



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Shared Island
Initiative

Shared Island Initiative

Cross Border Economic Conference 2025
4 March 2025



Overview



- Shared Island initiative commenced in 2020.
- **Key elements:**
 - **Future-facing:** “building consensus around a shared future”.
 - **Good Friday Agreement:** institutions, principles, relationships (N/S and E/W)
 - Deepen **cooperation and connections** across the island.
 - **Enhanced ambition** for all-island investment: PfG and NDP 2021-2030.
 - **Whole of Government.**
- **2025 Programme for Government** – new commitments and resourcing:
 - “Sustained focus on and investment in reconciliation”.

Key elements

Building a Shared Island

- **Raise ambition and impact of all-island investment**
- **Delivery on existing and new cross-border projects**

Dialogue on a shared future

- **SI Dialogue series:** 16 events, 4,000+ citizens from all communities, traditions and regions.
- **SI Youth Forum:** 80 young people meeting over a year to agree vision and values for a shared future.

Research - *understanding the island*

- Evidence and analysis on economic, social, cultural, political **considerations for future on the island.**

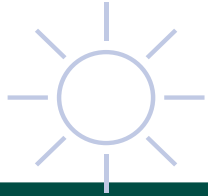


Shared Island Fund



- **€2bn commitment** out to 2035. **€510m allocated** over 2021-24. **€50m+** Feb 2025.
- For delivery of objectives in PfG and National Development Plan.
- Working through **all-island partnerships**: Northern Ireland Executive and through North South Ministerial Council; and with UK Government, Local Authority and Civil Society partners.

Shared Island Fund



A more sustainable island

- €11m for all-island **bioeconomy** demonstrators
- €11m for **cross-border** peatland restoration and biosecurity initiative
- €15m for **sports club** EV charging point installation



A more prosperous island

- €44.5m for teaching building at **Ulster University Derry**
- €20m for **Co-Centres for Research and Innovation** through Science Foundation Ireland
- €7.6m **collaboration** by Wild Atlantic Way and Causeway Coastal Route



Shared Island Initiative

A more connected island

- €3m Shared Island **Civic Society Fund**
- €7.4m for **Arts** investment projects
- €6m Shared Island dimension to **Creative Ireland** Programme 2023-2027

2024 announcements



Shared Island
Initiative

- 20 February 2024 - largest ever island-wide funding commitment by Government
- €800m in total for SI investment priorities
 - €600m to **A5 upgrade** and progressing related N2 and Donegal TEN-T schemes
 - **Hourly frequency rail service Dublin - Belfast**
 - Contribution to **Casement Park redevelopment**
 - Construction of **Narrow Water Bridge**
 - Shared Island **Enterprise scheme**
 - Cooperation on **reducing educational disadvantage**
 - Renewal of **Battle of the Boyne** visitor experience



2025 announcements



- 25 February 2025 - €50m+ for new SI projects
 - **Sustainable Tourism - Shared Destinations** – Carlingford Lough, Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Geopark, and Sliabh Beagh – up to €23m (2025-30)
 - **Arts & Cultural heritage programmes** – up to €20m (2025-30)
 - **Increased Shared Island Civic Society Fund** - €6m (incl DFA €2m) (2025-27)
 - **Island-wide nature restoration programmes** – up to €10m (2025-30)



Dialogue series



2023:

- Accommodating **National Identities**
- **Education** systems and **connecting communities**
- **Media representation** on the island of Ireland

2022:

- Tackling **Gender Based Violence and Abuse**
- **Arts & Culture**
- **Identities** - new generation perspectives
- Enabling **Rural and Community Development**
- **Sport cooperation**

2021:

- **Tourism**
- **Future of education**
- Working for a **Healthier Island**
- Building back together: **Economic recovery**
- **Equality** on a Shared Island

- **Civil Society** - catalyst for connections
- **Environment and Climate**
- **New Generations and New Voices**

- Video summaries and reports at: gov.ie/sharedisland



Youth Forum

- 80 young people (18-25) from diverse backgrounds across the island.
- Deliberative forum over a year to set out their **vision and values for a shared future**.
- Themes of: Sustainability; Opportunity; Wellbeing; Equality; Culture and Identity.
- Statement published in September 2024.



Research programme



Shared Island Initiative

ESRI publications to date:

- *Cross-Border Trade in Services* – December 2021
- *Enhancing attractiveness of the Island of Ireland to FDI* – December 2021
- *Analysis of Primary Health Care Systems of Ireland and Northern Ireland* – March 2022
- *Comparison of Education and Training Systems and outcomes* – April 2022
- *Modelling Productivity Levels in Ireland and Northern Ireland* – November 2022
- *Coordination of Energy infrastructure and renewable energy supports* – December 2022
- *Early Childhood Education and Care, North and South* – January 2023
- *Migrant Integration and Experience in Ireland and Northern Ireland* – March 2023
- *Student Mobility in Ireland and Northern Ireland* – October 2023
- *Social and political attitudes in Ireland and Northern Ireland* – November 2023
- *Contrasting Housing Supply in Ireland and Northern Ireland* – January 2024
- *Gender and Labour Market inequality across the island of Ireland* – April 2024



2024 research:

- *Child poverty; Income inequality; Economic overview; Overarching report*

All reports available at gov.ie/sharedisland/research



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



ECONOMIC & SOCIAL
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Programme for Government 2025 – Securing Ireland's Future



- Significantly increased emphasis, ambition and resourcing for **Shared Island**
- Whole of Government
- Relationships (N/S and E/W)
- To be reflected in revised National Development Plan

Resources

- www.gov.ie/sharedisland:

- *Annual reports*

- *Video summaries*

- *Research publications*

- *SI fund programmes*



Shared Island Initiative



A more connected island

Local Authority Development Funding Scheme

This scheme enables Local Authorities on both sides of the border to cooperate on delivering shared regional development goals. Over €4.5m was awarded for 23 Local Authorities in the South to work with 9 Councils in Northern Ireland on 23 feasibility projects. Work was completed in 2023 developing cross-border capital investment proposals in areas such as biotechnology, tourism, and climate action. Completed feasibility projects will be reviewed in 2024 with a view to a number being supported to progress to the next stage.

Respite therapeutic centre for children diagnosed with cancer and their families

€2.5 million was announced in June 2023 by the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, for construction of a respite and therapeutic centre for children diagnosed with cancer and their families from across the island in Co. Mayo. The facility will complement the service provided by Cancer Fund for Children at Castle College, Co. Down and enable CFCF to increase the number of children with cancer supported each year from 1,800 to 4,000.

Shared Island dimension to the Government's Creative Ireland Programme 2023-2027

A Shared Island dimension to the Government's Creative Ireland Programme is keeping the power of creativity by people and communities North and South. In 2023, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin TD, announced €652,000 for nine new Local Authority and shared island community arts and creativity projects, and €500,000 for three new projects which develop awareness, through creativity, of climate change on a cross-border basis.



Accommodating National Identities

A dialogue on Accommodating National Identities was convened by Taisiáé Michael Martin TD on 25 October 2023, and co-hosted with the Abbey Theatre, Dublin.

There was participation by over 300 people from across the island including civil society, political representatives, academics, and the faith community. The dialogue was moderated by RTE broadcaster Siobhán O'Coigheir.

There was a focus on historic experience and future actions to accommodate national identity diversity. Questions explored included:

- Where in society is national identity diversity well accommodated, where not?
- How could the 20% of residents who were not born on the island be better recognised?
- What can be learned from the Decade of Centenaries on acknowledging identities?
- Have you and Europe ever been changed in recent decades? What were drivers of change?
- Has a tension in the South to complexity of national identity accommodated, including Protestant, Ulster, Anglo-Irish or British identity and background?

Report and video summary available at www.gov.ie/en/newsroom/2023/10/2023-10-25-abbey-theatre-dialogue/



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Thank you

Contact: sharedisland@taoiseach.gov.ie