end of month 3);
2. Survey of elected representatives (local councillors and MLAs) from all political parties. The survey would draw on questions in the NILT survey, incorporate questions from the literature review and be modelled on the survey of politicians' views on community relations (Foley & Robinson, 2004). (Questions drawn up and survey distributed by middle of month 4, collected by month 6, preliminary report to inform interviews by month 8);
3. Interviews with a sample of elected representatives in 6 locations (3 east of the Bann – Belfast, Craigavon/Portadown, Coleraine – and 3 west of the Bann – Derry/Londonderry, Dungannon/Coalisland, Enniskillen) (begun month 8, completed month 10);
4. Interviews with key individuals in the minority ethnic community sector (begun month 9 completed month 10);
5. Preliminary report for conference/workshop – including findings from survey and interviews (by the end of month 11);
6. A conference/workshop bringing together elected representatives /political parties and those working in the minority ethnic community sector to discuss the findings of the survey (end month 12/beginning month 13);
7. Final report (compiled, printed and distributed by the end of month 15).

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

University of Ulster

Learning to deal with difference in the workplace

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Theme:	The impact and role of sectarianism in everyday life; the structure and dynamics of segregation

AIMS:

The aim of this project is to investigate the manifold ways through which young neophyte employees, living in interface areas of Belfast, learn to deal with community group differences in the workplace and further, how such differences are actually managed.

OBJECTIVES/TARGETS:

1. To establish new employees' levels of understanding of how dealing with issues of community group difference are germane to effective organisational life, and how well equipped they perceive themselves to be in being able to deal with such differences;
2. To ascertain how and in what ways aspects of community group difference are communicated in the workplace;
3. To uncover the means whereby acceptable methods for dealing with difference are learned and assimilated by neophyte employees;
4. To identify and analyse instances where aspects of difference have been effectively dealt with;
5. To chart how and in what ways employees' management of difference can break down, resulting in accusations of sectarianism;
6. To establish the relationship between formal and informal organisational processes for regulating cross community interaction;
7. To formulate a model of best practice in relation to employees' management of difference in the workplace that would inform the induction procedures for new employees.

This project is due to be completed in May 2008.

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