



Northern Ireland
Assembly



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Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

2014-15 KESS PROGRAMME

“Promoting evidence-led policy and law-making within Northern Ireland” – that is the underlying aim of the Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS). KESS is the **first** of its kind in the United Kingdom, formally partnering a legislative arm of government – the Assembly - with academia. Aiming to encourage debate and improve understanding, KESS provides a forum to present and disseminate research findings in a straightforward format, across the Programme for Government; making those findings easily accessible to decision-makers such as MLAs and Assembly committees, as well as the wider public sector.

KESS is jointly delivered by the Research and Information Service of the Assembly (RaISe), in partnership with all three universities located in Northern Ireland (NI) – the Queen’s University of Belfast (QUB - co-founder in 2011), Ulster University (Ulster - in 2012) and The Open University (OU - in 2013).

The Series presents networking opportunities, attracting a broad spectrum of attendees. These include: MLAs and their staff; Assembly staff; public and private sector employees; academics; voluntary and community groups; and, members of the public.

Seminars are **free** and are held on **Wednesdays from 5 November 2014 through 24 June 2015**. Each seminar starts at **1.30pm in Parliament Buildings**, located on Stormont Estate. Most seminars cover a range of themes under one broad heading – see below for relevant dates and timings.

Refreshments are provided following presentations and discussion. Free parking is available to all. Kindly allow time to pass through Assembly Security upon entry to Parliament Buildings; and ensure that you specify your special needs (for example, wheelchair accessibility) when registering.

Please email raise@niassembly.gov.uk to reserve your place at a seminar.

Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series 2014-15

5 NOVEMBER 2014

Social Inclusion & Educational Attainment

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Raffaella Folli, Dr Christina Sevdali, Dr Catrin Rhys, Dr Jacopo Romoli and Prof Alison Henry (Ulster) - *Language made fun: Supporting disadvantaged children in their English language development* - In linguistically diverse societies, language issues are recognised to mediate social inclusion and hence be significant for social inclusion policies. More specifically, failure to support the language needs of newcomer pupils can lead to social exclusion and underachievement in education. This presentation reports on '**Language made fun**', a play-based language intervention programme for primary school newcomer pupils from refugee families. The project is a joint initiative between Ulster Centre on Multilingualism (UCoM) and Barnardo's NI. UCoM, established by the linguistics team (Ulster's School of Communication), is a service for parents and professionals dealing with children acquiring more than one language. 'Language made fun' is specifically aimed at supporting the English language skills of newcomer pupils who may be vulnerable to exclusion and educational failure. The presentation highlights key findings on the post-intervention evaluation of the project's pilot, which indicated improvements in both vocabulary and grammar and both teacher and parent reports indicated positive outcomes for language and confidence in communication. At the policy level, the UCoM analysis of the pilot revealed that there is an immediate need for more linguistically-informed assessment of newcomer pupils' language skills to meet their linguistic needs and improve educational access. This project showed that relatively small investment in linguistic expertise had a transformative effect on the language and confidence of the children involved. Relying on these findings, the presentation makes recommendations about accessing relevant linguistic expertise in a consistent manner for all newcomer pupils.

2.05pm - Prof Ruth Leitch (QUB) – *Understanding differential educational achievement within and between areas of multiple deprivation in Northern Ireland: a case study approach* - This presentation presents the findings of the 'ILiAD' research study (Investigating Links in Achievement and Deprivation), a 3-year study funded by the Office of First Minister and the deputy First Minister, which will finish in March 2015. The study aims to understand the reasons for differential educational achievement within and between deprived areas in Northern Ireland. Previous studies have concluded that there is a positive correlation between deprivation and underachievement. However, some areas of high multiple deprivation in Northern Ireland have high levels of GCSE attainment, whereas other less deprived areas have much lower levels of GCSE attainment.

The study was conceptualised through a social capital perspective, which centralises the connections within and between individuals and social networks in a community as a valuable resource for educational achievement. It was designed as a multi-level case study analysis of seven Ward areas, selected on the basis of religious composition, measures of multiple deprivation and differentials in educational achievement. The analysis combines a statistical mapping of factors with qualitative, in-depth data interpretation to provide deeper understandings of the dynamics and contributory factors within and between the case study sites. The presentation outlines findings and recommendations that aim to both increase understanding about these anomalies and inform policy development and strategic planning regarding educational performance.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

12 NOVEMBER 2014

Devolution and Governance

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1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Gerry Mooney and Dr Philip O’Sullivan (OU) - *The impact of the Scottish Independence Referendum on Devolution and Governance in the United Kingdom* - The issue of Scotland's constitutional status is often mistakenly believed to be an issue that pertains to Scotland alone. However, with the result of the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum only very recently behind us, the consequences for the other countries that make up the United Kingdom - that is England, Northern Ireland and Wales - are in many ways still very uncertain and far reaching. The implications of the referendum vote, rather than settling many policy debates, actually raises many newer questions in terms of welfare and social policy for example, areas which were to a large extent overshadowed by the narrower constitutional question. This presentation examines key issues surrounding the Scottish Referendum debate, such as what was driving the demand for Scottish Independence on the part of a substantial proportion of the population of Scotland? What were the key welfare and social issues that emerged in the Independence debate and how might these now have a resonance for others parts of the United Kingdom? The presentation also discusses that despite the outcome of the September 2014 Independence Referendum, things will not remain the same in Scotland; relationships between different countries within and beyond the United Kingdom will change; as has been remarked, devolution is a process, not a 'one off' event that started in 1999 and finished on 18 September 2014.

2.05pm – Discussion

2.35pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

2.40pm – Networking and Refreshments

26 NOVEMBER 2014

Learning & Behavioural Disabilities: Supporting Needs To Improve Lives

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Laurence Taggart and Dr Wendy Cousins (Ulster) - *People with Intellectual Disabilities: Promoting Health, Addressing Inequality* - There are approximately 32,600 people with intellectual disabilities (also known as 'learning disabilities') living in Northern Ireland. This is a higher proportion of our population than other regions in the United Kingdom. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) recognises that persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability; yet a growing body of evidence highlights significant inequality in health care provision for this vulnerable group. The recent Confidential Inquiry Report into the Premature Deaths of People with Learning Disabilities (2013) found that people with intellectual disabilities died on average 20 years earlier than adults in the general population, and that many of these deaths were avoidable. People with intellectual disabilities are also more likely to experience a range of chronic health conditions, many of which can be prevented and/or managed more appropriately; thus improving quality of life, increasing longevity, and reducing care costs. This presentation discusses the health inequalities faced by people who have an intellectual disability and outline potential solutions to deliver more effective and less discriminatory healthcare for this often over-looked section of the population. This aims to contribute to the development and implementation of the 'Transforming Your Care' agenda and future policies designed to address inequalities and health.

2.05pm - Prof Karola Dillenburger (QUB) - *Early intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorder: Comparing international policies with developments in Northern Ireland* - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects about 2% of school children (approximately 5000 in Northern Ireland; Megaw, 2013). ASD is a pervasive neurodevelopmental condition with problems in building social relationships and very restricted interests. When these children enter the labour market, only

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15% of them find employment; a great loss to them and to society (Rosenblatt, 2008). The cost of autism per lifetime is estimated £2.7 billion per each year in the United Kingdom, and can rise to £1.23million per lifetime (Knapp et al 2009).

There is strong, statistically significant evidence that early intensive behavioural-analytically based interventions can save fiscally, enhance the quality of life considerably and enable adults with autism to participate fully in an inclusive society (Orinstein et al., 2014). Internationally, the USA and Canada enact laws and policies to ensure that these scientifically validated, individually tailored, person-focussed interventions are offered to all those who need them, i.e., these interventions now are considered 'medically as well as educationally necessary' in most of North America. This presentation outlines the evidence on which international decisions are based and outline the implications of adopting similar policies for Northern Ireland.

2.25pm - Dr Stephen Gallagher (Ulster) - *Parent training in evidence-based practice for Autism* - Despite the rising numbers of children being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), and the fact that it is parents who carry the greatest burden of caring for their children, there has been little investment in effective parent training. There is an urgent need for parents to learn practical skills that they can implement in their own home to improve quality of life for their child and family. It is generally acknowledged that early intervention is essential in addressing the needs of children with ASD. Given limited resources (i.e. suitably qualified professionals) and costs, it makes sense to educate parents as key persons in their child's educational and health development. Research has shown that appropriate parent training in evidence-based practice benefits children's developmental outcomes and reduces family stress. In Canada and in 36 American states, evidence-based practice is seen as medically and educationally necessary by statutory agencies. Currently those 36 American states have passed legislation mandating insurance companies to provide evidence-based treatment for Autism. Whilst in the United States the gold standard treatment is Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), currently in Europe there is a serious mismatch between increasing rates of autism diagnosis and the availability of professionals trained in ABA. As a consequence, policy-makers have not been fully informed about the benefits of ABA and the importance of parent training in ameliorating the effects of Autism on family life. Based on research undertaken, this presentation recommends that government in Northern Ireland invest in parent training as a cornerstone of evidence-based practice, while drawing on a European project that originated in Northern Ireland to meet the needs of parent training in the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany, Norway, Italy, the Netherlands, Iceland, Sweden, and Portugal through the use of internet-based training in evidence-based practice.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

3 DECEMBER 2014

Local Government & Planning

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Colin Knox (Ulster) - *Community Planning in Local Government – how do we do it?* - One of the key reforms in local government reorganisation is the statutory power of community planning, which has been described as the equivalent of *Delivering Social Change* (OFMDFM) at council level. There is however a dearth of information on how to take the principles of community planning from concept to practical implementation in Northern Ireland. This presentation draws on a pilot study and sets out one approach to the outworking of community planning in local government. It will highlight potential tensions between community planning partners in relation to the issue of accountability: vertical accountability to the Minister, and Assembly and horizon accountability to the community planning partnership. It also offers insights into emerging central-local government relations and whether community planning could rebalance a devolved administration which has been centripetal in nature.

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2.05pm - Mr Gavan Rafferty and Prof Greg Lloyd (Ulster) - *Community Planning and Land Use Planning in Ireland's Border Area* - The convergence of local government reform in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is occurring at a unique moment in the island's history, allowing further consideration on how an inter-jurisdictional co-operative framework can foster collaborative decision making on cross boundary community planning issues. In Northern Ireland, the proposal to introduce community planning will herald the reorganisation of local government, together with the transfer of statutory land use planning functions from the centre to the new local authorities. The Republic of Ireland is also witnessing a strengthening of its local governance arrangements. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 will create new local economic and community plans (LECP), which facilitate the better integration of public bodies, social and community partners to collaboratively work on integrated plans for specific actions in communities. This presentation explores the interfaces between land use planning (reforms) and community planning (innovation) in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland in the specific context of the border area. There are vertical, horizontal and lateral dimensions to this potential interface and the context is febrile with questions around culture, capacity and competence in executing the new governance arrangements on integrated service delivery and spatial development.

2.25pm - Dr Karl O'Connor (Ulster) - *Policy making at the local level: Everyday policy making in our local councils* - If greater powers are to be devolved to our new super councils, what type of institutions will inherit these powers and how will these powers be used? Existing public administration research would lead to the expectation of greater bureaucrat involvement in the traditionally more mundane aspects of policy formulation, while in areas of greater public and political interest greater political involvement in the decision-making process would be expected. Converse to these expectations, however, evidence from Belfast City Council suggests that the bureaucratic elite are found to play a pivotal role in the day-to-day management of power-sharing within the city. This presentation highlights research findings that identify two 'typologies of bureaucrat' within the Council; and these in turn provide an insight into what guides everyday decision-making. It further explains that the development of administrative capacity within our local Councils is a necessary condition not only for good governance and supporting local councillors, but also for conflict management. (The research was conducted using Q Methodology: a mixed method designed to measure core beliefs and values and was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.)

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

14 JANUARY 2015

Mental Health, Bereavement & Suicide

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Aideen Maguire, Dr Mark McCann, Dr John Moriarty and Dr Dermot O'Reilly (QUB) - *Using administrative data to understand mental health in Northern Ireland: results from two exemplar projects* - Mental ill health is a major contributor to the burden of disease among the population. Associations have been found between gender, deprivation and bereavement and mental ill health; but the underlying mechanisms are not well understood. Emerging studies are using a novel method of measuring population mental health by linking existing administrative healthcare data to Census returns data and GRO death records to determine the prevalence and predictors of depression in the entire Northern Ireland population. In the two studies illustrated in this presentation, prescribing data on psychotropic medications dispensed in community pharmacies in Northern Ireland were linked to Census returns data from the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study and death data. Results show 17% of Northern Ireland population is on antidepressants. In the most deprived areas almost 50% of women aged over 45 years are on anti-depressants, and those living in urban or interface areas are at a higher risk. Bereavement is associated with an increased risk of poor mental health also, with sudden deaths inflicting greater impact on mental health and bereavement following

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suicide having the greatest impact. The innovative method explained in this presentation outlines a quick, inexpensive way: to gain an accurate picture of population mental health; to determine associations; to calculate risk; and, to inform policy.

2.05pm – Dr Sharon Mallon (OU) and Dr Karen Galway (QUB) - *Towards an Understanding of the Role of Bereavement in the Pathway to Suicide* - Bereavement is considered to be a common precursor of death by suicide. Studies suggest those bereaved by suicide may be particularly vulnerable to suicide themselves. Recently, there has been a steady rise in the number of deaths by suicide in Northern Ireland. As a result, an increasing number of individuals have been exposed to bereavement by suicide. It remains unclear how these deaths might impact on future suicide rates. This presentation is dual focused, it provides an in-depth examination of a two-year cohort of suicides, exploring how bereavement issues affected those who died, and looking at the impact of these deaths on those left behind. Initially, it draws on data from a range of sources, including GP and Coroner records, to provide an estimate of the prevalence and type of bereavement issues that may have contributed towards suicide. It then draws on relatives' accounts to increase our understanding of the impact of these types of bereavement and makes suggestions in relation to how support services can enhance their response to those affected by these deaths. The presentation concludes by considering how these findings might be used to develop supportive interventions which are best suited to the local setting. It also explains how the findings could instructively inform future programs of suicide prevention and postvention research in Northern Ireland.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

21 JANUARY 2015

Advancing Gender Equality

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm – Prof Joan Ballantine, Prof Kathryn Haynes, Dr Melina Manochin and Mr Tony Wall (Ulster) - *Gender Equality at the Executive Level of the Northern Ireland Public Sector* - The issue of gender equality at senior levels in the private and public sectors is receiving ever increasing worldwide attention. Reflecting this, substantial data exists for the private sector with research broadly indicating that progress towards achieving gender equality at senior levels is slow. However, limited research has considered this issue in the context of the public sector. Recent statistics have indicated that males continue to significantly dominate senior positions in both the GB and N.I. Civil Service and across public appointments. However, whilst some limited data is available for specific segments of the N.I. public sector, to date no study has investigated this issue across the entire sector. In this presentation we report the findings of an OFMDFM funded research project, which aims to investigate and address this issue. Stage one of the project provides a baseline for gender equality within the N.I. public sector, with findings showing that females account for just 29% of senior positions. Stage two reports on a survey of some three thousand current and aspiring male and female executives' attitudes to gender equality issues including enablers and barriers to achieving gender equality at senior levels in the N.I. public sector. The findings are of particular relevance to N.I. given OFMDFM's commitment to gender equality in terms of increasing women's representation in decision making. They are also timely in the context of the development of the new N.I. gender equality strategy.

2.05pm - Prof Monica McWilliams and Prof Fionnuala Ní Aoláin (Ulster) - *Advancing Gender Equality in Northern Ireland: Addressing Domestic Violence and Human Rights Protections for Women* - This presentation broadly addresses issues of gender equality in the context of the Northern Ireland transition. It underscores the necessity of advancing a broad equality agenda in post-conflict Northern Ireland, which mandates directly addressing gender-based violence. The speakers' collective research consistently connects the economic and social advancement of women's rights with the prevention

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of violence against women. Based on decades of empirical research addressing the experience and regulation of domestic violence in Northern Ireland, this presentation outlines current research and data on domestic violence in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. This dovetails with the second part of the presentation which concerns advancement of a domestic violence strategy by the Department of Justice in Northern Ireland. The presentation addresses the importance of integrating international human rights standards into the advancement of gender equality in Northern Ireland. It discusses the new CEDAW General Comment 30 on the Responsibility of States to Women's Human Rights in post-conflict settings, as well as the implications of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent Security Council resolutions for women's rights in Northern Ireland.

2.25pm - Dr Catherine O'Rourke (Ulster) - 'Dealing with the Past in Northern Ireland: Putting Gender on the Agenda' - This presentation outlines research findings that aim to constructively contribute to the vexed and halting debate in Northern Ireland about dealing with the past. It seeks to usefully reframe the debate by explaining how gender should be understood as a structural factor of conflict and resolution. The presentation draws on the speaker's comparative study of gendered approaches to dealing with the past in Chile, Northern Ireland and Colombia, as well as pertinent international legal obligations (CEDAW, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325), to identify missed opportunities and future priorities for any process to deal with the past. International and comparative experience identifies the following potential contributions of a focus on gender to broader debates to deal with the past: firstly, a broader understanding of the harms caused by the conflict; secondly, an awareness of structural inequalities that gave rise to certain patterns of harm; thirdly, a focus on the importance of process; and finally, the eschewal of an individualistic and legalistic approach to dealing with the past. The presentation considers how international and comparative experience can inform relevant local policy and practice.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

4 FEBRUARY 2015

Care Needs: Informal & Formal

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Stefanie Doebler (QUB) - *The Health and Mental Health of Informal Caregivers in Rural and Urban Northern Ireland* - This presentation discusses new research findings from a project that analyses effects of providing unpaid care to a family member or neighbour on the self-reported health and mental health of the care-giver. The results are based on robust statistical analyses of Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS)-data. The NILS is a Census-linked health-records study, representative of the Northern Irish population. In addition, analyses include NILS-linked BSO-prescription data for mental health drugs, allowing for comparisons of the risk of suffering from ill-mental health across different social strata. Furthermore, the findings account for area-level effects (e.g. remoteness and access to services). This allows for a distinction to be drawn between relationships across different sub-populations and across rural-urban area-contexts. The results presented are highly useful to researchers and policy-makers in order to evaluate the social support – and care needs of individuals and families in Northern Ireland. The findings are highly relevant in the following areas: Transforming Your Care; Mental Health (the forthcoming Mental Capacity Bill); Access to Appropriate Care; Gender Equality (following the review of the Gender Equality Strategy); and, Differential Health Outcomes (a socio-economic, demographic and spatial analysis, e.g. differences in sickness rates, disability and mortality).

2.05pm - Dr Mark McCann and Dr Dermot O'Reilly (QUB) - *Area of residence and admissions to care homes for older people: data linkage study of factors associated with entry to care* - Research on admissions to care homes for older people has paid more attention to individual and social characteristics than to geographical factors. This presentation considers rural-urban differences in household composition and admission rates and presents key findings arising

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from this research. Data on 51,619 people aged 65 years or older at the time of the 2001 Census and not living in a care home, were drawn from a data linkage study based on 28% of the Northern Ireland population. Living alone was less common in rural areas; 25% of older people in rural areas lived with children compared to 18% in urban areas. Care home admission was more common in urban (4.7%) and intermediate (4.3%) areas than in rural areas (3.2%). Even after adjusting for age, sex, health and living arrangements, the rate of care home admission in rural areas was still only 75% of that in urban areas. People in rural areas experience better family support by living as part of two or three generation households. After accounting for this difference, older rural dwellers are less likely to enter care homes; suggesting that neighbours and relatives in rural areas provide more informal care; or that there may be differential deployment of formal home care services.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

18 FEBRUARY 2015

Drivers of Economic Growth

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Ms Michelle Douglas, Prof Karen Fleming and Prof Ian Montgomery (Ulster) - *Hide and Seek: Where is design in the creative industries network of Northern Ireland and do we really understand its power in the growth of our economy?* - In almost all the official Northern Ireland documentation highlighting statistics and reviews for the creative industries, there is very little differentiation of the sector and little recognition of design as a distinct and essential factor in success. With debate focused on end-product, digital and manufacturing sectors, there is no policy or ministerial advisory committee that promotes the value of design in Northern Ireland. Nor is there physical space or a council to advise on design policy or academic research for the creative industries. Design spans several government department remits, but is most closely aligned with the creativity industries under the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure. This presentation examines understanding of design as a sector and why the visibility of it so vague in Northern Ireland. It is based on research of the eco-systems (networks, practices, operating environments, and sustainability) of small design driven practices (SME) based in Northern Ireland. The research investigated current Northern Ireland innovation and culture policy context, while exploring the contribution of micro creative businesses to the social, cultural and economic environment. It examined: how their ripples form?; what the support mechanisms are for their initiation, maintenance and growth?; and, what sort of early stage eco-system needs to be put in place within Northern Ireland society to nurture confident risk-takers entering in to the private sector? The presentation outlines key findings of the research, highlighting how the value of design relates to the regional advantage attached to creative industries growth in Northern Ireland, which should be considered when formulating policy in this area.

2.05pm - Dr Brendan Galbraith and Ms Kirsty McManus (Ulster) - *Benefiting a regional economy with societal-driven innovation adoption in high-tech small firms* - A key question is how do business models ensure that new high-tech innovations are responsible, benefit society and are well aligned to regional policy? This is an increasingly important question for policy-makers and high tech small firms in Northern Ireland. The question is important because although innovation adoption in high-tech small firms (HTSFs) has long been a United Kingdom and European priority, and despite decades of attention, there is still a dearth of innovative HTSFs and, worryingly low participation levels of HTSFs in United Kingdom and European Research & Development and innovation funding programmes. To capitalise on emerging high-tech markets, it is imperative that HTSFs have the capacity to exploit these new opportunities and crucially, to contribute to the development of a modern economy. Research carried out by the University of Ulster in European projects investigated how policy can help address the dearth of SMEs in European and national innovation funding programmes. The growth of innovative HTSFs has the potential to contribute to both the economic and social development of a regional economy. However, the mainstream business model frameworks that are used to

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develop value propositions of high-tech innovations are exclusively focused on the corporate perspective and do not encompass the benefit to society. This presentation addresses these issues and looks at how the research findings might influence the development of policy in Northern Ireland.

2.25pm - Dr Peter Bolan, Dr Karise Hutchinson and Mr Matthew Kearney (Ulster) - *Developing and harnessing golf tourism and film tourism as economic drivers* - This presentation explains that golf and film tourism are both highly lucrative and Northern Ireland must develop and plan for them in a more strategic manner. First it outlines findings from an extensive study (utilising surveys, interviews, and observation methods internationally and domestically) by Ulster Business School, which analysed and evaluated the Northern Ireland golf tourism product by focusing on perspectives of golf tourists and specialist golf tour operators with an integral economic impact assessment of the recent Irish Open 2012 at Royal Portrush. The presentation highlights how, if leveraged properly, this high-spend form of tourism can bring job creation, new business development, urban and coastal regeneration, improved quality of hotel/restaurant provision and improved image as a tourist destination. Thereafter the presentation focuses on film tourism, which can also bring enormous opportunities in terms of global destination image as well as economic impact and development. It highlights that there is an urgent need to capitalise on the tourism potential of on-going film productions in Northern Ireland, explaining strategic opportunities for destination development and enhancement based on global online research (netnography) undertaken with the fan-base of Game of Thrones, and further supplemented with analysis of key informant interviews with industry stakeholders which have recently begun Game of Thrones tours and activity based experiences. It concludes outlining new insights that could help to inform new strategic directions for developing Northern Ireland's tourism product in this area.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

4 MARCH 2015

Adoption Reform

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Alice Diver (Ulster) - *The child's right to genetic ancestry as a key element of the best interests principle in adoption, donor and surrogacy contexts: reforming adoption law in Northern Ireland* - This presentation looks at the right to genetic identity/relatedness, with reference to some recent controversial cases involving adoption, surrogacy, donor children in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and elsewhere in Europe. Such comparative research indicates that in many cases the rights of the child are either over looked or outweighed by parental interests/rights or in relation to issues of privacy, 'ownership', and immigration laws. Adoption law reform is needed in Northern Ireland. This presentation explains how this need presents an opportunity to avoid the controversies that are experienced elsewhere and to acknowledge/embed the best interests of the child principle in any future legislation. It draws on research findings about approaches taken in other jurisdictions when addressing issues such as genetic parenthood, post-adoption contact and accessing birth records, and evaluates the findings' relevance for Northern Ireland.

2.05pm - Prof Brigid Featherstone (OU) and Dr John Devaney (QUB) - *Making timely decisions for children: balancing differing needs in families* - In both England and Northern Ireland there appears to be a policy consensus that early authoritative intervention is required with families in order to ensure vulnerable children do not remain too long in neglectful situations. Recent legislation in England - such as the Children and Families Act 2014 - contains timescales for court proceedings, alongside support for speeding up adoption processes. These developments are clearly aimed at ensuring the welfare of children is protected, but they do potentially contain implications for their parents and wider family networks, especially in a context of

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resource constraints. Drawing upon empirical and theoretical research, this presentation explores the balance to be sought in making timely decisions for children, alongside providing the opportunities for parents and other family members to demonstrate how they can meet children's needs. In doing so, the presentation identifies key considerations for policy-makers in Northern Ireland when developing legislative reform in this area.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

18 MARCH 2015

Housing: Standards & Budgets

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm – Ms Lindsay Shaw (Ulster) - *Changing the Minimum Standard for Housing* - There are social inequality issues relating to low/limited income households being less able to afford a better standard of housing. While there is a 'Fitness Standard' (the minimum standard for housing in Northern Ireland), this is recognised as outdated and offers inadequate protection. In England, the 'fitness standard' was replaced by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) in 2006. This HHSRS considers hazards in and around the home, including excess cold and inherent safety hazards which are not considered by the 'fitness standard'. Currently in Northern Ireland, excess cold would relate to Fuel Poverty with rates in Northern Ireland at 42%, compared with England 15%, and Scotland 25% (2011).

Overall the full cost to society of poor housing is £82 million per year. It is estimated that, if all hazards were reduced to a more acceptable level the NHS alone could save £33 million per year. This presentation looks at the Social Housing Allocations Research and Proposals (2013) and the recommendations made in the Building Sound Foundations (A Strategy for the Private Rented Sector, Department of Social Development, 2010) to ascertain the extent to which the 'fitness standard' issue has been addressed in Northern Ireland and to look at recommendations for future policy.

2.05pm - Prof Rory O'Connell (Ulster), Mr Eoin Rooney, Prof Colin Harvey (QUB) and Prof Aoife Nolan (Nottingham, ex QUB) - *Budget analysis and Housing in Northern Ireland* - This presentation discusses the findings of multidisciplinary research, to develop an approach to budget analysis, as applied to housing in Northern Ireland. The research is based upon a robust methodology incorporating economic analysis and legal principles, following an examination of efforts at budget analysis in case studies across the globe. The framework is then applied to a concrete case study on housing in Northern Ireland, which considers the practical implications of the system for funding for social housing, with its reliance on housing associations. The degree of transparency in the housing institutions is considered and the research also addresses the role of the private rented sector (PRS), and use of housing benefit in the PRS. Budget analysis work has also been taken up by public sector bodies (NI Human Rights Commission, NI Commissioner for Children and Young People). This presentation explains how the approach undertaken is relevant to the work of Assembly committees when scrutinising the Executive.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

15 APRIL 2015

Planning: Shoreline, Marine & Landscape

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof J. Andrew G Cooper (Ulster) - *Shoreline management planning in Northern Ireland* -

Recent storms on the Northern Ireland coast have caused widespread flooding and coastal erosion. Erosion threatens buildings, roads, railways and other infrastructure, but is also a vital natural process that sustains beaches, and is essential to maintenance of a healthy coastal ecosystem. Societal responses to erosion include: (a) hard and soft protection works; (b) realignment or removal of infrastructure; or, (c) do nothing. Each has implications for the built and natural environment. Unusual among western European countries, Northern Ireland has no strategic approach to shoreline management. This means that there is much uncertainty regarding who holds responsibility, what powers they have and what constraints affect them. As a consequence, decisions are made individually, without any regional guidance, or understanding of the local or cumulative effects of such decisions. The default decision is to armour the coast; and a large amount of the coastline has been armoured already. This protects property, but requires continual maintenance, and ultimately damages coastal assets (beaches, landscape quality, ecosystem health) that are used by the whole population. This presentation looks at the need for a strategic approach in Northern Ireland, based on examples from research undertaken on a global scale.

2.05pm - Dr Heather Ritchie and Prof Greg Lloyd (Ulster) - *Marine planning for the blue economy: small island: big challenges* -

The island of Ireland, though physically small, faces big institutional challenges for the delivery of a sustainable blue energy future. Challenges stem from separate governance regimes across the island; with several government departments controlling functions across planning and regulation. Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is established as an integrated policy based approach to the regulation, management and protection of the marine environment (Claydon, 2006). MSP will play a major part in the European Union's vision for the 'blue economy', and will be vital in enabling renewable technologies to shape the future energy mix of the island of Ireland. This presentation explains that the existence of two separate, variegated and fragmented planning traditions, (terrestrial and now marine) spanning the island may create a potential barrier to realising Ireland's ability to be a leader in offshore renewable energy and exports. It highlights how the island may have missed out on investment opportunities due to the lack of an integrated and co-ordinated marine planning system. The presentation acknowledges that a single marine planning system or a marine authority is unlikely, but it recommends more opportunities for integration and cooperation for an all-island strategic approach, beyond statutory consultations, allowing the island of Ireland to develop a sustainable blue economy.

2.25pm - Mrs Emily Smyth (Ulster) - *Landscape Planning for Sustainable Development* -

The European Landscape Convention commits the Northern Ireland government since 2007 to recognising landscape as a common resource to which everyone has rights and responsibilities for culture, quality of life and individual and social wellbeing, and economic activity; that changes in the economy accelerate landscape transformation; and that cooperation in protection, management and planning of landscape is important. Research undertaken for the Ministerial Advisory Group for Architecture and the Built Environment in Northern Ireland (MAG) demonstrates revision of the 1999 Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment is crucial, and that Landscape Character Assessment as the basis for green infrastructure strategic design is in turn the basis for local development plan-making, that landscape quality objectives should uphold landscape value, and that competency is dependent on adequate expertise within the local authority.

In Northern Ireland, landscape policies, and the integration of landscape into planning and all other policies, are required. The first planning policy for landscapes designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty was published in 2013. However, drawing on the MAG research findings, this presentation establishes that all landscapes of all qualities must be included in such policies. It provides an investigative overview relating to an overarching Landscape Strategy for Northern Ireland, binding on all government; and concludes that for sustainable development, all development, land and activities, must manage, enhance or protect the environmental resources parallel with those of cultural society, as the research findings indicate.

2.45pm – Discussion

3.15pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

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3.20pm – Networking and Refreshments

29 APRIL 2015

Social Isolation & Inclusion

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Paula Devine (QUB) et al - *Social isolation and older men: meeting the need?* - In Northern Ireland, as elsewhere, there has been a growing recognition of the needs of older people within a range of policies and strategies. Within these, the prioritisation of social inclusion for older people acknowledges that social inclusion and active ageing have strong links to health and well-being. At the same time, men's health is a growing concern internationally. Social isolation, loneliness and depression are increasingly identified as major issues for men throughout the life course. Men often have less involvement in support and friendship networks than women do. Alongside this, service provision has been criticised for being 'feminised'. This presentation - jointly presented by The Men's Working Group and researchers from Queen's University - outlines a recent review of services for socially-isolated older men aged 50 years or over living in Belfast. The introduction explores the impact of social isolation on men's mental and physical health. Key findings from an audit of current service provision aimed at this group are highlighted, followed by case studies of individual service members. This followed by an assessment of how these services are meeting current levels of need, and ways in which they may be developed to meet future requirements.

2.05pm - Dr Sarah Eardley-Weaver (QUB) - *Including all: Improving arts accessibility for people with varying visual and hearing ability* - Media accessibility and social inclusion are increasingly prominent issues in today's rapidly developing technological and multicultural world, as reflected in legislation and in a growing social awareness of inclusion as a fundamental human right. However, there remains a lack of promotion and awareness of the accessibility facilities for the blind and partially-sighted, as well as the deaf and hard-of-hearing, especially within the arts such as theatre, cinema, opera and museums. This presentation discusses findings from pioneering research into translation and accessibility issues in the arts, focusing on audio description, touch tours, sign language interpreting and subtitles/captioning. It includes examination of the production and reception of these innovative facilities which push the boundaries of current perceptions of the notions of accessibility and disability.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

6 MAY 2015

Youth Justice

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm – Ms Lesley Emerson, Dr Karen Orr and Prof Paul Connolly (QUB) - *Engaging young people with the conflict and its legacy: findings from an evaluation of the 'Prison to Peace' educational programme* - 'Prison to Peace' is an educational programme which assists young people in exploring the conflict and its legacy through the narratives of politically motivated former prisoners. A cluster randomised controlled trial evaluation of the initiative, funded by the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister and conducted by QUB School of Education, demonstrates that the programme

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has the following significant positive effects on young people: reduction in sectarian prejudice; reduction in support for violence; and increase in likeliness to participate positively in school and community, as indicated by measures of information seeking behaviour, interest in talking to others about politics. Further, the programme increases young people's knowledge and understanding of the conflict, and its complexity, and processes of transition to peace. Moreover, the results demonstrate the programme's potential to increase young people's optimism for permanent peace. This presentation draws on the findings from the cluster RCT, interviews with young people, teachers, principals, parents and educational stakeholders to discuss more generally how education can contribute to the ongoing debate regarding dealing with the legacy of the past. It also discusses how best to co-ordinate this and other educational programmes seeking to address issues of conflict and division in Northern Ireland within the current policy context.

2.05pm - Dr Nicola Carr and Dr Siobhán McAlister (QUB) - *Experiencing Youth Justice: Process, Meaning and Legitimacy* - Reform of the youth justice system, including the wide incorporation of restorative justice approaches, was a central component of the *Criminal Justice Review (2000)*. Following the devolution of policing and justice powers to the Assembly, the *Youth Justice Review (2011)* made a series of recommendations for further reforms. These included proposals for the introduction of a statutory time limit in youth cases to tackle avoidable delay. Strengthening legitimacy and advancing rights-based approaches are key themes underpinning the recommendations of *Youth Justice Review (2011)*. Young people's views of justice within the system are critical to our understanding of how such aims can be achieved. This presentation is based on findings from a longitudinal qualitative study exploring young people's experiences of transitions *into* and *from* custody in the Juvenile Justice Centre. Using a life-history approach young people's experiences of justice at various stages of the criminal justice process and in the wider context of their lives is explored. Key issues such as social contexts, legitimacy and perceptions of fairness are highlighted and the implications of this for system reform are critically examined.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

13 MAY 2015

National Identity

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm – Mr John Garry (QUB) and Mr Kevin McNicholl (QUB) – *Understanding the 'Northern Irish' Identity* - This presentation outlines key findings of research that used census and survey data to examine the 'Northern Irish' identity. The presentation first provides a demographic profile of Northern Irish identifiers: are they different from 'Irish' and 'British' identifiers in terms of gender, age, social class, educational qualifications and religious background? Second, it focuses on attitudinal factors: are Northern Irish identifiers notably moderate or centrist in their political beliefs? Third, it focuses on behavioural factors: are Northern Irish identifiers particularly likely to engage in 'cross community' contact and activities? How has Northern Irish identity (and associated demographic, attitudinal and behavioural profiles) changed over time? Linking the analysis to Priority 4 of the Executive's Programme for Government, the presentation assesses the extent to which the emerging Northern Irish identity may enhance efforts in 'building a strong and shared community'. Is 'Northern Irish' a genuinely and meaningfully distinct identity associated with shared values and behaviour and potentially a shared community? Or, is 'Northern Irish' identity simply another way of expressing traditional identities, with substantial differences between 'Northern Irish' Catholics and 'Northern Irish' Protestants? The findings shed light on the relationship between shared identity and shared community.

2.05pm – Dr Ian Shuttleworth (QUB) - *Religion and National Identity in Northern Ireland: A Longitudinal Perspective 2001-2011* - Religious denomination is a key element in understanding Northern Ireland society and politics, as it is often equated with national identity and voting intentions. It is also significant in informing debates about equality and resource

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allocation. Usually it is understood as a two-group 'green and orange' issue – Protestants/Unionists and Roman Catholics/Irish Nationalists. However, the 2011 Census showed that there was an appreciable number of 'nones' and 'not stated'. Moreover, in 2011, there was also a sizeable group who reported a Northern Ireland identity. The 'nones', 'not stated' and Northern Irish do not appear to fall easily into the 'green and orange' categories and are little understood. The presentation therefore explores the social and demographic backgrounds of the 'nones', the 'not stated' and the Northern Irish in 2011 and relates this to their individual background and where they lived in 2001. It examines who changed religious denomination between 2001 and 2011, and focusses on the religious affiliation in 2001 of those who reported they were 'none' or refused to state a religion in 2011. It also answers questions about whether those who became 'nones' or 'not stated' by 2011 tended to be better-off and more residentially mobile than those who reported the same denomination in 2001 and 2011.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

10 JUNE 2015

Equality in Physical Activity & Sports

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Dr Katie Liston and Prof Marie Murphy (Ulster) - *'Playing Like a Girl': Female participation in physical activity and sport in Northern Ireland* - This presentation examines the relationship between sport and physical activity participation, and gender in Northern Ireland and globally. By drawing on the latest peer-reviewed research on physical activity, sports participation, gender ideologies and role expectations, it describes international best practice in the promotion of women's involvement in sport and physical activity (PA). Following this is an examination of the barriers – real and perceived – that constrain (if not prevent) girls' and women's full participation in sport and physical activity and a consideration of how these barriers can be overcome. Research involving novel interventions designed to encourage female involvement in sport and PA is reviewed. Finally, the presentation draws from the collective expertise of Sport and Exercise Sciences Research Institute to suggest ways in which government in Northern Ireland might take the initiative in addressing the consistent gender imbalance in participation levels in PA and sport.

2.05pm - Dr Ruth Hunter and Dr Mark Tully (QUB) - *Time to address inequalities in sports and physical activity participation* - The prevalence of physical inactivity is rising and the inexorable slide to more inactive lifestyles offers worrying projections of future prevalence of obesity, morbidity and mortality. National guidelines recommend that adults do at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week. However, evidence shows that only 8% of adults in Northern Ireland are aware of the guidelines and over 60% are not doing enough activity. It is imperative these guidelines are followed up by innovative and sustainable action. Increasing the proportion of the population doing physical activity represents a considerable societal challenge. Given the limited resources for health promotion, Northern Ireland needs to tailor approaches to target those most "in need". This requires an understanding of the characteristics of those who are unaware of the guidelines and those not doing enough activity, in order to effectively develop and target population-level interventions to address inequalities in participation. This presentation draws on research findings suggesting that males with a low level of education, living in deprived areas, and young females and females with poor health may benefit from targeted physical activity promotion interventions. It further recommends moving away from government's "one size fits all approach" towards tailored interventions in order to halt the physical inactivity "pandemic".

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments

24 JUNE 2015

Innovation and Economic Growth

1.30pm – RaISe – Welcome

1.35pm – Assembly Committee Chair – Opening Remarks

1.45pm - Prof Barry Quinn, Ms Lynsey McKitterick, Dr Adele Dunn and Prof Rodney McAdam (Ulster) - *The effectiveness of the policy and support environment for local food production competitiveness, innovation and growth* - This presentation focuses on the effectiveness of policy for SME (small and medium enterprises) innovation in the food chain. Specifically it provides evidence-based recommendations for policy-makers arising from research into the effectiveness of the policy and support environment in fostering innovation, competitiveness and growth among small and micro-sized food producers. A competitive local food production sector contributes to the fabric of the rural economy and leads to greater transparency and traceability in the supply chain. The findings and recommendations for policy arise from the EU funded INTERREG IVC LOCFOOD (Local Food as an Engine for Local Business) project which consists of 13 partners across 9 EU regions. The research indicates relatively high levels of innovation among food small/micro food producers, but a lack of involvement in support programmes, particularly collaborative programmes. The evidence suggests that these enterprises are engaging with introductory levels of support, but indicates various barriers to engagement, such as a lack of understanding of available support and lack of critical networking capabilities. Policy implications include the need for government and support agencies to engage more with these businesses to communicate available support, to provide more specialist support, and to formulate a strategy for collaborative networks.

2.05pm - Prof NJ Hewitt & Dr P Griffiths (Ulster) - *The Need for Energy Storage in Northern Ireland as a mechanism for Efficient Electrical Network Use* - Wind energy is the large scale renewable energy electricity provider of choice with a marriage of a mature cost effective technology and an excellent wind resource in Northern Ireland. However, given the variability of wind energy, its availability does not always coincide with our electricity needs. Furthermore the wind resource tends to be in the west of Northern Ireland, while the major demands are in the east. Finally, the electricity network has been designed for power stations in the north and east of Northern Ireland, with the network radiating outwards, with the consequential drop in capacity as it delivers electricity to the traditional lower demands of the west of Northern Ireland. Thus energy storage can meet a number of needs. For example, it can manage the variability of wind. It can also manage the load/demand relationship at certain points on the network ensuring the transmission network operates optimally and safely. Bearing these benefits in mind, this presentation discusses the technologies potentially of use in Northern Ireland, as well as their likely benefits. This presentation seeks to explore more cost effective integration of wind power (or other variable renewables) onto the electricity network, as the network is at a cross-roads. It explains that significant investment in capacity may be partially alleviated by energy storage and also may allow more renewable energy penetration onto the electricity market. It also discusses how market changes may have to reward flexibility management which storage can provide.

2.25pm – Discussion

2.55pm – RaISe - Closing Remarks

3.00pm – Networking and Refreshments