

Conference of Irish Geographers 2026

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Advancing Blue Economies and Marine Geographies

“Into the blue”: Directions for coastal prosperity beyond the sustainability triple-bottom-line

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The blue economy is marked by a core paradox: it seeks economic expansion from ocean resources while claiming to safeguard their long-term sustainability. Yet marine and coastal ecosystems face accelerating degradation driven by growth-oriented policies that prioritise resource intensification and extraction. These approaches reflect a triple-bottom-line logic that assumes economic, social and environmental goals can be balanced, an assumption increasingly challenged by climate change, geopolitical volatility and widening socio-ecological inequalities. Such dynamics expose the limits of the TBL framework and undermine efforts to adopt genuinely holistic governance of marine resources. A fundamental revaluation of how ocean systems are understood and managed is therefore required. Concepts of resilience, stewardship and justice offer more robust foundations for addressing ecological limits and social inequities. This paper synthesises emerging scholarship across these domains to outline alternative pathways for blue economy governance capable of meeting present needs without compromising future ecological and societal well-being.

Business Models for Sustainable Aquaculture: Insights from European Firms

Noelle King, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick

Aquaculture is recognized as a key component of the Blue Economy, contributing to food security, coastal livelihoods, and regional development while raising pressing questions of environmental impact and social equity. This paper examines how sustainability and equity are incorporated into the business models and innovation practices of aquaculture firms across Europe. Using responses to a Europe-wide online survey of aquaculture firms, the study identifies distinct configurations of sustainable business models and sustainability-oriented innovation strategies within the sector. Semi-structured interviews with selected firms are used to contextualize and interpret quantitative findings, providing insights into how and why particular business model patterns emerge, how they operate in practice, and on implications for environmental performance and social justice. By combining quantitative firm-level survey data with in-depth qualitative insights, this study develops an empirically grounded typology of sustainable business models in European aquaculture and examines spatially uneven drivers and constraints that shape their development across different regions.

Towards a rethinking and remaking of the blue economy in Ireland

Chelsea Beardsley, Queen's University Belfast

This paper will present some of the findings from my PhD research focused upon oceans governance and the blue economy in Ireland. The marine space in Ireland has been defined, valued and governed according to its own genealogy of development. Both internationally and nationally the ocean is being conceived of as a new frontier for development. It is seen as an

infinitely marketable space where, for example, offshore renewable energy (ORE) technologies can provide energy security and aquaculture expansion can provide food security. Coinciding with this frontiering is the recognition that ocean species and habitats are in critical need of protection or conservation. In different parts of the world access to ocean spaces and 'resources' are changing according to rules and regulations enacted under the blue economy and blue growth paradigms. Whose knowledge counts, and how participation is structured within emerging blue economy strategies matters as the expansion of ORE, aquaculture, conservation zones and other marine developments advances. This paper presents the analysis and findings of interviews conducted with marine stakeholders in Ireland. These interviews were conducted to investigate instances of resistance or potential counter-conducts to the overarching blue economy problematisations in Ireland, and responses to the progression of different marine sectors. Understanding responses to current governance is essential for rethinking how knowledge is produced and shared, ensuring that moving towards a 'sustainable' blue economy is both inclusive and just.

Arts-based and experimental methods in geographical investigation (1)

A Co-Dialogue Exchange on Narrative Approaches to Geographical Investigation

Dr Rosa Rogers, University College Cork & Dr Caroline Millar, University of Kent

As creative writers our work asks how interdisciplinary forms including poetry, personal narrative, and digital storytelling can interrogate, speculate and open space in geographical investigations. Our session will include a collaborative discussion of separate and interrelated work, bridging points of connection around artistic process, methods and challenges we face. Dr Caroline Millar will propose a methodology she terms 'Edgewriting', a creative approach to exploring marginal and marginalised spaces by treating them as co-authors of their own stories. In capturing voices that development narratives often silence, interstitial landscapes are no longer passive subjects, but creative collaborators. Dr Rosa Rogers will discuss her work under the Met Éireann TRANSLATE project, where she is exploring meaningful co-design with communities to create climate storytelling that is accessible, can hold complexity, and generate knowledge beyond datasets to highlight intersectional risk and vulnerabilities. As interdisciplinary practitioners, we ask how experimental methods can illuminate new ways of seeing, imagining and connecting to pressing social and environmental issues. Our work addresses key challenges, particularly in how artistic methods in scientific spaces can often be seen as 'window dressing', instead we posit this work as a site to generate new knowledges that can expand geographical investigations. As well as producing a co-dialogue exchange about the transformative power of narrative, our session will invite group discussion around our current points of enquiry. Drawing upon artistic methods of thinking about 'process', 'collaboration' and 'participation as research', the session will not offer definite conclusions, but instead hold space for interrogation, creative thinking and future imaginaries.

Corporeal cartographies: Constructing participatory visual narratives of women's respiratory health experiences in the Cambodian garment sector

Gráinne Fay, Dr. Stephanie Coen & Dr. Sabina Lawreniuk, University of Nottingham

This research explores experiences of respiratory ill-health amongst Cambodian women garment workers. Focusing on air and breathing, this research looks at how intimate metabolic processes are mediated by socio-political factors, which change the body's very constitution. Creative participatory methods are employed to include the fleshy, fluid body within geographical research on human-environment entanglements. During four co-designed arts-based workshops, garment workers use visual storytelling to communicate realities of working and breathing in- and out-side factory walls. This approach encourages garment workers to creatively and visually express their bodily experiences of breath and breathing, while considering how structural vulnerabilities shape health outcomes. This inclusive practice subverts hegemonic approaches to understanding health, generating instead a 'non-textual way of knowing' (Garber & Turner, 2025: 43). The body maps produced by garment workers visualise the affective embodiment of work within global supply chains and question the normative politics of inclusion and exclusion, exposure and security, that ultimately determine who deserves the right to breathe. This method endeavours to go beyond 'declarations of privilege and positionality' (Gani and Khan, 2024) within academia to centre garment workers' feelings, sensations and experiences when understanding variegated experiences of breathing, on and off the shop floor. In doing so, a 'biosocial' geography of breathing is uncovered; a process wrought by complex relations of power and difference, across time and scales and bodily boundaries. Building on cultural and feminist health geographies, these creative methods affirm the ambiguous, messy and non-binary aspects to breathing, to lay the groundwork for an emancipatory respiratory politics.

Making Carbon: Visualising Soil Carbon Offsets and the Rise of "Restoration Economies" on Grasslands

Linda Pappagallo, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University

Soil carbon and biodiversity offsets on grasslands are emerging as new investment frontiers attracting a diverse range of stakeholders, including social enterprises, universities, climate-tech firms, fintech consultancies, entrepreneurs, and carbon-emitting multinationals. The process of investigating, archiving, summarising, and tabulating 80 Verra-registered soil carbon offset projects worldwide has revealed eight principal modes of creating carbon. I experiment with desktop documentaries as an audio-visual storytelling device to illustrate these distinct (yet overlapping) modalities of creating carbon: Hypercarbon, Techno-scientific carbon, Statist carbon, Carbon exceptionalism, Mission-driven carbon, Strategic carbon, Megalomaniac carbon, and Neo-colonial carbon. This visual analysis demonstrates how soil carbon projects draw upon dominant imaginaries of "nature" to reproduce long-standing myths about livestock production systems and grassland ecologies. Narratives of land degradation are mobilised by actors both online and in practice to rapidly scale carbon projects turning climate mitigation into a rush for land. This dynamic is problematic because soil carbon offsetting relocates responsibility and risk for climate mitigation onto grassland ecosystems and communities, often in the global south. In doing so, this reinforces historical legacies of land injustice while instrumentalising livestock farmers as solutions to the climate crisis. The desktop is used as a site of narration, while the internet functions as both archive and landscape through which the investigative process unfolds. This approach reveals the visual, linguistic, discursive, and cognitive practices that shape emerging 'restoration economies' or new 'economies of repair' (Fairhead et al., 2012; Huff & Brock, 2023) on grasslands.

Risky Cities toolkit: arts-based, participatory geographies for flood resilience

Kate Smith, Briony McDonagh & Ed Brookes, University of Hull

Geographers are increasingly turning to arts-based and participatory methodologies to understand socio-environmental challenges, expanding how knowledge about place, environment and lived experience is produced. This paper reflects on the development and application of the Risky Cities Toolkit, an open-access resource designed to support participatory engagement around flood risk and coastal change. Drawing on insights from the AHRC-funded Risky Cities project, the paper examines how creative methods can function as hybrid geographical tools for investigating the spatial, emotional and relational dimensions of climate risk with diverse groups of participants. The toolkit brings together a suite of arts-based, participatory approaches that were co-developed with communities and creative practitioners. In line with growing work in creative and participatory geographies, these approaches foreground embodied, affective and place-based forms of knowledge that are often marginalised in technocratic models of environmental governance. By enabling participants to visualise, narrate and materially represent their experiences of flooding and coastal change, arts-based methods generate alternative ways of seeing and understanding climate pasts, presents and futures. Responding directly to session themes, we critically examine the challenges that emerge when using creative practices within geographical research. These include negotiating power dynamics in collaborative research, addressing the emotional labour involved in working with communities experiencing environmental trauma, and translating context-specific creative processes into transferable methodological resources. These processes provide methodological scaffolding for the co-creative and participatory turn across disciplines and advance ongoing debates about the transformative potential and limitations of creative methods in contemporary geographical research.

Arts-based and experimental methods in geographical investigation (2)

Mental Mapping for Interpreting an Urban Study Area as an Outsider Researcher

Aya Badawy, Maynooth University

As universities and research institutions have been calling for internationalising research to broaden perspectives of knowledge, urban researchers have been travelling abroad to study new cities and urban areas different from their home countries. In the limited time of a research project, international researchers need to familiarise themselves with large-scale urban areas to be able to interpret the data they collect and later evaluate the findings, particularly in qualitative research. Current studies have provided guidelines for how to analyse urban areas but for decision-making. However, analysis for decision-making is often quantitative involving the collection of various data types; yet, familiarisation requires knowledge of the stories and history embedded in the area, the names of development projects and the key routes and features that shape the area. Therefore, this research aims to answer the question: How can outsider researchers use art-based methods to rapidly familiarise themselves with a large-scale urban area under study? I present the art-based method which emerged as I was interpreting Dublin 8 preparing for research on the relationship between residents' satisfaction and neighbourhood planning and design. Dublin 8 is postal code district in the inner city of Dublin covering around 686 hectares. The method involved using diagrams, mental maps, on-site sketching and transect walks to construct a rapid yet informative understanding of the area before data collection. It provides a guideline on how to familiarise oneself with a large-scale urban area before approaching it for research.

Logistical aesthetics, artistic interventions and a substantive geography of the doorstep

Samuel Mutter, Maynooth University

This paper brings together work on critical logistics, political aesthetics of landscape and urban artistic interventions. It takes as its central focus the geography of the doorstep, comparing its treatment by logistics on the one hand, and socially-engaged art on the other. Existing work identifies logistics as an increasingly prevalent field of corporate governance directed towards the in-between spaces of capital circulation: its hubs, seams and border zones. On an urban scale, this includes everyday interstices such as fulfilment warehouses, empty lots, pavements and doorsteps. I further this work by examining logistics relative to the aesthetic ideals applied previously to legitimise the transformation of land(scape) into private property. Logistical aesthetics work not primarily on an exterior expanse to be romanticised (as Nature), enclosed (as property) and extracted (as resource), but on the small, numerous interiors to be integrated within the supply-chain, calculated, tracked and optimised. This constitutes a flattening of the doorstep to a secure, transactional border demarcating private property and reveals broader political ramifications. Following Kenneth Olwig and Amanda Byer, I argue for a more 'substantive' geography of the doorstep. I do so by examining a collaboration with socially-engaged artist Augustine O'Donoghue, through which the artist produced a set of doormats as a mode of intervention into housing politics in Dublin, while I developed a response in the form of an anonymous letter. I interrogate the detail of this collaboration to develop insights for understanding and disturbing logistics in favour of more 'substantive' perspectives.

Valuing the Unmeasurable: Dinnseanchas and Arts-Based Methods in Community-Led Urban Practice

Darren O'Connor University College Cork

Arts-based and experimental methods are increasingly mobilised within geographical research to engage forms of knowledge that exceed conventional academic frameworks. This paper reflects on the methodological approach of Uncertain Ground, an ongoing research-by-design project examining the value of TEST SITE, a community organised meanwhile-use initiative in Cork, Ireland. Situated within a post-colonial and neoliberal planning context, the project interrogates how inherited systems of governance struggle to recognise forms of social value that cannot easily be captured through quantitative metrics such as participant numbers, financial investment, or economic return. In response, the research draws on arts-based methods to explore alternative epistemologies of place and value. The project engages with the Irish concept of dinnseanchas, often translated as the wisdom of place, as a decolonial framework for understanding value as an assemblage of memories, narratives, relationships and situated experiences. This framing informs a set of experimental methods designed to capture lived and collective understandings of the site. These include participatory videography with community contributors, board game co-design workshops used to explore organisational decision making and planning processes, and deep mapping inspired by Alexandra Arènes' Terra Forma to trace the anthropocenic palimpsest of human and more than human interactions across time. As the research is ongoing, the paper does not present final results. Instead it focuses on the cultural and geographical context of the project, the development of its methods, the potential for arts-based research in collaborating with community actors, and the ethical considerations involved in collaborative arts-based research.

Beyond participation: Postqualitative and posthumanist participatory methodology for queer migration research

Jessie Sutphin, University College Cork

Dominant discourses on migration in popular media and policy present fixed and linear migrant identities, marginalising queer migrants whose embodied experiences are fluid, disidentifying, and resistant to stable categorisation (Munoz, 2001). This project develops zine-making as a post-qualitative, arts-based methodology for researching queer migration through a participatory project with queer migrant co-researchers in Ireland, proposing a hybrid methodological approach that draws on but departs from classical participatory action research. This departure is theoretically motivated rather than pragmatic. Classical PAR's humanist assumptions and tendency toward measurable outcomes sit in tension with the fluid and disidentifying subjectivities of queer migrants and risk reproducing the extractive and homonormative dynamics the project seeks to resist. Drawing on counter-hegemony and posthumanist feminist theory, this project reconceives participatory cultural production as simultaneously a research methodology and a prefigurative political intervention by enacting, rather than merely describing, counter-hegemonic praxis. Zines are proposed as the primary site of knowledge production: a countercultural, DIY form of self-publication that generates embodied and grassroots perspectives as direct action (Atton, 2002). Materials produced will be housed in a publicly accessible digital archive under anti-copyright or open distribution terms, allowing for the ownership of the works to be retained by their creators as well as allowing the creators to control their own narratives. This paper reflects critically on the methodological and ethical challenges this approach generates. Asking questions of researcher positionality, the limits of democratic participation, and the risk that even radically intentioned research reproduces the exclusions it critiques.

Broadening and Deepening the Scope of Social Reproduction Theory in Geography

Panellists: Klara Trane, Emma Petersen, Geoff Boyce, Wagner Alves da Silva (University College Dublin)

In this panel session we are aiming to broaden theoretical understandings of social reproduction. Social reproduction refers to all activities and infrastructures that are directly involved in maintaining a society, on a daily and generational basis. As social reproduction is closely linked to care work, it often gets misunderstood and/or mischaracterised as only encompassing unpaid care work located within the private sphere. Our goal for this session is to critically and creatively engage with theories of social reproduction and broaden these theoretical approaches by addressing other spaces and conditions necessary for (and entangled with) the necessity of social reproduction. To do so, we use the research of each panelist to explore and probe the breadth of the concept, and the leverage obtained by understanding and applying it outside of the private sphere.

Klara Trane works on militarisation and colonial-capitalist accumulation in the Arctic Nordic context. Here, she employs social reproduction within militarised political economy as an analytical entry point to examine how militarisation operates through everyday life in Nuuk, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland). Housing, labour, care, mobility, and environmental relations are treated as key sites where military and state power are materialised, justified, and potentially

disrupted. In this sense, the analysis moves beyond production-centered accounts of value and toward an analysis of how value is generated through the restructuring, degradation, and differential distribution of reproductive capacities.

In her research, Emma Petersen, is linking social reproduction to reproductive justice in the realm of critical migration studies. Both concepts are often used to explore the lived realities of women, but then are treated as disparate from each other. Combining them can reveal everyday injustices that people who have migrated experience and have to negotiate. And thus, show structures and networks of solidarity and community support related to issues such as housing, access to medical support, sharing of information and care structures that create liveable lives outside of welfare care structures.

Geoff Boyce's research explores the political economy of migration governance, including pathways of capital investment and accumulation that follow from the effort to expand state capacities for surveillance, detention, and removal; how peoples' everyday access to social rights and social infrastructures have become weaponised in an effort to punish and deter irregular migration; and how ordinary people come together-across-difference in order to "make a way out of no way," developing alternative networks and infrastructures of mutual aid and solidarity in order to overcome enforced precarity and exclusion.

Building on this broader understanding of social reproduction, Wagner Alves da Silva's research examines how domestic work is being reshaped through processes of platformization on social media and entrepreneurial discourses. His work explores how precarious domestic workers are increasingly drawn into an attention economy in which they are not only expected to perform their labour, but also to rebrand themselves as "companies" and compete for visibility and symbolic capital online. For many of these workers, social media represents a promising pathway to overcome poverty and improve their life chances. Platforms, therefore, occupy an ambiguous position in this process, functioning simultaneously as professional portfolios, spaces of leisure, and arenas where entrepreneurial ideals are promoted and normalised. Wagner investigates how these dynamics reshape the conditions, aspirations, and forms of recognition available to domestic workers in developing economies in the Global South.

The research approach of each panellist shows an adaptation of social reproduction theory within critical geographic scholarship.

CIG Poster Session

Holding Ground: Bogland, Belonging, and Ireland's Energy Transition

Dr Rachel Gough, Dr Breffní Lennon & Dr Niall Dunphy, Sustainability Institute, University College Cork

This paper examines Ireland's socio-spatial relationship to bogland as a key site through which questions of environmental integration and resilience are negotiated in the context of decarbonisation. As peat extraction declines, bogs have become emotionally and politically charged landscapes, entangled with debates around rural identity, heritage, class, and the just transition. Focusing on the intersection of cultural representation and environmental change, the paper explores how bogland functions as a "connected environment" in which ecological,

social, and cultural systems converge. Through close analysis of contemporary cultural texts—including poetry, visual art, and film—the study identifies recurring affective registers such as preservation, patriotism, instability, morality, and transgression. These affective dynamics are then situated within broader geographical and sociological discussions of place attachment, energy landscapes, and climate emotions. By placing cultural analysis in dialogue with research on public attitudes to climate action, including findings from *Climate Change in the Irish Mind*, the paper demonstrates how emotional and cultural attachments to bogland shape the possibilities for integrating low-carbon transitions into everyday life. In particular, it highlights how evolving relationships to land, labour, and gender within bog landscapes can both enable and constrain forms of environmental resilience and collective climate action. The paper argues that cultural conceptions of place are central to understanding how energy transitions are experienced, contested, and enacted. In doing so, it contributes to geographical debates on connected environments by demonstrating the importance of integrating cultural analysis into interdisciplinary approaches to climate transition and resilience.

“Mediating Migration in Ireland: Interactions Between Policy, Media Representations, and Public Attitudes Toward Refugees and Asylum Seekers”

Philip Keegan, University of Galway

Ireland continues to address the challenges of incorporating large groups of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, and migrants (RASIM). While the government has policies in place to accommodate these individuals, public opinion in receiving communities does not always align with these policies. This misalignment can cause social and political tension. Successful integration of newcomers requires reciprocal interaction between RASIM and the communities where they settle. Media representations further complicate this process, as coverage may draw simplistic correlations between the rise of right leaning and far-right political orientations and extremist anti-immigrant views and the increasing number of RASIM arriving in Ireland. However, correlation does not equal causation. This research will examine the complex interplay between media discourse and public sentiment. It will investigate whether there is a tangible relationship between policy shifts, media portrayals, and public attitudes towards migration within Ireland. To achieve this, the study will employ a mixed-methods approach. This will include generating archival data from online media outlets, surveys to gauge public opinion regarding RASIM and political preferences, and comprehensive analyses of relevant policies and media coverage. By integrating these multiple methods, the research aims to develop a nuanced and holistic perspective. Through examining these relationships, the study aspires to provide a clearer understanding of how migration is discussed within Ireland and what these dynamics might mean for future policy and media representation of migration issues.

Dublin’s Cultural Audit: Mapping Dublin’s Cultural Life

Claire Duggan, Dublin City Council Culture Company

To support informed decision making in policy, strategy and planning, Dublin City Council requires a comprehensive knowledge base of the city’s cultural landscape. That is why Dublin City Council Culture Company in partnership with Dublin City Council developed the Cultural Audit and Map. The project brings together geographic and descriptive data for a wide range of cultural areas such as arts and heritage, parks and nature, sport and fitness, food, hobbies, community involvement and education, as well as artists and makers who call Dublin home. Developed using a cultural mapping methodology, the Cultural Audit is integrated within the Council’s existing Geographical Information Systems (GIS). It is also a public resource, a website called Culture Near You, that makes the city’s cultural buildings, organisations and

networks easier to find and connect with. This resource holds both hard and soft infrastructure together in one place where people can see cultural places, organisations and infrastructure. Public engagement and ongoing research enhances the scope and accuracy of the dataset. The Cultural Audit and Map provides an accessible and up to date resource for both internal and public use. It improves the visibility of cultural infrastructure, supports analysis and decision-making and enables users to discover and connect with culture across Dublin. The Cultural Audit and Map is an evolving tool that strengthens connections between communities, practitioners and policymakers, while supporting a more informed, data-driven approach to cultural planning and development.

Transcending the Paradigm: Applying a ‘Worldview’ approach to Irish Climate Politics

Elaine Harris, Dept of Geography Maynooth University

Ireland is projected to fail to meet with our national and EU climate targets resulting in the likelihood of billions in financial penalties. We are fast gaining a reputation as a climate laggard. Despite the available scientific knowledge and innovative solutions to mitigate the climate and biodiversity crises it appears we lack the social, economic and political will and consensus to bring about urgent, impactful change in Ireland. Our worldview, meaning how we view the world, influences our assumptions, values, beliefs and behaviours. Therefore, our worldview of the Earth, our relationship with the Earth and our beliefs around the extrinsic and intrinsic value of nature - all influence political priorities regarding our care of the Earth. This PhD study applies a ‘worldview’ lens to Irish climate politics to understand how our western dominant ecological worldview - is shaping the Irish human-nature relationship, political priorities, legislation, policies and strategic action or inaction regarding the climate and biodiversity crises. Using a mixed methods approach of political discourse analysis, qualitative interviews and focus groups, the study asks how transcending the worldview paradigm might offer a leverage point to systemic change in Ireland and transformative policies supporting biodiversity and climate justice.

Sediment archives as Long-term records of antimicrobial and metal resistance in a human-impacted lake system.

Julie O Donovan¹, Aaron Potito¹, Jean O Dwyer², Michelle McKeown²

¹University of Galway, ²University College Cork

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a major global threat to human health, with the environment increasingly recognised as a key reservoir and pathway for its spread. Despite this, long-term records of AMR in natural systems remain limited. This project aims to reconstruct temporal trends in AMR within a freshwater environment impacted by agricultural intensification and human activity. Sediment cores representing approximately 80 years of deposition were collected from Lough Muckno, Co. Monaghan, Ireland. A chronological framework was established using ²¹⁰Pb and ¹³⁷Cs dating to enable temporal analysis. A multi-proxy approach has been applied, combining sediment geochemistry (including loss-on-ignition, ITRAX elemental analysis and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$, $\delta^{13}\text{C}$, C:N ratios) with microbiological and genomic techniques. Bacterial isolates recovered from sediment intervals were subjected to antimicrobial susceptibility testing, while whole genome sequencing is used to identify taxa and antimicrobial resistance genes (ARGs). This integrated approach enables comparison between phenotypic resistance and genotypic potential across time. Environmental drivers, including population change and indicators of agricultural activity and pollution, are being assessed alongside AMR data to explore potential relationships. This work aims to demonstrate the value of lake

sediments as archives of AMR and to improve understanding of how environmental pressures influence resistance dynamics. The findings will contribute to ongoing efforts to address AMR from a One Health perspective and inform future water quality management and public health strategies.

What's up, DOC? A review of dissolved organic carbon concentration and export patterns in temperate and boreal river catchments.

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Rising dissolved organic carbon (DOC) levels in rivers and streams across temperate and boreal regions pose multiple threats to water quality and to the global carbon balance. This has stimulated extensive research into the climatic, hydrological and biogeochemical controls on DOC dynamics in surface waters. Despite this no synthesis has systematically evaluated patterns and trends across catchment-scale monitoring studies. We conducted a systematic scoping review of catchment-scale DOC monitoring studies published between 2004 and 2024 across the Northern Hemisphere and Ireland, following the PRISMA-ScR framework. Data on DOC concentrations and export, from 93 eligible studies, were extracted, standardised and analysed to assess regional patterns, land-use influences and long-term trends. Distinct regional patterns emerged in DOC concentrations with the highest values reported by Boreal Europe (15.27–65.78 mgL⁻¹), with elevated values in Finnish catchments. Land-uses affected by disturbance of organic soils, including forest clear-felling, peat extraction, and restoration, were consistently associated with higher DOC concentrations (57.98–111.28 mgL⁻¹) relative to less disturbed catchments on mineral and mixed soils (<50 mgL⁻¹). When it comes to annual DOC export, which incorporates catchment size and discharge into measured DOC concentrations, the patterns shift. The highest DOC exports reported by Oceanic Europe (5.05–18.45 gm-2year⁻¹) and Continental Europe (9.00–13.72 gm-2year⁻¹), highlighting that concentration-based assessments alone do not fully capture the nature of catchment-scale carbon dynamics. Long-term studies conducted across the Northern Hemisphere consistently reported multi-decadal DOC increases, while short-term studies provided insight into DOC responses to land-use change. Notably, Ireland was underrepresented within the reviewed literature. Given Ireland's extensive peat soil coverage and ongoing land-use changes, this limits a national-scale understanding of DOC dynamics. Our synthesis highlights the need for long-term, standardised DOC monitoring in Irish catchments to distinguish climatic trends from land-use impacts and to inform water quality and carbon management policy.

Climate Action, Governance and Communities (1)

Perceptions of Climate Coloniality in International Climate Governance: Engaging with Scholars at COP30

Rafaela Graça Scheiffer & Jennie C. Stephens, ICARUS Climate Research Centre, National University of Ireland Maynooth

During 30 years of global climate governance, carbon emissions have increased worldwide and perceptions of the capacity for the international United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process to facilitate transformative change have decreased.

Scholars from a diversity of academic backgrounds attend the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings observing and researching the international governance processes. This research analyses how scholars engage with the coloniality of the climate crisis and of the international governance structure designed to reduce the risks of climate change. Interviewees with scholars who attended COP30 demonstrated consistent perceptions regarding the lack of representation in negotiations of those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Perceptions of decolonial practices in academic spaces include deconstruction of belief systems, development of university curricula tailored to local contexts, critically examination of epistemological bases of current knowledge systems in research and teaching, fostering horizontal classroom exchanges, implementing other pedagogical methods such as storytelling to enhance student autonomy and critical thinking while challenging established authority. Some academics do not perceive coloniality. The incorporation of justice perspectives into the last IPCC special report was mentioned as a decolonial step – scholars have proposed that future steps consider inclusion of historically neglected areas such as mountain landscapes, centring marginal regions such as the Pacific, discrimination of luxury versus survival carbon emissions, and amplification of border scholar perspectives including feminist, Black, and indigenous viewpoints in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and UNFCCC activities. Suggested changes to the climate conferences included banning fossil fuel lobbyists, restrictions in party delegation sizes, and scaling down giant COPs.

Understanding public worldviews to increase climate action and engagement in Ireland

Anne Pender, Dr. Chelsea Beardsley, Miguel Trejo Rangel and Cara Augustenborg & Kevin Cunningham¹

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Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges of our time, with a well-established evidence base for its current and predicted effects. However, despite a significant majority of people worldwide being both aware of the threats posed by climate change and supportive of stronger action by governments, an “awareness-action” gap still persists, including in Ireland. Research is now increasingly uncovering the role played in this gap by deeper and often unconscious influences such as worldviews. Worldviews function as an internal meaning-making tool and comprise the assumptions, beliefs and values which shape our mental and emotional engagement with the world, as well as our behaviour and decision-making. This paper presents the findings of the first survey of dominant worldviews in Ireland, conducted with 1000+ respondents between November 15th and 26th, 2024. The survey utilised the Integrative Worldview Framework developed by de Witt et al. (2016) and previously tested on populations in The Netherlands and the USA. The survey also included questions on audience socio-demographics and attitudes towards climate change. The results indicate a dominance of Postmodern (43%) and Integrative (29%) worldviews among the sample population, which has potentially positive implications for boosting climate engagement; however, the results also indicate a potential vulnerability to climate mis- and disinformation amongst those holding Traditional (10%) and Modern worldviews (18%). Regarding gender distribution, males comprised the majority in the Traditional and Modern worldview categories (63% and 51%, respectively), while females comprised the majority in the Postmodern and Integrative categories (53% and 58%, respectively). In terms of respondents’ attitudes towards climate change, 44% self-identified as concerned and 37% as alarmed (37%), with a minority identifying as either cautious (12%) or doubtful (7%). The findings add value and depth to existing research on climate attitudes in Ireland such as the Environmental Protection Agency’s Climate Change in the Irish Mind initiative and are also relevant for other countries, especially those with a similarly well-educated and politically diverse population.

An examination of climate service actors in Belfast and Cork

Sadhbh Gaston, Niall Dunphy & Alexandra Revez, Sustainability Institute, University College Cork

In 2019, the city councils of Belfast and Cork each declared climate emergencies. In doing so, they joined a growing movement of public institutions working towards combatting climate change. City councils as local units of governance have perhaps the most direct relationship with their citizens. This makes them well suited to support place-based climate actions and engage in building genuine public participation. Such initiative can have impacts beyond the physical and may contribute to disrupting unhelpful narratives and encouraging fair and just climate action. Climate services play an important role in delivering usable information needed to make decisions. As cities take the lead in climate policies in their areas, they will need tailored climate services as their needs are very different to those of national institutions. These differences have not been widely investigated but cannot be resolved by merely downscaling existing services. The envisaged co-production inherent in provision of climate services involves a wide range of actors at city level, and the services created will have more site-specific relevance. The constraints cities face delivering action may also lead to more inventive applications of climate services. In this paper, would like to present an investigation climate services in Belfast City and Cork City conducted within the context of the EPA-funded JustCities Hub project. This work examines the state of affairs surrounding climate services and just transitions in the cities. It mapped the current network of actors connected to the climate services in the cities through the plans and policies that impact them and raises questions as to how climate services may be best supplied and utilised in cities.

Climate Action, Governance and Communities (2)

A Wasted Transition? Managing the end-of-life of Ireland's renewable energy infrastructure

Kathleen Stokes, Dublin City University, Pdraig Flynn, The Rediscovery Centre

Ireland's renewable transition is reshaping the spatial and material configuration of the energy system, as wind and solar are rolled out across the country. While this transition has been widely examined in terms of deployment and landscape change, comparatively less attention has been paid to what happens as these infrastructures age and reach end of life. This paper presents preliminary findings from an exploratory project examining Ireland's current approach to the repair, decommissioning and material recovery of renewable energy infrastructure. Drawing on a questionnaire and group interviews undertaken in 2025, it highlights emerging uncertainties around how infrastructural lifecycles are governed and how responsibilities for end-of-life management are being distributed. In particular, the paper points to a lack of clarity around Ireland's emerging repair, decommissioning and material recovery pathways, including who will undertake this work and how it will be governed. Rather than offering definitive conclusions, it concludes by setting out questions for further investigation, including how infrastructural endings are being anticipated, the scope for circular economy approaches, and what embedded models of repair and recovery might look like.

Establishing acceptability: wind energy and community in the energy transition

Breffní Lennon, University College Cork

Energy transitions are invariably socio-technical phenomena. However, institutional bias towards resolving the associated technical and economic barriers has left significant blind spots with regards to the social and cultural contexts that both frame and facilitate transitions. While it characterises the current malaise, particularly in relation to the planetary crisis, this approach has also undermined efforts to realise the systemic shift to a decarbonised energy future. Past energy transitions rarely considered issues of social justice or community cohesion. Instead, a minority of actors effectively captured the commons that had previously been available to a majority of stakeholders. The current transition is different and is notable by the diversity of voices visioning the types of future available to us and very much depend on the choices we make both collectively and individually. Even when the technical and regulatory barriers are addressed, ignoring the social dimension can and has undermined expected outcomes envisioned by policy makers. This presentation outlines one such example of the types of questions raised around community and cohesion as they relate to a wind farm proposed for the southwest of Ireland.

Group Water Schemes in rural Ireland as an example of community management of natural resources- exploring the potential of Group Water Schemes communities for climate action initiatives.

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Following the Biodiversity Enhancement and Climate Action (BECA) pilot project in which the National Federation of Group Water Schemes (NFGWS) positioned Group Water Schemes (GWSs) as potential leaders in community-led climate action, this paper critically examines how sustainability initiatives have been operationalised in the context of community-managed water services. Drawing on qualitative interviews with representatives of the National Federation of Group Water Schemes (NFGWS) which were analysed through thematic analysis, this paper asks: to what extent can GWSs act as community leaders in climate mitigation and adaptation? The study pursues two interconnected objectives: to understand how stakeholders within the NFGWS conceptualise the role and remit of GWSs in relation to climate action; and to assess the capacity of GWSs and the NFGWS to deliver community-led climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives. Engaging with debates on community-based natural resource management, water governance and just transition, the paper examines how transition priorities are defined within and around GWSs, whose knowledges and capacities are recognised, and how rural institutions can be placed within decarbonisation agendas. The paper argues as community actors with established resource management experience, GWSs represent an underutilised vehicle for place-based climate action. In doing so, it contributes to scholarship on community-led transition initiatives.

Unlocking the Potential for Climate Action Leadership by Community-owned Water Services in Rural Ireland through a Local Government Lens

Cian Donovan, Armelle Leclercq-Spooner, Harun Siljak, Julie Clarke, John Gallagher

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Ireland's national Climate Action Plan 2025 emphasises the critical role of local government in leading climate action at a community level. This paper reviews all thirty-one local authority (LA) Climate Action Plans (CAPs) to examine specific commitments to climate mitigation and adaptation that relate to community-owned water services. A complementary survey of LA representatives in roles of responsibility for climate action aimed to understand the capacity for rural water governance and stakeholders involved in the process. The LAs commutatively adopted approximately 4,000 Climate Action Plan (CAP) actions supporting climate mitigation and adaptation nationally, these plans were prepared in consultation with internal and external stakeholders. With drought and heatwaves representing the most prominent climate hazards impacting water services, leveraging the potential of the LA CAP's decarbonisation zones (DZs) have not been realised, and evidence of meaningful engagement with community-owned water services was limited. Furthermore, the adaptive capacity of key rural stakeholders such as private group water schemes (GWSs) remains largely unrealised, limiting the potential co-benefits of decarbonising rural water services. Survey responses reveal significant concerns regarding LA capacity to deliver CAP commitments, with insufficient resourcing, expertise, and long-term funding identified as key barriers. While alignment with national climate policy strengthens the overall governance framework, stronger integration of community-led water management bodies is required. The research highlights a missed opportunity for embedding community-owned water services as climate action leaders across rural Ireland. Strengthening collaboration further between LAs and GWSs could enhance water security, build rural climate resilience, and contribute to a more equitable and inclusive just transition in Ireland.

Commoning in Irish land, housing, and environmental justice: Radical geographies and infrastructures of resistance

Chairs: Rebecca Vining and Jack Edmunds Bergin, Maynooth University

Panellists: Rebecca Vining (PhD researcher, Maynooth University), Jack Edmunds-Bergin (PhD researcher, Maynooth University), Emma McKeever (PhD researcher, Queen's University Belfast), Daniel Connor (Talamh Beo), Mair Kelly (Community Action Tenants' Union)

In the face of intensifying enclosure from the privatisation of urban housing to the ecological degradation of Lough Neagh, "the commons" has re-emerged as a focal point for radical geographers and activists alike. This participatory workshop will consider the different articulations of the commons present in contemporary Irish land, housing, and environmental movements. It brings together a cohort of PhD researchers and activists from Talamh Beo (land), Community Action Tenants Union (housing), and Slí Eile (environment) to explore "commoning" as an active, social relationship and a manifestation of collectivised power. Following short (5-minute) provocations from each movement, audience discussion will welcome all to share experiences, questions, and reflections. We hope to use this space to reimagine infrastructures of resistance, find synergies between social movements, and build connections around what shared life might look like.

Connected ecologies: Land governance and resilience

Pastoral Ecologies

Romina Totaro, Architectural Association

This paper reconstructs the long transformation of the Capitanata plain, in Apulia, southern Italy, between 1400 and 1861, from a pastoral platform structured by transhumant ecologies into a cereal-oriented agrarian space increasingly subjected to cultivation and territorial control. It approaches the Tavoliere not as an empty agricultural surface, but as a politically produced landscape whose uses were historically regulated through the interplay of hydrological conditions, property regimes, and state power. The Dogana della Mena delle Pecore, established in 1447, the plain functioned for centuries as the winter hinge of a wider transhumant system linking the Apennine uplands to the lowlands of Capitanata through the infrastructural network of the "tratturi" (sheep tracks). Within this configuration, pasture prevailed over cultivation, while the protection of the "terre salde" (uncultivated and unploughed lands) formed part of a fiscal and territorial apparatus designed to sustain the feudal wool economy. Conceived as the first chapter of a PhD thesis, this research traces the gradual destabilisation of this regime between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as demographic growth, changing grain markets, and the spread of liberal agrarian thought increasingly challenged the pastoral order. The abolition of the Dogana in 1806 marked a decisive threshold in this process, opening the Tavoliere to widespread ploughing and accelerating the conversion of pasture into arable land. Yet this transition did not produce a more equitable agrarian landscape. On the contrary, the shift from pasture to wheat reconfigured older asymmetries into new forms of concentration, as formerly common and regulated lands were progressively absorbed into expanding regimes of agricultural exploitation. By following this transformation up to the mid-nineteenth century, the chapter shows how the Tavoliere became the object of a new political rationality in which cultivation, productivity, and territorial ordering converged. What emerged was not simply the end of transhumance, but the spatial foundation of a grain-producing plain whose later agrarian modernisation would continue to rest on unequal access to land, ecological simplification, and the progressive subordination of territory to productivist logics.

A Structural Ecological Risk Diagnosis of Inner Mongolia's Agro-Pastoral System: Integrating Ecosystem Services and Land-Use Constraints

Yawen Kang & Ainhua Gonzalez Del Campo, University College Dublin

Increasing dietary shifts toward animal-based foods have intensified pressure on cultivated land in China. In response, China is transitioning toward an 'all-encompassing approach to food', which emphasizes grasslands for their dual role in food provision and ecological conservation. As the largest pastoral region in China and now one of the country's major grain-producing provinces, Inner Mongolia serves as both a critical production base and an essential ecological barrier in northern China. However, extensive grassland reclamation and agricultural intensification have exacerbated ecological degradation in the region, where water scarcity, biodiversity loss and soil erosion have become increasingly severe. Existing studies have linked ecosystem services with land-use, but often lack spatially explicit assessments and are predominantly based on historical trajectories rather than current conditions. To address these gaps, this study develops a static structural-diagnostic framework that integrates assessments of key ecosystem services with ecological land-use (un)suitability to identify ecological risk areas. The results reveal where multi-ecosystem service vulnerability or conflict hotspots spatially coincide with ecologically unsuitable cultivated land or vulnerable grassland. These

areas reflect the compounded ecological pressures and indicate locations where land-use practices exceed underlying ecological capacities. The findings provide spatially explicit evidence for guiding future sustainable land-use optimization. Furthermore, the proposed diagnostic framework offers a transferable approach for assessing structural risks in regions facing land-use competitions and underlying ecological vulnerability.

Mediation: A Mechanism for Strengthening Resilience in Rural Ireland

Ms. Mary Flanagan, Dr. Catriona Murphy & Dr. Geraldine Maughan, TUS

Communities in rural Ireland are increasingly at the forefront of environmental challenges, from climate change targets and emissions to changes in agriculture, land use, and rural planning. Environmental pressures can impact negatively on communities by disrupting production, diminishing income, undermining livelihoods and contributing to conflict across multiple contexts and divergent stakeholder interests. For example, conflict can arise where farmers fear that environmental policies will undermine their ability to sustain their livelihood, while policymakers emphasise regulatory compliance and long-term ecological goals. Climate change intensifies tensions, generating disputes over access to land and critical resources such as water. The imperatives of local economic survival and the pursuit of climate targets can create conflict, particularly in remote rural communities dependent on intensive sectors such as transport; efforts to restrict these sectors can provoke resistance where viable alternatives are lacking. The rural-urban divide, where rural communities and urban policymakers differ in their perceptions of climate urgency and appropriate responses, compound these challenges. This paper explores how mediation can strengthen resilience in rural contexts by supporting collaborative climate adaptation and sustaining rural livelihoods. Mediation is not merely a mechanism for resolving disputes; it is a process that fosters dialogue, trust-building and shared problem solving. This flexible system of facilitated communication enables stakeholders to engage constructively in the presence of a neutral third party. Mediation promotes inclusive engagement, allowing local knowledge to be integrated with technical expertise to foster mutual understanding and develop context-sensitive agreements. Thus, harmony within communities in rural Ireland can be maintained while adapting to mitigate the impact of climate change and other issues. Mediation represents a critical, albeit underutilised tool for strengthening resilience in rural Ireland, empowering communities to respond to environmental change while safeguarding agricultural sustainability.

Defining the problem-space of Kenya's rising Rift Valley lakes

Peter McGowran (Queen's University Belfast), Molly Gilmour (University of Newcastle), Faith Taylor (King's College London), Joel Gill (Cardiff University)

The part of the Rift Valley which runs through Kenya is home to several lakes comprising one interconnected lake-system. This system, a connected environment, is a crucial component of Kenya's wider socioecological systems, supporting millions of human and non-human lives, and underpinning national and international flows of wildlife, goods and services. Unique in both the challenges and opportunities the lakes give rise to, perhaps their most striking characteristic is that since at least 2010 the lakes have risen by a combined total of over 71,000 km² (Byrne et al., 2024). Often rapidly occurring, rising lake levels have inundated hundreds of buildings across the also-expanding towns and cities bordering the lakes. These processes are threatening communities and exposing tens of thousands to other hazards such as human-wildlife conflict, disease-spread, and localised weather extremes. Increased levels of rainfall, at least to some extent exacerbated by climate change (Kimutai et al., 2022), combined with urbanisation and land-use change across the watershed, appear to be a significant part of the

causal equation (Byrne et al., 2024). At the same time, it is understood the lakes have always risen and retreated over millennia, owing to the complex geology of the Rift Valley. Whatever the cause, our study has revealed a heightened sense of exasperation among the already marginalised groups in Kenya most exposed to the on-going impacts of the rising lakes. Amid an absence of any long-term solutions, either realised or proposed, short-term and limited-capacity disaster management policies and procedures are struggling to match the scale of the damage caused. The problems posed by the rising lakes span the policy agendas of climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable development, and disaster risk reduction, with impacts spanning the social, infrastructural, economic, political, and ecological. In that sense, the rising Rift Valley lakes provide a productive case study for thinking through the converging demands each of these policy agendas ahead of their respective impending 2030 deadlines. This paper will present findings from a recent project that partially addressed the impacts of the rising lakes with respect to multi-hazard interactions and preparedness. Building on these findings, the paper will speculate on a geographical research agenda to question, rethink, and better define the complex problem-space of the rising lakes. I will suggest drawing on recent theoretical advancements in the geographical literature (McGowran and Donovan, 2021; Donovan, Morin and Walshe, 2023; Grove, 2025), to approach the problem of the rising lakes ontologically by asking: what is the rising risk valley lakes disaster? It is hoped that bringing integrated geographical knowledge to bear on this complex and connected environmental problem will help to shape a more resilient and sustainable future for Kenya's Rift Valley.

Contemporary Mobilities: Geographies of Migration and Tourism

Sitting with the Trouble: Reflexive Engagements for More Ethical Segregation Research

Valerie Ledwith, University of Galway

Research on socio-spatial segregation has, over several decades, generated a substantial evidence base documenting its patterns, drivers, and consequences across diverse contexts. Yet segregation remains a persistent feature of contemporary societies, raising questions about the limits of existing knowledge and its capacity to effect meaningful change. This paper addresses this tension through a reflexive engagement with my own body of research on segregation among migrant and minority communities. Drawing on over twenty years of scholarship, the paper treats prior research not only as empirical evidence but also as an object of critical interrogation. Reflexivity is mobilised as both a methodological tool and an ethical orientation, enabling a critical assessment of positionality, responsibility, and potential complicity within the research process. This approach is informed by recent calls to “stay with the trouble” of research discomfort. In particular, Zoë O’Reilly (2025) emphasises the importance of engaging with, rather than retreating from, the ethical unease that accompanies research on marginalised populations. Her work provides a lens through which to reinterpret moments of discomfort in my own research as generative sites for methodological and ethical reflection. In doing so, the paper moves beyond the accumulation of evidence towards a deeper engagement with how knowledge is produced and the responsibilities of researchers in addressing persistent social inequalities.

Rural migration through a place-based mobilities lens – challenging sedentarism

Dr Caitriona Ni Laoire, School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork

Rural places are commonly imagined as vulnerable in the face of migration, under threat either socially and culturally as a result of in-migration, or from depopulation through outmigration. This paper presents a critical analysis of dominant constructions of the relationship between rural places and migration, taking Ireland as a case-study, and proposes a relational place-based rural mobilities approach to challenge the dominance of sedentarism in understandings of rural migration. A content analysis of representations of rural migration in policy and media texts reveals the reproduction of sedentary and essentialised understandings, which view migration in the rural sphere as something exceptional rather than ordinary. Alternatively, a place-based rural mobilities approach would draw attention to the full spectrum of migration and mobility processes, both visibilised and invisibilised, that are an integral part of the constitution of rural places, thus challenging static views of the rural. The paper calls for a renewed research and policy agenda that brings a critical perspective to bear in research on rural migration, questioning taken-for-granted in/visibilisations that permeate public, policy and academic discourses.

Moving out, moving up? Socio-spatial mobility as capital in the European space

Niall Cunningham, Newcastle University

It is well-understood that social mobility and spatial mobility are inherently linked; within states and superstates, particular areas can function as ‘escalator regions’, providing individuals with opportunities for professional and personal advancement, and in the process, these regions contribute disproportionately to national economies. On the other hand, health geography has long pointed to the phenomenon of health-selective migration, in which those with downward mental and physical health trajectories are also prone to internal migration, and congregation in particular and already disadvantaged places, leading to further social and material pressures in those areas. The negative social political implications of these inequalities are being increasingly felt across old, advanced economies, from the racialised ‘stuck in place’-ness of the USA to the classed stasis and stigma underpinning European notions of ‘left-behindness’. What is less well understood, however, is how the capacity to be spatially mobile can operate not merely as a correlate or predicate of social mobility, but how that spatial mobility can operate as a form of individual capital in its own right, conveying and bringing further advantage to individuals. This paper will draw on research from a large-scale, representative pan-European survey to argue that we can effectively isolate mobility level in Bourdieusian terms through approaches he pioneered. It also draws on useful and related models of ‘motility’ advanced by Kaufmann and colleagues to make these points. Ultimately, this matters because in an ostensibly (or at least legislatively) ‘fairer’ and more meritocratic world, attention needs to be drawn to evolving and more pernicious forms of boundary making in the production of new forms of advantage.

A training needs analysis for a sustainable tourism destination management programme – a practitioner’s perspective.

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While sustainable tourism practices have long been acknowledged for their potential to reduce negative impacts and enhance positive outcomes, their effectiveness is often hindered by several challenges — most notably, a considerable gap in skills and inadequate collaboration between practitioners and educators. To meet these pressing challenges, it is essential to

strengthen awareness, enhance collaboration between industry and educators, and develop the critical skills needed to champion responsible and sustainable tourism in European regions. As the principles of sustainability advocate for equitable management of tourism destinations combined with the upward growth in tourism activity in Europe post-pandemic, there is an urgent need for a concerted effort to expand the adoption of sustainable tourism destination management. Specialised education programmes can play a crucial role in developing practical skills and fostering networks that help address the challenges and complexities involved in advancing and innovating sustainable tourism practices across destinations. The WeNaTour Erasmus+ project (The European Alliance for Innovation and Sustainability Education in Welfare, Nature and Tourism) responds to this call through the provision of a dedicated programme designed to empower tourism practitioners and educators to develop innovative approaches to more sustainable and responsible tourism futures. This paper presents the findings of an online questionnaire administered to tourism destination managers, employees, and students across the project's five partner countries. The results informed a comprehensive training needs analysis (TNA), which subsequently guided the development of the project's training and networking initiatives. The TNA revealed there is a compelling need for a combination of traditional 'soft' skills such as communication, networking, and relationship building, alongside industry-specific skills, including sustainable destination management tools, corporate social responsibility, social and environmental measurement techniques, and expertise in marketing, information communication technology (ICT), governance, and project management. The findings underscore the significance of ongoing development of tailored sustainable destination management programmes that align to the diverse needs of tourism destination stakeholders.

The Changing Geography of Domestic Tourism in Ireland During COVID-19

Dr Barraí Hennebery, Technological University of the Shannon

The purpose of this paper is to understand how the spatial distribution of domestic tourism in Ireland changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is understood that the tourism sector suffered during the pandemic. However, the behaviour of domestic tourists may have changed due to the restrictions on outbound flights. Understanding changes in domestic tourism patterns is important as climate change and geopolitical volatility could cause an increase in the number of people deciding to holiday at home in the coming years. To better understand the changing geography of domestic tourism this paper analyses the share of domestic tourism that each country had pre-pandemic (2019) and post-pandemic (2022). The paper also utilises a resilience index for the years 2020 to 2022 for counties in Ireland to understand how individual counties absorbed and rebounded from the crisis. The research shows that the impact of the pandemic on domestic tourism was not homogenous across Ireland with some counties being able to better absorb and rebound stronger from the negative impacts of COVID-19.

Critical Geographies of Housing Crises and Resistances

Conflicts between the financialisation and decarbonisation of housing: a case study of the corporate landlord sector in Ireland

Fiadh Tubridy, Juliana Sassi, Patrick Bresnihan, Department of Geography, Maynooth University

This paper will examine the relationships between the financialisation and decarbonisation of housing. Thus far there has been limited critical research which has investigated how the structural context of commodification and financialisation of housing impacts on the possibility of decarbonising housing systems. Insofar as it exists, this has focused on a limited range of

contexts and primarily identified the problem of renovictions, referring to evictions to facilitate energy efficiency renovations and rent increases. We progress our investigation through a case study of conditions and energy efficiency in the corporate landlord sector in Ireland, focusing on the operations of three major corporate landlords, IRES REIT, LRC Group and Orange Capital Partners. Data has been collected through a tenant survey and a range of secondary data sources which allows for investigation of the relationship between rents and energy efficiency across CL portfolios. Our findings highlight the diversity of CL valorisation strategies in the Irish market, including different strategies to exploit loopholes in tenancy legislation in order to extract increased rents. However, while corporate landlords have been identified by policy makers as the solution to poor conditions and energy efficiency in the private rental sector, a common thread across all three case study companies is a lack of investment in their portfolios that would substantively reduce carbon emissions. Overall our findings show how the financialisation of housing, as manifest in growth of corporate landlords, is acting contrary to the imperative to decarbonise housing systems in response to the climate emergency.

Re-examining Informal Housing in the Global North

Alexia O'Brien, Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice/Trinity College Dublin

This paper investigates the emergence of housing informalization in the Global North through a case study of Dublin, focusing on overcrowded accommodation and co-living. While housing informality is generally associated with the Global South, recent literature has recognized it as a feature of Global North cities experiencing housing crises driven by processes of financialization, neoliberalization, and unaffordability. Dublin offers a particularly acute example (Human Rights Council, 2017). As policy and market actors, as well as tenants, respond to homelessness and housing precarity, a range of new housing types and tenures have begun to emerge that, with varying degrees of state sanction, claim to provide “solutions”. Recognizing how informality is always strategically and selectively deployed by the state (Roy, 2005), this paper innovatively considers how co-living and overcrowded accommodation can be seen as and explaining informalization. This paper reframes informality through a spectrum that takes and uses a conceptual framework of production, urban governance, and consumption factors aiding to informalization trends.

Counter-knowledges of urban vacancy via occupations and eviction resistance in Ireland

Tommy Gavin, Trinity College Dublin

In 2023 the High Court of Ireland ruled that the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), the regulator of rental housing in Ireland, did not have the jurisdiction to decide whether dwellers meet the protected status of ‘tenants’ or not (Gavin and O’Callaghan, 2024). Henceforth it could only adjudicate in cases of officially registered tenancies. Figures from the 2022 Irish national census showed that 330,632 households rented their homes from a private landlord, while figures from the RTB that year showed that there were 246,453 registered tenancies. Excluding outlier cases, this still conservatively left 73,002 households without the most basic tenancy protections in law (Simon Community, 2024). This ruling had the effect of excluding tenants without registered tenancies from the meagre protections of the RTB, which in any case are routinely ignored, and is one milestone in a long trajectory of the normalisation of informality, extraction, dispossession and exclusion in the system of housing in Ireland. Since 2019 the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU) has organised across the island of Ireland to challenge and resist this trajectory. CATU is a mass member organisation with members organised into local branches on regional levels. Branches elect members to the national steering committee who have oversight of the whole organisation and the staff of paid

organisers funded by member dues. CATU was formed as the direct successor of a wave of campaigns and actions that sought to intervene in the housing crisis that materialised in the wake of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC). These campaigns have employed strategies involving collective eviction resistance and occupations of vacant buildings. The understanding connecting these strategies lies in addressing the abstract relation to ownership and distribution of space. These practices of occupations and eviction resistance are examples of “strategic illegality” (Roy, 2017) and they function as what Roy terms ‘the politics of emplacement’ (Roy, 2017). They reveal how property rights “come into being” via “state enforcement” (Blomley, 2004), but these strategies are inherently fragile because they are unlikely to secure the demands they advance towards transformations to the property regime. The capacities and networks to coordinate these actions and campaigns must be nurtured and that is one of the primary rationales for the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU). In this session I will describe how the development of an organic mass movement politics of housing justice has developed sophisticated counter-knowledges of the production of urban space via evolving strategies of collective direct action and counter-legitimate alternative imaginaries of “the city otherwise” (Wilhelm-Solomon, 2020).

Is ‘renoviction’ real? A causal analysis of the impact of retrofitting activity on subsequent eviction rates at the neighbourhood level in Ireland

Kevin Credit, Tom Murphy, Fiadh Tubridy, Patrick Bresnihan, Maynooth University

Retrofitting the existing building stock is a critical factor for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the residential sector, as well as for reducing energy expenditure and providing greater thermal comfort for individuals. This is particularly true in European countries, where the existing building stock tends to be older and less efficient than in other regions (e.g., North America) (European Commission, 2020). However, despite increasing policy interest invested in encouraging retrofit uptake in many countries – and a growing academic literature on the behavioural, demographic, and socioeconomic determinants of retrofit – rates remain stubbornly lower than targets: for instance, in Ireland, only 59,932 “deep” retrofits were completed between 2019 and 2024, despite a goal of 500,000 to be finished by 2030 (SEAI, 2025). At the same time, a large body of research has begun to interrogate and expose some of the tensions inherent in ‘green transition’ policies as implemented in (primarily) neoliberal political-economic frameworks. One example with particular relevance to Ireland (and other countries experiencing increasing housing costs) is ‘renoviction’, which refers to the forced displacement of tenants due to retrofitting or renovation works. Whether this is cynically used by the landlord to effectively evade rent pressure regulations, or due to a genuine desire to upgrade the energy efficiency of a building, ‘renoviction’ represents an important tension between competing sustainability goals that deserves further investigation. While this practice has been described and studied in previous qualitative work (Richard, 2024; Richard et al. 2025; Woodhall-Melnik, 2026), the goal of this paper is to empirically analyse the possible causal effect of neighbourhood-level retrofitting activity on neighbourhood-level eviction rates in Ireland. Using a unique dataset on legal evictions collected from Ireland’s Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) by the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU) and information on retrofitting activity derived from the public Building Energy Ratings (BER) data, this paper uses a causal study design to assess the difference in eviction rates (2015-on) between small areas that experienced retrofitting activity prior to 2015 (the “treated” units) and those that have never experienced any retrofitting activity (the “control” units). The results suggest that retrofit rates – particularly for “deep” retrofits – have had a causal impact on subsequent eviction rates at the small area level. While this analysis has some limitations, both in terms of data completeness and ecological interpretation – and needs to be supplemented by further qualitative analysis – the results provide evidence to support the hypothesis that renoviction is occurring in Ireland.

These findings can be used to inform the design of more progressive and effective retrofitting incentive and rent pressure policies.

Critical Perspectives on Academia: AI, EDI and Just Institutions

Beyond the Paywall & APCs: Diamond Ireland & the Academic Publishing Landscape in Ireland

Dr Frank Houghton¹, Dr Johanna Archbold², Jane Buggle³ & Niamh Brennan⁴

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The scholarly communication system is fundamentally broken. Academic publishing is dominated by a highly profitable oligopoly comprised of five international publishing houses. This oligopoly has control of most elite journals, that are all too often seen as crucial in decisions related to faculty hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion processes. Moves towards open access publishing have all too often been conflated with predatory publishing. In response to inequalities in access many countries have developed national open-access publishing platforms. Such moves are in line with cOAlition S initiatives, such as Plan S, as well as EU and Government requirements. Ireland has just launched its own diamond open access publishing press: Diamond Ireland. An overview of this will be presented, as well as outlining how it could contribute to a more equitable world. Many challenges remain, and this presentation will discuss how Geographers can support this initiative.

The University's New Clothes: How the Adoption of AI Exposes the University as a Fabrication of an Institute of Higher Education and its Demise

Jeremy Auerbach, UCD

Generative AI has been quickly adopted into all aspects of higher education as the latest spectacle through which the university performs innovation and modernity. Yet AI is more than a spectacle, it is a force multiplier that scales up the hollowing of the university and accelerates the university's transition into a fabrication of an institute of higher education. Generative AI use in the performative university violates the research ethics and the core principles in education that serve as its bedrock. Generative AI use in the performative classroom ensures that the university and its staff systematically and completely dismiss pedagogy. Generative AI adoption ensures that the performative university and its staff systematically and completely dismiss the mass of knowledge that finds that AI destroys learning, democracy and the environment, the mass of knowledge that's been generated by its own staff, faculty and students. Together these reveal the university is no longer a site of critical inquiry but a hollow simulation of enlightenment, powered by extractive computation and moral incoherence, a system colonization of higher education. In accordance with late-stage capitalism's self-destructiveness, neoliberalism's war on higher education is entering a strategic inflection point where the innovation and reputation that the performative university survives on will erode and take the university with it. To recover intellectual authenticity and save itself, higher education

must refuse the generative mirage, reassert epistemic sovereignty, and break with the performative economy of fabricated excellence. The paper concludes with feasible practices of resistance against the invasion of generative AI within universities.

Opportunities and Challenges to Supporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education in Ireland

Amy Duley, Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)

The European Pillar of Social Rights identifies 20 key principles necessary for creating a more fair and inclusive society through combatting discrimination on grounds including gender equality, equal opportunities and inclusion of people with disabilities. A literature review was conducted to identify research at the EU and Irish levels relevant to the protected grounds enshrined in EU and Irish legislation to support the development of an evidence base for the Technological University of the Shannon's Public Sector Duty. This process revealed several opportunities and challenges to supporting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the EU and in Ireland. There were clear disparities between the types of research being conducted at the EU level compared to that being carried out in Ireland, highlighting geographical differences in the type of research that is being conducted in this area. Identifying appropriate studies was difficult for some of the lesser acknowledged grounds as the terminology used in the equality and human rights legislation was not always employed by researchers. Furthermore, country-level research often did not reference Europe or the EU, meaning that a separate search would be needed to identify relevant studies in each country. A move towards using standardised language when reporting research related to EDI would facilitate improved visibility of studies in the field, allowing for easier identification of knowledge gaps and more collaboration among researchers. Furthermore, the findings of this review have identified literature gaps in Ireland that will help guide the focus of future studies to develop a deeper understanding of the issues relating to EDI in and throughout the country.

Rethinking Space in Inclusive Assessment: Neurodivergence, Spatial Experience and the Limits of Conventional Assessment Environments

Blanca Escudero Fontan, Dr Therese Kenna, Dr Linda Murphy, Inclusive Assessment Team (Path 4 Phase 2), UCC

Assessment environments play a significant role in shaping how students participate, perform and experience belonging in higher education. For neurodivergent students, whose sensory, cognitive and affective experiences are deeply influenced by environmental conditions, assessment spaces can function simultaneously as supports and barriers (Kapp 2020, Clouder et al. 2020). Large exam halls may intensify sensory overload or attentional challenges, while smaller or quieter rooms may reduce these pressures but they can also emphasise feelings of visibility or difference. Drawing on focus groups with neurodivergent students at University College Cork, conducted as part of the Inclusive Assessment Project funded by the Irish Higher Education Authority, this paper adopts a whole of institution approach to rethinking assessment through a spatial lens. Our focus is on the environments in which assessment takes place, because spaces are not neutral: they shape people's experiences, reflect power dynamics, and can include or exclude neurodivergent students (Lefebvre 1991, Gieryn 2000, Strayhorn 2012). Disability studies and critical work on ableism highlight how normative assumptions about attention, productivity and behaviour shape educational expectations (Campbell 2009, Dolmage 2017). Yet the spatial organisation of assessment (exam halls, quiet rooms, reduced distraction spaces) remains underexamined within inclusive assessment research (Tai, Ajjawi & Umarova 2021, Nieminen 2022). Other work on belonging and spatial experience in higher

education further demonstrates how environments structure participation and identity (Thomas 2012, Wong 2024). This paper explores how neurodivergent students navigate assessment environments, negotiate the expectations embedded within assessment spaces, and respond emotionally to their spatial conditions. Recognising how sensory, spatial and pedagogical dimensions intersect is essential for developing more flexible, inclusive and spatially responsive assessment practices (Tai, Ajjawi & Umarova 2021, Nieminen 2022). By centring neurodivergent students' lived experiences, this research contributes to conversations about space, belonging and participation (Gravett & Ajjawi 2022, Wong 2024), and highlights the importance of rethinking assessment environments as part of broader efforts to support more inclusive educational practices (Dolmage 2017). The paper argues that a spatial lens is essential for moving beyond compensatory models of inclusion. Drawing together insights from inclusive assessment, Universal Design for Learning and spatial justice, it contends that meaningful educational justice requires transforming not only assessment formats and design but also the material and spatial conditions under which assessment takes place (Hamraie 2017).

Belonging to place: Fieldwork as a tool for enabling a sense of belonging among undergraduate students

Sara Hannafin, Catherine Porter, University of Limerick

Each year a cohort of around 160 first year geography students take part in on-campus fieldwork in their first six weeks at the University of Limerick. This paper examines the usefulness of this as an assignment which helps promote a sense of belonging in these new undergraduates. It builds on the work of Mulrooney and Kelly (2020), who highlight the role of the university's physical infrastructure in shaping students' emotional connection to the institution. Navigating a large campus such as UL is one of the first challenges that new students encounter. This experience can evoke feelings of discomfort and disorientation, signalling a perceived lack of fit with place. Over time, however, campus navigation typically becomes a taken-for-granted aspect of student life and one of the ways in which feelings of belonging are achieved. The paper draws on assignments submitted in the Introduction to Human Geography module in which students complete a self-guided fieldtrip on campus. The fieldwork, supported by lectures and readings, provides an opportunity to explore the key geographical themes of space, place, identity and belonging through a direct engagement with four sites across the UL campus. Comments in the completed assignments give an insight into the range of feelings experienced by new first years and indicate how the fieldtrip helps students to engage with the campus and thus enhance their sense of belonging in place. In this way the assignment is a meaningful way of assessing learning in geography while also promoting a deeper engagement with the campus. Importantly, it also helps new students to build an emotional relationship with the university as an institution thus shaping their sense of identity as a UL student.

Cultivating Change – Approaches to Sustainable Agriculture

Unruly Sediment

Alex Arnall, University of Reading

Coastal defence schemes aim to control erosion and stabilise beaches, yet the shore is never fully containable. Sediment is dynamic, shifting and unruly, producing gains and losses that continually exceed human attempts at mastery. Despite this, defence works continue to be underpinned by the promise of control, even when framed as "working with nature." This paper

develops these ideas through the case of Borth, a seaside village in West Wales with a long and contested history of coastal protection. From nineteenth-century groynes to a large rock and beach nourishment scheme completed in 2011, Borth has been repeatedly reshaped by successive efforts to hold the line. Still, the beach evolves unpredictably: sand and stone build up in some areas while disappearing in others, rocks are hurled inland during storms, and long-buried forests are intermittently revealed. Drawing on historical research and community accounts, the paper explores how these shifting sediments alter both the material character of the coast and the ways residents live with and interpret its changes. By foregrounding the agency of sediment alongside the situated knowledge of those who inhabit the shoreline, the analysis shows how defence schemes obscure but cannot eliminate the dynamism of coastal environments. Rather than simply managing erosion, these interventions actively participate in the making of coastal futures, entangling human and nonhuman forces in unstable ways. The paper concludes by reflecting on what it means to live with “unruly sediment” and considers the implications for adaptation strategies that move beyond stabilisation towards more open-ended engagements with dynamic coasts.

Cultivating Connected Environments: Embedding Regenerative Agriculture through Education and Practice

Dr. Marie Taylor and Yvonne Doyle, Sustainable Development Research Institute (SDRI), Technological University Shannon (TUS)

The Erasmus+ AGRETAIN project explores how regenerative agriculture can be embedded within higher education and vocational training in order to support more sustainable and resilient food production systems. By linking applied research, education and practical experience in market gardening the project aims to strengthen knowledge exchange between growers, educators and researchers. The project seeks to integrate formal education with practitioner knowledge, peer learning and community engagement. In doing so, it highlights the importance of collaborative learning environments in shaping sustainable agricultural practices. The research engages a range of stakeholders including market gardeners, farmers, students, educators and rural development stakeholders. Through the development of training modules, learning resources and market garden hubs, the project supports the application of regenerative practices that enhance soil health, biodiversity and environmental resilience. In addition, the project illustrates how connected environments emerge through the integration of education, practice and community networks. By fostering collaborative learning and knowledge exchange, the project contributes to new ways of understanding and implementing sustainable agriculture within evolving environmental and social landscapes.

Regeneration as a specific approach to rural development: An exploratory theory-based framework

Aisling Murtagh, Maura Farrell, Louise Weir, University of Galway

This paper aims to open a discussion in rural studies on the question of rural regeneration. We argue that rural regeneration is a special approach to rural development that should be approached and practiced from this perspective. In rural development, there is a need to move beyond regeneration as policy rhetoric and offer a clear unpacking the concept of regeneration. This paper develops a theory-based framework for rural regeneration that constructs regeneration as taking different forms. The concepts of innovation and resilience alongside capital frameworks are used to deepen understanding of the nature and process of rural

regeneration. The starting point for rural regeneration can be how to deal with rural decline and how this can lead to rural renewal and potentially transformation. However, the pathway to rural renewal is potentially very different to rural transformation. A number of principles to underpin regeneration of any type in a rural context will also be discussed. Understanding what can catalyse regeneration and sustain regeneration outcomes is also important. This calls for exploration of how regeneration plays out as a process and this paper teases out the idea of regeneration as a spiral. This paper will also illustrate the framework by drawing on examples from an agri-food context. This exploratory theory-based framework also raises a number of avenues for future research.

Farmer-herder conflicts in Ghana: Linkages between climate change, resource competition and food security in rural communities

Evans Amoako Amoah, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick - Ireland

Farmer-herder relations have been changing over the past decades, particularly in West Africa because of the impacts of environmental degradation, climate change and non-climatic factors. This has subsequently led to shifting patterns of migration and evolving practices around landownership, and more emphasis on privatisation and commercialisation of land, as well as the emergence of new actors, a change in patron-client relations and the ‘politics of othering’. In Ghana, the majority of debates on farmer-herder conflicts have focused on the role of resource and environmental scarcity in promoting conflict, without considering the influence of the various power dynamics. This research seeks to address this gap by using a human security approach and a political ecology framework to provide an empirical understanding of the causal connections between climate change, conflict of various levels of intensity and non-climatic factors, such as the strength of the local institutions and national political trends. By employing a mixed methods approach the following questions will be answered: 1. What are the perceptions of farmers and herders on the linkages between climate change, resource competition, food security and conflicts? 2. What overlaps and intersections occur between pastoralists and their neighbouring farmers in terms of the impacts of climate change, tensions and conflicts, and other livelihood stressors? 3. How do issues relating to access to land and other resources, especially water, influence conflicts or co-operation, between farmers and herders? 4. In cases where conflicts arise, why these escalations occur and how are they managed between local farmers and pastoralists, local and national authorities? This presentation will examine the theory behind this research project and demonstrate why a combined approach of human security and political ecology can be a useful lens to examine the research questions posed.

Evolving methods in changing environments

Remote Sensing Application for monitoring vegetation phenology and climatic impact in the Nigerian Sahel and Sudan Savanna between 2000 and 2025.

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Vegetation phenology is an important indicator of ecosystem responses to climate variability, especially in semi-arid regions where vegetation productivity is strongly influenced by rainfall and temperature dynamics. However, long-term phenological monitoring in the Sahel is

constrained by limited ground-based observations, frequent cloud contamination, and inconsistent satellite temporal coverage. To address these challenges, this study develops a hierarchical pixel-level fusion model that integrates Landsat and MODIS data to generate a consistent, high-resolution time series of vegetation indices for phenological analysis in data-scarce dryland environments. The model integrates Landsat 7, 8, and 9 and MODIS (MOD09A1) surface reflectance data to produce a temporally continuous record of Normalized Difference Vegetation Index- and Enhanced Vegetation Index 2-based vegetation indices at 30m resolution from 2000 to 2025. Multi-sensor harmonisation, cross-sensor calibration, and temporal compositing were applied to reconcile differences in spatial and temporal resolution, enabling the reconstruction of stable vegetation trajectories despite sparse observations in the Sahel. With the fused dataset, phenology metrics such as start of season (SOS), peak of season (POS), end of season (EOS), and length of season (LOS) were extracted to assess spatio-temporal trends in vegetation dynamics across the Nigerian Sahel and Sudan Savanna. The results show moderate yet statistically significant relationships between the climate and phenology. SOS shows negative correlations with late-season temperature ($r = -0.39$, for mean temperature; $r = -0.46$ for maximum temperature, $p < 0.05$) and positive correlations with rainfall variables ($r = 0.40$, $p < 0.05$). EOS also exhibits a significant negative correlation with seasonal temperature ($r = -0.41$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that vegetation senescence is sensitive to thermal conditions. These results emphasize the role of rainfall variability and temperature in controlling vegetation phenology in Sahelian ecosystems. This study contributes to a more comprehensive research framework that aims to compare climate-phenology relationships in Sahelian savannas and Mediterranean shrublands, leading to the development of a conceptual framework that integrates phenological monitoring into climate adaptation strategies in these regions.

Can we replace field-based biodiversity assessments with Remote Sensing? Opportunities and Challenges for Agri-Environmental Monitoring

Alex Maingi^{1,2}, Prof. Ainhoa González Del Campo², Dr. John Finn¹, Dr. Stuart Green¹

¹Teagasc, ²University College Dublin

Effective monitoring of results-based agri-environmental payment schemes (RBAPS) across Europe depends on reliable and spatially consistent monitoring methods. Currently, Ireland's Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) primarily relies on manual, field-based habitat scoring. As the 2027 target approaches, this method remains notably labor-intensive, prone to human inconsistencies, and challenging to scale across Ireland's diverse landscapes and at a national level. Using ACRES as a case study, this research explores the potential of using remote sensing (RS) techniques, including multispectral satellite imagery and airborne/UAV LiDAR, to automate or enhance the accuracy of field-based biodiversity scoring. Instead of a simple "replace or remain" approach, this study creates a detailed hierarchy of RS suitability by evaluating indicators across the 10 ACRES habitat scorecards with a multi-criteria matrix that includes spectral sensitivity, spatial resolution, and operational feasibility. A key part of this work involves creating a flowering phenology calendar for indicator species to optimize the RS data collection window by aligning satellite imagery acquisition with their specific flowering periods. By categorizing indicators into levels of "operational readiness," the preliminary results of this ongoing research highlight that, although structural habitat features (vegetation structure, bare ground, and invasive shrubs) are readily detectable, fine-scale botanical composition still requires integrated field validation and is unlikely to be replaced by RS in the near term. The resulting framework will offer a transferable approach for policymakers to systematically assess where RS can most effectively lessen the logistical workload of national biodiversity monitoring. Therefore, this study aims to provide a solid roadmap for integrating Earth observation (EO) into consistent, nationwide monitoring strategies that align

with European agri-environmental policies, while clearly outlining the limits of RS in fully replacing field-based biodiversity assessments.

Post-glacial recolonisation of *Globorotalia truncatulinoides* in response to hydrographic changes in the western and central Mediterranean Sea

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Globorotalia truncatulinoides, comprises five known cryptic genetic types (Types 1–5). Among these, only Types 2 and 5 exhibit the dextral (right-coiling) variant, with Type 2 being the sole representative present in the Mediterranean Sea. Under present day conditions, populations of *G. truncatulinoides* in the western Mediterranean Sea are dominated by the sinistral (left-coiling) variant. In particular, the species is abundant during the winter season, where vertical mixing within the water column and subsequent high nutrient availability promote juvenile growth. This research conducts a quantitative analysis of coiling variation in *G. truncatulinoides* using 12 sediment cores distributed throughout the western and central Mediterranean Sea during the Holocene. The analysis identifies a series of key post-glacial bioevents associated with the recolonisation of *G. truncatulinoides*. Early Holocene abundances of *G. truncatulinoides* are dominated by the sinistral variant. However, the notable decline of the species during the uppermost part of the Early to Middle Holocene, is attributed to strong upper ocean stratification likely driven by post-glacial sea-level rise and increased freshwater runoff. A marked increase in the abundance of *G. truncatulinoides* occurs during the upper part of the Middle Holocene, broadly coinciding with the end of the African Humid Period and a shift toward a more semi-arid climate. During this interval, peak frequencies of the dextral coiling variant are observed across all cores, potentially reflecting a transition to a weakly stratified water column following an extended period of strong stratification. Around 3 ka, the transition to modern hydrological conditions, characterised by deep winter mixing and the formation of Western Mediterranean Deep Water, corresponds with a decline in the dextral variant and dominance of the sinistral form. These findings highlight the utility of coiling direction in *G. truncatulinoides* as a proxy for past water column dynamics and climate-driven oceanographic change in the Mediterranean region.

Bridging Soil Health and Socio-Economic Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Framework from the SOILCRATES Living Labs

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This paper presents a novel socio-economic impact assessment framework developed within the SOILCRATES project to evaluate the role of soil health innovations in shaping agricultural sustainability and rural development. Grounded in participatory action research, the methodology integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to capture the complex interactions between farming practices, business models, and regional socio-economic systems. The framework is currently being implemented across four European Living Labs and unfolds in three phases: baseline, ex-ante, and ex-post assessments. At the farm level, longitudinal data is collected from cohorts of participating farmers through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and financial surveys. Emphasis is placed on understanding farmers' lived experiences, motivations, and constraints, particularly in relation to adopting regenerative

practices and monetizing ecosystem services. At the regional scale, the methodology combines Eurostat indicators with spatial and econometric modelling to examine how soil health practices affect broader socio-economic outcomes, including employment, productivity, and social cohesion. The assessment further explores impacts on sustainable land use and community wellbeing, including soil literacy and stakeholder engagement across the quadruple helix. By linking micro-level behaviour with macro-level outcomes, this research advances an integrated, policy-relevant approach to evaluating agricultural transitions. The findings contribute to ongoing debates in geography and rural studies by demonstrating how environmental practices, economic structures, and spatial dynamics intersect, offering insights for scaling sustainable agriculture within diverse regional contexts

Food Geographies of Connection, Integration and Rebellion

Performing the Nation: Nationalism, Gendered Assimilation, and the Feminist Urban Geopolitics of Hui Food Cultures in Beijing.

Dean Phelan, School of Geography, UCD

This paper examines how places of food culture consumption serve as critical sites for the gendered performance of identity, belonging, assimilation and resistance among the majority-Muslim Hui ethnic minority in Han-dominated urban China. Focusing on Beijing, it explores how dietary practices and spaces of food production and consumption reflect broader geopolitical and social dynamics. In re-visiting and re-analysing the dataset from my doctoral research, including more than 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork data, I re-think findings through a new theoretical framing, one situated at the intersection of Chinese nationalism, food geographies, gender, and feminist urban geopolitics. In doing so, this paper first critically re-examines the ways in which inter-ethnic relations and urban politics and governance shape the lived realities of ethnically Hui people in Beijing during an era of Islamophobic geopolitics and increasingly ultra-nationalist policies. Secondly, it looks at how both external and internalised pressures to assimilate have shaped the gendered performances of Hui food culture in Han-dominated Beijing. Here, it reveals the complex ways marginalised communities navigate urban assimilation in contemporary China, and how their lived experiences act to reproduce or challenge gendered nationalist geopolitical imaginaries. Ultimately, this paper offers a nuanced perspective of how Chinese nationalism is performed and experienced in the country's capital city among Hui minority people vis-à-vis gendered performances of food culture.

From Tea to Techno: Food Spaces, Social Infrastructure and Queer Solidarity at Dublin's Hirschfeld Centre, 1979-1987

*Páirc Kerrigan (School of Information and Communication Studies, University College Dublin),
Maria Pramaggiore (Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Appalachian State University)*

On St. Patrick's Day in 1979, the Hirschfeld Centre opened its doors at 10 Fownes Street in Dublin and quickly became one of the most significant institutions in modern Irish queer history. Although it operated for only eight years, the Centre served as a crucial political, social, and cultural hub for Ireland's emerging LGBTQ+ community during a period marked by intense legal, social, and religious hostility towards the Irish queer community. The Hirschfeld Centre hosted activist organisations, community meetings, social events and the well-known nightclub Flickers, which functioned as an important economic lifeline for sustaining the building. While the Centre's role in the development of queer activism in Ireland has been widely

acknowledged, far less attention has been paid to the everyday social practices that sustained this space, including food practices. This paper examines the role of food practices within the Hirschfeld Centre and considers how the sharing of food contributed to the formation of queer community and political solidarity in 1980s Dublin. During the day, the building housed a café that served tea, coffee, and simple meals, transforming the space into an informal gathering point for members of the queer community. By night, the same room became the dancefloor of Flickers, highlighting the improvised and multifunctional nature of queer social infrastructure in a context where dedicated queer spaces were rare and often precarious. Drawing on over sixty oral history interviews conducted as part of the Waking the Hirschfeld project, this paper explores how participants recall the café as a key site of everyday social interaction, care and identity formation. Many interviewees described the café as a place where they first encountered other queer people in a relatively safe environment, with some recalling that they came out to friends, colleagues, or family members while sharing food or drinks there. In this sense, the café functioned as an ephemeral yet vital queer food space that enabled both personal and collective forms of belonging. The paper argues that food practices, particularly the sharing of food and drink, played an important role in the social reproduction of queer activism at the Hirschfeld Centre. These practices helped cultivate networks of hospitality, care and mutual support that sustained activist communities during a period of significant marginalisation. More broadly, the paper argues that examining food cultures within queer spaces offers an important lens for understanding how everyday practices contribute to the formation of political solidarities and community infrastructures.

Galway residents perceive local food, connection, and less plastic and food waste as priorities for sustainable food systems

Nicole Olweean & Anne Mullen, University of Galway

There is growing consensus that societal buy-in and bottom-up societal change must accompany other forms of innovation if sustainable food systems are to be achieved. However, little is known about what householders in Ireland perceive as sustainable in food practice, and what they find affordable, feasible, and culturally acceptable in adopting sustainable food practices. This focus group study among adult residents of County Galway (n=30) explored perceptions and experiences of food (un)sustainability, including barriers to sustainability and opportunities for change. Results of thematic analysis suggest that participants perceive locally sourced diets, community-driven food systems, less food waste, and less or no plastic food packaging to be sustainable. Participants describe disconnect, distrust, uncertainty, and unwanted complicity in unethical, unsustainable practices as issues within current food systems, along with feelings of isolation and disempowerment in sustainable food action. Connection, education, and learning from the past are seen as remedies to current food systems issues. Time, energy, mindset, and power imbalances are areas where barriers present themselves and where there are also opportunities for positive solutions.

Allotments and the commons in south Wales: from the Parliamentary enclosures to the new enclosures

Owain Hanmer, UCD

Urban Agriculture has become a central feature of the contemporary geographies and politics of food, and is consistently noted for its contradictions and tensions in relation to the wider political economy. However, its resurgence in Western Europe and North America can often overlook rich histories of urban agriculture which reveal important insights into its possibilities and challenges today. This paper undertakes a conjunctural analysis that explores the histories

of allotments during a period of rapid urbanisation and political change in south Wales. Tracing the histories of the allotment movement and its intersections with a changing urban environment, the article situates allotments alongside a vast network of commons infrastructure that emerged in the region during the 19th and 20th centuries. I argue that the allotment movement has always been defined by a common and repeated tension: on the one hand, it has been a convenient tool used by the state and capital for its own reproduction, yet on the other hand it has provided an important infrastructure within communities that provided glimpses of autonomy, freedom, and control. While this is particularly prominent during periods of crises, allotments have become remarkably persistent and resilient with important insights for the politics of food and the urban commons today.

Gender Equality, Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Exploring Pathways in Rural Areas and Farming

Hidden Stewards of the Land: Rural Women and Land Use

Maura Farrell, Aisling Murtagh and Louise Weir, University of Galway

Land use on a global stage is at the intersection of agriculture, urban development, environmental policy, and social equity. Within the European Union (EU) and in a rural context, land use has conventionally been dominated by agriculture, forestry, housing, and infrastructure. Traditionally, land governance and rural development have been male-dominated, with women only playing a minor role in land ownership or shaping the landscape. Women's access to land is often inhibited by several factors, including legal issues, financial constraints, socio-cultural influences, and institutional barriers. This paper will explore land use in farming and in rural innovative practices through the lens of women's roles and rights, highlighting structural disparities that affect land management practices, food security, and long-term rural development. Drawing on findings from the Horizon Europe FLIARA (Female-Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas) project, this paper highlights the strong environmental values held by women involved in farming and rural innovation. It demonstrates how, when given access to land, whether through affordable leases, public spaces, or supportive financing, rural women can play a significant role in enhancing the long-term viability and sustainability of their farms, rural areas, and regions. The paper concludes with a set of practical policy recommendations aimed at better recognising women as stewards of the land while also strengthening their access to it.

Breaking the Pattern: Why Women Rarely Own Irish Farms. Gender Equality and Farm Ownership in Rural Ireland

Dr Mary Curtin, University of Limerick

Women's work has long been integral to farming in Ireland, but this role is rarely reflected in land ownership, with women accounting for only 13% of farm holders. Ownership of and access to land are closely linked to participation in farming as an occupation and to the economic sustainability of rural communities. This research investigates the structural, institutional and cultural factors that contribute to, or alleviate, gender inequality in farm ownership. The study adopts an original multidisciplinary approach, examining female farm ownership from social, business and legal perspectives. A review of the literature identified a gap in research relating to gender disparities in agricultural asset ownership. The financial context within which farm

ownership transfers occur was analysed to identify potential economic barriers. In addition, a doctrinal legal analysis was undertaken to assess the extent to which existing legal frameworks protect female family members whose names do not appear on the legal title to farms. Empirical data were also gathered through semi-structured interviews with farmers and stakeholders, and through a survey of agricultural students, to explore attitudes towards female farm ownership. The findings highlight the continued influence of patriarchal norms in land succession. Financial barriers and taxation rules also limit women's ability to obtain legal ownership. While participants supported including women on the legal title to recognise their contribution to farming, concerns about divorce and asset redistribution often discourage this step. Policy reform and increased awareness may support more equitable farm ownership.

Dissolving the barriers to gender equality in Irish agriculture – Lessons from HER-SELF

Martina Roche (Maynooth University), Noirin MacNamara (Maynooth University/Trinity), Mary Anne Hurley (MTU), Áine Macken-Walsh (Teagasc)

Women in agriculture play a vital role in society and are central to food security, nutrition and the sustainability and resilience of rural communities (European Commission, 2021a; UN, 2026). However, only approximately 32% of EU farms are managed by women, their farms are smaller than their male counterparts and only 37% of farm workers are women (European Commission, 2026). Ireland's situation is considerably worse where women account for just 13% of farm holders and 27% of farm workers, with 58,000 women working in farming in Ireland without visibility and without status as a farm holder (CSO, 2022). For the first time in the history of CAP, CAP 2023-2027 referred specifically to gender, highlighting the need for gender equality and to increase the participation of women in farming (European Commission, 2021b). The United Nations declared 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer (IYWF 2026). Despite these efforts to recognise the important role that women play in agriculture, significant barriers remain to women's full participation across the sector. HER-SELF (Highlighting pathways to Empower Rural women to have Sustainable & Equitable Livelihoods in Farming) (funded by DAFM) used a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to provide a baseline position on women in farming in Ireland and evidence for future policy interventions to advance gender equality in the agriculture sector. HER-SELF highlighted key barriers to female participation in agriculture in Ireland and made a number of policy recommendations for improving gender equality in the key areas of: Data Collection & Monitoring; Equitable Policy & Practices; Dialogue & Awareness Training; Gender Equality in Educational Pathways; and Gender Equality in Agricultural Organisations. This research highlights how a systems approach by policy makers to advancing gender equality as part of a just transition - integrating economic, social and environmental measures - is key to achieving the required shift in values, beliefs and practices to enable gender equality across the agricultural sector.

Fallacy or robust process? Exploring the case of benchmarking European policies supporting women-led rural innovation

Aisling Murtagh, Maura Farrell, Louise Weir, University of Galway

Benchmarking originated in the corporate world but has evolved as a wider concept and is seen applied in other contexts such as policymaking, with the goal to improve policy and learn by comparison. In practice, applying benchmarking to policy is not straightforward and remains understudied as a tool to improve policy design. With a place-based lens, this paper will discuss the value of policy benchmarking, explore challenges to consider and reconcile in the context of benchmarking European policy relevant to women-led rural and farm innovation. It

draws on research carried out as part of the FLIARA (Female-led Innovation in Rural Areas and Farming) Horizon Europe project. The FLIARA approach explored how to strengthen qualitative approaches to policy benchmarking, one area that existing research suggests is important to develop. The research draws on cross national policy analysis and workshops, as well as policy implications emerging from women-led innovation case studies in both rural place and wider farming contexts. This research questions how the boundaries of what is benchmarked are determined in this policy and innovation context. The framework of concerns that benchmarking happens within is critical because it determines the scope of the policies under benchmarking comparison. Examples of promising policy measures from different national contexts will be discussed that illustrate a series of benchmarking principles that represent a potential qualitative approach to policy benchmarking. The spin off value of benchmarking, in terms of identifying good practices, and wider learnings for policy measures and wider policy processes will also be explored.

Generative AI, Assessments and Peer Reviewed syllabi

Chair: Carla Maria Kayanan (MU)

Panellists: Jennie Stephens (MU); Stephan Hügel (TCD); Alma Clavin (UG); Jeremy Auerbach (UCD); Ruth McManus (DCU); Maedhbh Nic Lochlainn (UCC)

How students learn and how we assess that learning is changing. Alongside longer-running malaise about the shrinking of average attention spans, the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated an abrupt 'pivot' toward online and asynchronous teaching and learning approaches (QQI, 2020). Higher education discussions about assessing the 'Covid-19 generation' have unfolded alongside both the mainstreaming of universal design for learning and the development of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) (particularly the evolution of large language models (LLMs) that produce coherent text). When it comes to student learning and to developing the technical components of critical reading, thinking and writing skills, advances in Generative AI and LLMs can challenge established ways of teaching. We believe that higher education is at something of an impasse, with O'Sullivan et al.'s (2025a) recent report for the HEA noting that AI challenges fundamental values of authorship, assessment, and academic integrity and that assessment reform is both necessary and welcome as a result. In this context, assessment design and redesign emerges as 'no longer a purely pedagogical exercise, but a cross-cutting policy concern that requires clarity of purpose, institutional support, and regular review to keep pace with changing AI capabilities and regulatory expectations' (O'Sullivan et al., 2025b).

Our panel session will bring together early-career, mid-career, and senior academics working in Geography departments across the island of Ireland to discuss assessment in the age of Generative AI. Geographers' perspectives are particularly interesting to foreground, given a disciplinary emphasis on authentic assessment through, for example, field work, and the wide range of possible uses and misuses of generative AI that cut across the varying epistemic norms and professional standards of human and physical geographers. We believe that open dialogue on generative AI and assessment from a disciplinary perspective but across varying institutional

contexts will allow geographers to take better ownership of assessment design that responds to discipline-specific learning outcomes, pedagogical approaches, and the challenges of AI in the context of our own field.

GeoAI and Earth Observation for Climate Risk and Urban Resilience

GeoAI for timely monitoring of Artisanal and Small-scale Mining (ASM) to support climate risk management and landscape resilience in cocoa-growing regions

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Artisanal and Small-scale Mining (ASM) supports the livelihoods of millions of people across the Global South but poses significant environmental and social risks, where monitoring is limited. In Ghana, cocoa production is the primary livelihood for nearly 30% of the country's population and contributes significantly to global supply chains, yet illegal and unregulated ASM activities increasingly threaten these landscapes. The rapid expansion of illegal and unregulated ASM often results in landscapes scarred by abandoned and unstable piles of soil and rock, excavated pits, water pollution, and widespread deforestation. These impacts exacerbate climate-related risks, including flooding, soil erosion, and the loss of landscape functions that support rural and urban resilience. Therefore, the timely detection of ASM is critical for climate risk management and landscape governance; however, persistent cloud cover in the wet tropics restricts the effectiveness of optical imagery. This study presents a novel methodology that integrates Sentinel-1 SAR imagery with deep learning and change detection techniques for timely and reliable ASM monitoring in persistently cloudy environments. Our approach delivers actionable alerts to support swift intervention and targeted restoration planning, reducing delays from several months to within 18 days. By enabling timely monitoring of mining-induced forest land-use change, this approach has the potential to support a broad range of applications, including enforcing legislation aimed at combating climate change, promoting sustainable forest management, timely environmental monitoring, and supporting action against illegal ASM across cocoa-growing landscapes experiencing rapid ASM expansion in Ghana, with strong potential for scalable global application.

An Open-Access App for Shallow Water Bathymetry Monitoring along the Irish Coast

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Accurate and up-to-date shallow water bathymetry is essential for coastal monitoring, management, and conservation, yet access to this data remains limited for many potential users. This paper presents an open-access Earth Engine App designed to enable non-specialist users to generate satellite-derived bathymetry (SDB) models from Sentinel-2 and Landsat-8 imagery along the Irish coast. The app delivers only imagery-suitable outputs, removing the burden of image selection and processing from the user and significantly lowering the barrier to access. Five Irish coastal bays — Dublin, Dungarvan, Portrane, Rosses, and Tramore — served as pilot sites, demonstrating the app's effectiveness across a range of contrasting coastal environments. The results confirm that the pre-ranking strategy ensures reliable bathymetric outputs, with model performance reflecting the diversity of Irish coastal conditions. The app has the potential to support a broad range of applications, including environmental monitoring, coastal protection, habitat mapping, and marine spatial planning, and enhances the value of existing programmes such as Copernicus and INFOMAR. With over a decade of Sentinel data now available, the tool opens a compelling opportunity to monitor coastal change over time. Targeted at coastal managers, environmental agencies, researchers, and the wider public, this work represents a first step toward a more ambitious and community-driven coastal monitoring vision for Ireland.

The creation and use of an Irish flash flood chronology

David Archer Newcastle University and JBA Trust (Skipton), Rory Moore ICARUS Maynooth University

Although prolonged winter frontal storms are the source of most floods on Ireland's major rivers, convective summer storms cause flash floods with severe damage from surface water and from river floods. We have compiled a chronology of nearly 600 flash floods, identified by their rapid onset, from the late seventeenth century to the present. Surface water (pluvial) floods contributed an increasing proportion of events with property flooded as urban centres grew. Flash flooding in rivers has historically caused loss of life (total 142 drowned), in the worst case, through the destruction of riverside buildings. Many bridges have been destroyed by the impulse of rapidly rising water levels and velocity and associated scour, (over 300). In one extreme flood more than 50 deaths were reported and in another widespread flood more than 30 bridges were destroyed. We describe how the chronology was compiled and explain its relevance to present day flood risk management

From Satellite to Neighbourhood: Operational GeoAI for Flood Risk and Urban Resilience in Ireland

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Hyper-local pluvial flooding is emerging as one of the most consequential yet least adequately observed climate risks facing Irish cities. The June 2023 Crumlin storm event in which an intense localised burst of rainfall reached approximately 12 mm in five minutes within a substantial gap in the national monitoring network exposed a critical mismatch between the spatial resolution of conventional observation systems and the scales at which urban flood processes actually unfold. This paper presents the RESTORATION Living Lab as an operational

response to that mismatch, integrating Earth Observation, GeoAI (machine learning and spatial data fusion applied to geospatial and Earth Observation workflows), low-cost IoT sensing, citizen science, and neighbourhood-scale hydrological–hydrodynamic modelling into a reproducible satellite-to-street workflow for urban flood-risk assessment and adaptation planning. The framework combines Coupled Non-negative Matrix Factorization (CNMF) fusion of PRISMA hyperspectral (30 m) and panchromatic (5 m) imagery with an automated pixel purification method and Random Forest classification to improve urban land-use and land-cover mapping in heterogeneous city environments. Applied in Dublin, this workflow supports differential analysis of impervious and pervious surfaces and identifies a 4.08% decrease in pervious surfaces alongside a 4.09% increase in impervious surfaces over one year, indicating a marked decline in urban permeability with direct implications for runoff generation. In parallel, a distributed network of more than 50 low-cost rainfall sensors, including domestic-garden installations co-produced with citizen volunteers, captures localised convective rainfall events that conventional fixed stations often fail to resolve. These high-resolution surface and rainfall data are then integrated within a neighbourhood-scale hydrological–hydrodynamic modelling framework to simulate the 20 June 2023 pluvial flood event across three residential neighbourhoods in Crumlin, Dublin (6.9 ha, 2.6 ha, and 0.6 ha). Four domestic-garden Nature-based Solution (NbS) scenarios were assessed, ranging from a fully paved baseline to rewilded front and back gardens with permeable parking and extensive green roofs. Results show that the rewilded garden configuration produced the strongest overall hydrological benefits, facilitating up to 1,590 m³ of infiltration in the 6.9 ha neighbourhood, reducing flood extent by up to 29%, 23%, and 26% across the three neighbourhoods, and lowering mean inundation depths by 6–13.7%. Moderate interventions also produced meaningful reductions in flood extent and inundation depth, while neighbourhood-wide NbS adoption reduced peak discharge and the number of affected buildings. These outputs are translated through the RESTORATION-NBS web-based decision-support platform, linking geospatial evidence to actionable pathways for households, communities, and public agencies. The study demonstrates how integrated GeoAI, hyper-local sensing, and neighbourhood-scale flood modelling can move urban resilience research beyond diagnosis towards deployable and policy-relevant climate adaptation in Ireland.

Geographers in the policy arena: Building bridges between academia and evidence-based policymaking

If only we could make better sense of the problem, we could fix it: The (false) promises of evidence-based planning

Rob Kitchin, Juliette Davret, Carla Maria Kayanan, Maynooth University

In the wake of the financial crash of 2008, and under pressure from the IMF, ECB and EU, there has been a stronger turn to evidence-based planning practice and policy making in Ireland (and elsewhere). This turn is designed to provide a more neutral and objective basis for understanding issues and decision-making. Evidence-based planning practice and policy making, it is believed, will provide transparency and reproducibility, will increase rigour and integrity and will prevent cronyism and clientelism. Inherent in this rationale is the notion that increased data about an issue results in better decisions and plans to adequately resolve the issue. Consequently, there has been an expansion in the use of IT systems to mediate planning and housing work, and a marked uptick in the production of planning and housing related datasets, the development and use of analysis tools and models, and public consultation on

strategic planning and planning applications. Nowhere are these dynamics more visible than in the domain of housing, perhaps the most politically contested and socially consequential arena of planning practice in Ireland. Yet, despite having more, higher quality evidence and analysis tools, the housing crisis in Ireland remains as acute as in the wake of the 2008 crash, albeit manifesting in different ways. Evidence is certainly useful for revealing and tracking the multifaceted nature of the crisis, and for speaking ‘truth to power’, but seemingly has little impact in resolving aspects of the crisis. In this paper, we reflect on this conundrum, critically examining why evidence-based approaches have so far failed to create a sustainable, fair housing system.

Post-crisis Municipal Housing Strategy in Dublin: Navigation, Narratives and Nonsense.

Dr Dáithí Downey (Dublin City Council), Justin Gleeson (AIRO, Maynooth University)

In 2014, collaboration between Dublin City Council (DCC) and the All Ireland Research Observatory (AIRO) brought forward an early public demonstration of GIS data visualisation for Dublin’s housing market. A ‘fancy Dublin housing maps’ moment had arrived. Positively received among the city’s elected representatives and wider stakeholders, requirements for strategic policy-design instruments led to a strengthening of the geospatial and science-policy interface for the city’s housing strategy and objectives under the city development plan. The city’s Dublin Housing Observatory (DHO) Data Navigator subsequently launched in 2017 with a dedicated research programme and governance that included national and international collaborators. New dynamics in knowledge production and explanation for Dublin’s omni-crisis in housing would emerge as the DHO challenged the policy making system with evidence garnered from participatory and original geographic knowledge production. For example, advanced residual income affordability measures helped map housing stress and default among local authority mortgage holders, techniques for ground-truthing urban vacancy using small area fieldwork were developed and original data scraping algorithms for use on short term rental platforms were deployed. DCC’s inaugural Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) model then used DHO enhanced data to produce advanced city-wide and local area projections. Reflecting on how geospatial data navigation helped challenge policy narratives and analysis and tackle nonsensical assertions on housing over the period, this paper also considers how the power dynamics in housing knowledge production and the politics of evidence itself remain implicated in maintaining a focus on short-term crisis management by policy decision makers.

Conditional Place-Based Policy: Key Town Designation and the Limits of Evidence-Based Spatial Planning in Ireland

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Place-based development has become a central principle of European regional policy and is strongly embedded in Ireland’s National Planning Framework. By identifying specific towns as strategic growth centers, national policy seeks to promote balanced regional development and reduce spatial disparities. However, the relationship between policy designation and local development outcomes remains poorly understood. This paper examines the implementation of place-based policy through the designation of “Key Towns” in Ireland’s Northern and Western Region. Drawing on census data, spatial analysis, and qualitative insights from policy documents and stakeholder perspectives, the research evaluates whether the designation of

growth centers aligns with the socio-economic and institutional capacities of these towns. The findings suggest that place-based policy in practice often operates conditionally. While policy frameworks emphasize the strategic role of selected towns, the effectiveness of these designations is heavily shaped by pre-existing territorial conditions, including infrastructure provision, institutional capacity, and economic structure. In several cases, towns identified as regional growth centers face structural constraints that limit their ability to realize policy expectations. The paper argues that these outcomes reflect broader tensions in evidence-based policymaking, where spatial strategies are often formulated within centralized governance structures that only partially account for local realities. By examining how geographical evidence is mobilized within national spatial planning, the paper contributes to debates on the science–policy interface and highlights the importance of aligning policy frameworks with place-specific development conditions.

Rewriting the Urban Impossible: Centering Hope and Co-Creation of More Just Urban Futures

David J. Roberts, Geography and Planning, University of Toronto

In an era of global polycrisis, urban geography often feels like it is stuck documenting systemic urban failure. Drawing on Paul Chatterton's (2010) conception of the "unfinished city," this paper argues for a shift in the geographer's role: from passive knowledge producer to a centering force for hope and equity-informed intervention. I reflect on my four years as director of the Multidisciplinary Urban Capstone Project (MUCP) at the University of Toronto. I offer it as a potential model for this transition, where community-engaged research and teaching serve as a mechanism for finding the partners and resources necessary to rewrite urban futures in both small and large ways. The MUCP functions as a policy intermediary that moves beyond traditional consulting to foster "co-creation." I analyze how student-led interventions—ranging from survivor-centered toolkits and creative zine-based surveying to the adaptive reuse of legacy transit infrastructure—challenge the notion of the "urban impossible." By prioritizing lived experience as a primary evidence base, these projects identify regulatory friction in areas like zoning and waste management, proposing actionable blueprints that prioritize "infrastructures of care" over administrative efficiency. Rather than attempting to "solve" wicked problems through top-down metrics, this approach addresses urban challenges by constructing viable visions of what is possible. By centering hope and collaborative urbanism, the MUCP demonstrates how academic institutions can act as vital anchors for ethical governance, ensuring that the "unfinished" city is continuously reshaped through principles of spatial justice and collective resilience.

Policy Designers, Planners, and People in Data Wonderland: Evidence From Dublin Satellite Images, Census, and Google POI Data

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Alongside the digital revolution, the increasing reliance on technology, data, and software in planning and decision making, the evolution of GIS from visualisation to a key policy instrument, and the growing influence of Urban Science, reflect a broader shift towards technocratic governance. This prioritises technical expertise, data, and algorithms over Urban Studies and critical social science. As data are not neutral and are shaped by the conditions of their production and classification, especially through smart cities' emerging technologies and

AI-driven data ecosystems, overreliance raises concerns about reliability, transparency, accountability, and ethics. In addition, while GIS promises predictive modelling and strategic decision making, it also raises epistemological and ethical challenges in algorithmic policy design. In this line, emphasis on mapping quantifiable data often leads to the underestimation of qualitative methods, lived experience, and socio-cultural complexities, with implications for social justice. This paper discusses these challenges and limitations using evidence from Dublin satellite imagery, Google POI, and census data, to monitor spatial inequality, the presence of the creative class in/around tech hubs, neighbourhood change, and gentrification in smart testbed areas, Docklands, Sandyford, and surrounding neighbourhoods in Electoral Division and Small Area levels. This study aims to highlight the need for participatory and critical data approaches, as well as the integration of qualitative methods, to increase the accuracy of quantitative results and support more grounded and democratic outcomes.

Geographies of Environmental and Social Transformation in Ireland

Intel's water governance impact: perspective from Ireland

Laure de Tymowski, Trinity College Dublin

In a context of climate change, risks arising from water scarcity are foreseen to grow dramatically. While Ireland may be seen as a well water-resourced country – the paradigmatic wet, green Island – Dublin, its largest city, is under increased water supply pressure. State-owned water utility Uisce Éireann argue that current water supply shortfalls are already putting at risk 1.7 million residents of the Greater Dublin Area. Access to water infrastructure itself is highly uneven with over 1000 households in the same Greater Dublin Area without piped running water (Plumbing Poverty Project). What is more, large-scale water infrastructure projects put forward to address these shortfalls are widely contested. Against this backdrop, since the start of its operation in Ireland in 1989, Intel has been quietly shaping the country's water infrastructure landscape. Located in Leixlip, west of Dublin, the semiconductor production facility has rapidly become the largest industrial water user in the country. As part of the construction of its latest fab completed in 2023, the overall water supply capacity of the site has increased to 37 MLD, roughly equivalent to the daily water use of 100,000 households. Drawing on the early stage of a research project assessing the water governance impact of Intel's semiconductor production in Ireland, the paper describes the first steps of data collection, and their challenges and learnings to date.

Adaptive Heritage on Offshore Islands

Aislinn Kelly, May Immaculate College

Offshore islands provide distinctive environments in which natural and cultural heritage intersect under conditions of environmental change. Climate change is accelerating transformation in many coastal landscapes through sea level rise, coastal erosion and shifting ecological conditions. These processes present significant challenges for heritage management frameworks that have traditionally prioritised preservation and stability. In exposed island environments, where built heritage, ecological systems and environmental processes interact closely, these assumptions may become increasingly difficult to sustain. This research forms part of the EPA-funded LIGHTHOUSE project, which examines natural and cultural heritage across six lighthouse islands managed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights. The project explores how the withdrawal of obsolete maritime infrastructure may create opportunities for

biodiversity recovery, heritage interpretation and new forms of landscape management. However, heritage conservation and environmental protection are often governed through separate policy frameworks. This fragmentation can create challenges for the integrated management of island landscapes experiencing environmental transformation. Drawing on recent scholarship in adaptive heritage, this presentation explores how offshore lighthouse islands might be understood as sites of heritage transformation. The study combines policy analysis and field observation across six island sites located around the Irish coast. Early fieldwork on Mew Island is presented as an initial case study. Fieldwork involved experiential observation of the island landscape, photographic documentation of infrastructure and ecological features, and the creation of baseline visual records of site conditions. These early observations highlight how lighthouse infrastructure, ecological processes and dynamic coastal environments interact within remote island landscapes. Offshore islands therefore offer valuable settings for examining the governance challenges associated with heritage transformation and climate change. The research contributes to ongoing discussions on adaptive and integrated approaches to heritage management in coastal and island environments.

There is no Such Thing as “Water”, or, How to Theorize the Waterbody

Jesse Peterson, UCC

This paper seeks to theorize the concept of water through insights derived from human geography and blue humanities. This is in part due to the prevalence of thinking water as a ubiquitous, universalistic, and pure substance that engages in exchanges and transfers across states (e.g., gas to liquid to solid), boundaries, and bodies. Though theorizations that build upon this concept of water innovate in understandings related to space and gender (Neimanis 2017) for example, they rest upon a productive imagination of “modern water” that is based on scientific descriptions of water as molecule, which serves to instrumentalize water for economic and political gains (Linton 2010). In contrast, I attempt to develop the concept of the waterbody to highlight the significance of space and its inseparability from water. Grounding my theorization in the context of low-trophic mariculture, this concept highlights how relationalities, connections, and flows co-produce space but distinguishes itself through an ontological grounding that recognizes flows, connections, and relationalities as always spatial and spatialized. In doing so, theorizing the waterbody highlights how water (as substance) is relational “in terms of permeating bodies” and “being permeated with bodies” (Peterson 2020, 15), but, in addition, must also be understood as embodied (as space) itself.

Knowing ‘Living Seawalls’: a discourse analysis of knowledge production practices surrounding multispecies nature-based solutions

Soli Levi, UCC

Living Seawalls are a nature-based solution aiming to enhance marine biodiversity through artificial habitat provision. Consisting of modular concrete panels designed around nature-based principles, Living Seawalls are affixed to coastal infrastructures, the surfaces of which are otherwise flat, vertical, and inhospitable to flourishing marine life. While there is much ecological engineering and monitoring research emerging from the global Living Seawalls project, to date the project has lacked input from critical social science perspectives. Indeed, the social sciences play a crucial role in making visible and unpacking the narratives and assumptions underpinning the production of knowledge about infrastructural solutions to the coastal crisis. In this presentation I discuss the critical approach I am taking as a social scientist situated within the Cork Living Seawalls project. As part of this approach, I share the

preliminary results of a discourse analysis unpacking the narratives and assumptions underpinning the knowledge produced through the global Living Seawalls project. I also consider how these narratives shape – and are shaped and subverted by – multispecies relations. In doing so, I aim to shed a critical light on the complex relationship between hegemonic scientific knowledge production practices and marine multispecies relationalities.

From small talk to big action: hair stylists as community influencers supporting social transformation

Catriona Iulia Reid, Aoife Deane, Dr Marica Cassarino, Dr Maria Kirrane, University College Cork

A Brush With Climate is a unique co-creation project which brings climate action into everyday conversations through the medium of hair salons. Through a series of 3 co-creation workshops held in 2025, the project engaged with a team of 8 hairstylists based in Cork City and rural towns (Bandon, Kinsale, and Clonakilty) to develop resources to support stylists to have conversations about climate change with their clients. These resources include mirror stickers, a Bingo Card game, information cards, and a digital Linktree page which points clients to actions they can take in their everyday lives. In February 2026, hairstylists were invited to attend a bespoke half-day climate training course in UCC, covering themes of climate myth-busting, climate impacts and climate action. The collaborative process used by the project identified a knowledge gap raised by the stylists which was addressed in the training course, supporting hairstylists to feel more empowered and confident in their communications with clients about climate change. The project is currently in the evaluation phase as we are conducting a series of 1-1 qualitative interviews with the hairstylists to understand the impact of the project on them, their colleagues and salons, and their clients, as well as their perceptions of their role as influencers on their clients' behaviour and on the broader role of hair salons for community building. This presentation will discuss the background and methods employed in the project and early analysis of the qualitative interviews and client surveys.

Geographies of Solidarity (1): Building and Navigating Connections

Sanctuary: A Space of Exception between Solidarity and Love?

Gerry Kearns, Maynooth University

Sanctuary is a space where some aspects of state power are inoperative. But unlike the state of exception discussed by Agamben, this is not a suspension by the state for the purpose of removing rights. It is rather an assertion of rights against the state from a subaltern position. In this paper I will examine the notion of sanctuary in the Greek and Judaic traditions and reflect upon how these traditions achieved salience outside their hearths. I will ask what affective force motivates support for sanctuary and consider the place of love and solidarity in this respect.

Visualising and Mapping Care: Participatory Approaches to Understanding Solidarity

Jayita Kundu, Maynooth University

In this paper, I explore participatory approaches to visualising and mapping care to understand solidarity. Often, solidarity is described in terms of political movements. Instead, drawing on ideas from caring geographies and mutual aid, I suggest that everyday practices of care can be understood as forms of solidarity. This approach focuses on the smaller, and often unnoticed,

ways in which people support each other in their daily lives. These everyday acts of care can be seen as meaningful expressions of solidarity. However, understanding these everyday acts of care is challenging, as care is given and experienced differently. The paper reflects on different approaches to researching everyday acts of care, based on my PhD research in progress. I consider a variety of methods, including participant observation, participatory mapping, and visual methods, while reflecting on my own positionality as a researcher. I discuss how each of these different methods provides the opportunity to generate conversation and shared reflection, so that this research becomes a space where ideas of care and solidarity can be explored together. Overall, this paper attempts to think about care as something lived and experienced in everyday spaces, how we might better understand those experiences, and how this in turn helps us better in understanding what solidarity looks like in practice.

Autonomy, Solidarity, and The Technicity of Trust: A Story of Radicle Git

Liz Calhoun, Maynooth University

The Feminist Server Manifesto asks us to consider the following question: how can we ethically be served? Part of a broader movement towards practices of ‘computing in place,’ their provocation underlines the significance of situated ecological relationships, collective tending of resources, and community-based collaborations for grassroots server projects. In its emphasis on localism, however, this political framework for digital autonomy relies on an image of community in which trust is given a priori and misses an important part of the story. Autonomous server projects are in a mutually supportive relationship with open-source repositories for sharing code, enabled by software known as Git that allows multiple users to edit code at once. Git are made available either through centrally hosted platforms (such as GitHub) or decentralized peer-to-peer forums. This paper looks at the forum ‘radicle,’ one of the view git repositories with no single entity controlling the network. This is illustrative for an understanding of solidarity precisely because radicle looks so different from the ethos of local community care found in most grassroots server projects: it is entirely decentralized and comprised of dispersed, online only participants who each host their own ‘node.’ Combined with its emphasis on autonomy and anonymity, this means that the building of trust is embedded in the technical operations of the protocols that the forum develops. This paper closely analyzes a publicly available online conversation from the radicle forum between anonymous participants discussing the establishment of content moderation protocols for the transfer of data among nodes. I read this conversation as an esoteric guidebook for how solidarity might be understood as a technical process of assessing trust within systems.

Digital Spaces of Solidarity and the Turkish Diaspora in Ireland

Eray Canlar, Maynooth University Department of Geography

Spaces of solidarity often emerge from a shared feeling of a need to respond to injustice. While the sources of injustice can vary greatly, diaspora communities are likely to come together and display acts of solidarity in response to different instances of injustice in their home countries. The shared national identity and migration history as well as a common concern for the developments in a home county make diaspora communities likely actors who display acts of solidarity. Due to their wide user base, flexibility and speed, the communication applications such as WhatsApp and social media outlets such as Instagram act as fertile digital spaces for diaspora groups to organise acts of solidarity and build communities in countries they reside in. The intense use of digital spaces by the Turkish diaspora in Ireland, Europe and the US

throughout Spring 2025 in response to political and judicial developments in Turkey provide a recent example for such a process. This paper examines the use of such digital spaces of solidarity by the Turkish diaspora in Ireland from Spring 2025 onwards to show how temporality plays a crucial role in shaping the organisation of these digital spaces and the associated acts of solidarity. This case shows that digital spaces of solidarity evolve in time, are shaped by the related developments in the home country and can interact with other spaces of solidarity and struggles against different instances of injustice.

On Solidarity as Intimate Struggle: Transnational and Anticolonial Solidarities in 20th Century India

Sneha Krishnan, University of Oxford

In his work on internationalism and geographies of solidarity, Mike Featherstone (2012) draws on the work of Stuart Hall to characterise solidarity as a project “without guarantees”, i.e., without the promise of a particular political future. This paper builds on this reading to present solidarity as characterised by productive and generative struggle – arguments and quarrels within political communities, among those who see themselves as comrades, friends, aligned but arguing. For this, I draw on an archive of anticolonial struggles at South Indian educational institutions in the early twentieth century, where European and American Christian Socialists sought to make common cause with anticolonial and anticaste South Indian Christian women, in the inter-war years of the 1920s and 1930s. These years were pivotal: while dissent against the British empire on the Indian subcontinent was widespread, the geopolitical form that would succeed it was not determined. In erstwhile Madras, where my research is located, there was a strong internationalist sentiment. This was borne both of concerns that the nationalist movement was fundamentally Hindu and upper-caste in character and emerging from Indian Christian women’s encounters with other oppressed Christian communities – Black Christians from North America, indigenous and colonised Christians elsewhere in the world – through transnational humanitarian networks. My paper focuses on both the close friendships and sometimes explosive battles through which South Indian Christian women engaged in this “imperial social formation” (Sinha 2000) with Euro-American women, many of whom were sincerely committed to socialist and anticolonial ideals that emerged out of their work in the settlement movement. These intimate negotiations, I argue, were the work of solidarity - not as ideal or end product, but forged in the practice of the struggle, always contingent, and in process. In doing so, this paper traces solidarity as a multiscalar and ongoing practice: necessarily implicating geopolitical formations and simultaneously experienced in the modality of intimate struggle.

Geographies of Solidarity (2): Social reproduction in/against the state

The right to independent living: rights-based approaches to solidarity with disabled people

Richard Scriven, UCC

This paper considers how solidarity with disabled people can be framed and progressed using a rights-based approach with a focus on independent living. At least 3,500 disabled people are confined to institutionalised settings in Ireland, as well as other disabled people in repressive family contexts, the asylum system, and inappropriately incarcerated. By combining the

geographies of disability and international human rights law, a distinct understanding of solidarity with disabled people is articulated. Rights of full inclusion and participation in the community, under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, are deployed to examine structural and spatial exclusions and to present opportunities for the enrichment of society. Lived experiences, advocacy materials, and legal sources form an empirical basis to discuss how solidarities can be strengthened and made more impactful. The paper also reflects on how a rights-based model can inform academic understandings of and approaches to disability.

Assemblages of Aid: The emergence, functioning, and governance dynamics of rights based CSOs in Tanzania

Ruby Paterson, Trinity College Dublin

Civil society in Tanzania has faced increasing repression since 2015, culminating in a shift from “Partly Free” to “Not Free” according to Freedom House’s (2025) ratings. As the ruling party, CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi), has intensified pressure on civil society organisations (CSOs) and political opposition, the space for civic engagement has narrowed, resulting in a disabling environment for the work of rights-based organisations engaged on work of human rights, advocacy, and participation in democracy. Alongside this, a marked decline in Official Development Assistance (ODA) has further limited the resources and capacities of CSOs to sustain movements of solidarity and represent concerned groups. Rights-based CSOs work as part of dynamic networks and broader processes of resistance and transformation, seeking to reconfigure power relations and build communities of solidarity across local, national, and transnational scales. Despite their reach there remains limited understanding of the processes and mechanisms of governance between actors. As private actors entrusted with public funds and committed to promoting justice, equality, and transparency, CSOs must not only advocate for these values but also embody them in their own governance practices. Following findings gleaned from a pilot trip in late 2025 and ongoing doctoral research, this paper examines the governance dynamics of rights based CSOs. The research considers how and why rights-based CSO entities assemble – to cooperate and collaborate – and how they are governed, exploring the implications of this on their ability to enact just governance.

Solidarity, Care and Migration

Zoë O'Reilly, Mary Gilmartin, Nataliia Boiko, Maynooth University

In recent years, in Europe as well as beyond, both the practice and discourse of solidarity with migrants have become more challenging due to the increased visibility of far-right and anti-migrant sentiment and practices. Despite this, migrant-led and migrant-supporting organisations and groups continue their work, often discretely, at international, national and local levels. In this paper, we reflect on how people working with migrant-led and migrant-supporting organisations and grassroots groups in Ireland understand and make sense of the work that they do, as well as how recently arrived migrants perceive this work. Our research is part of a broader research project that seeks to better illuminate and understand how individuals, communities and organisations respond practically and positively to migration and migrants. The project was inspired by literature on (radical) care and care ethics, with care understood as “everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible.” In our interviews, we have found that while some were influenced, or inspired by, by ideas of care, others actively resisted the description of the support they provided, or received, as care. Instead, they preferred other terms, such as ‘solidarity’ and ‘support’. Using insights from our interviews, we discuss the relationship between care and

solidarity. We argue that expanding our understanding of solidarity to encompass radical care and care ethics offers an alternative response to the growth of anti-migrant activity and discourse, centred on making lives better for everyone

Geography Matters: Evolving Curriculum and Strengthening Its Place in Education

Charting Young Worlds: The Vital Role of Geography in the redeveloped Irish Primary Curriculum

Dr. Anne Dolan

Geography's place within the Irish primary curriculum is both foundational and uniquely positioned, tasked with nurturing young children's understanding of space, place, and environment from local to global scales. This article argues that geography is not merely a subject of locational knowledge but a critical, integrative discipline essential for developing informed, empathetic, and active citizens in 21st-century Ireland. Through an analysis of the Primary School Curriculum (DES/NCCA, 1999) and the Primary Curriculum Framework (Department of Education, 2025), this paper examines geography's stated aims, its practical enactment in classrooms, and its potential to address contemporary challenges such as climate anxiety, digital disconnection, and global citizenship. Drawing on Irish and international scholarship, I contend that while the curriculum provides a strong platform for enquiry-based and environmental learning, its full potential is often constrained by implementation gaps, resourcing issues, and the subject's competition for time within a crowded curricular landscape. The article concludes by advocating for a renewed, more prominent vision for primary geography, one that leverages its innate interdisciplinary nature to foster spatial literacy, ecological identity, and a profound sense of care for local and global communities.

Followed by a panel discussion

Framed by the conference theme Connected Environments: Integration and Rebellion, this panel will engage and critically rethink how geographical knowledge is produced, interpreted, and shared within education in Ireland and beyond. It will explore how geography education can integrate diverse forms of knowledge - scientific, local, digital, and experiential - and, where necessary, challenge dominant narratives and practices in curriculum and pedagogy. The panel seeks to foster dialogue across early childhood, primary, post-primary, tertiary, and teacher education contexts, highlighting innovative, inclusive, and transformative approaches to teaching and learning.

Panellists: James Lenihan, Judith Shorthall and Elspeth Sinclair

GIS, Society, and the Challenge of Sustainable Development

The lifecycle of renewable energy projects: a geographical and geospatial perspective

Jack Bousfield, MKO Ireland

This talk is designed to investigate connected environments particularly focussing on the encouragement of renewable energy schemes alongside wildlife considerations, government policy, the natural environment, landscape, designations, mitigation opportunities and more.

A GIS-Based Four-Dimensional Approach to Cumulative Activity in Marine Spatial Planning
Virginia Morejón & Ainhoa González Del Campo, School of Geography, University College Dublin

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) play an increasingly important role in addressing sustainability challenges by enabling the integration of complex spatial and environmental data. In marine and coastal contexts, however, GIS-based environmental assessments within Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) often rely on static, two-dimensional (2D) representations of human activity, limiting their ability to capture dynamic interactions between people, place, and the marine environment. This constrains the capacity of SEA to anticipate cumulative effects and to effectively support sustainable planning and development in the marine space. This study presents a GIS-based approach to developing a four-dimensional (4D) cumulative activity (CA) baseline that incorporates spatial, vertical, and seasonal variability in human use of Irish coastal waters. Twenty marine activities were harmonised within a GIS approach, seasonally weighted according to operational intensity, and mapped across four depth zones to produce spatially explicit representations of CA. Activities were further interpreted based on their dominant disturbance orientation (benthic or pelagic), providing insight into potential pressure pathways. Results demonstrate that CA varies significantly across both depth and season, revealing patterns not visible in conventional 2D analyses. Shallow coastal areas emerge as highly multi-use and seasonally dynamic, while deeper zones show more spatially concentrated patterns. Seasonal shifts in activity highlight changing interactions between sectors and the marine environment. By extending GIS-based analysis into a 4D approach, this research illustrates how spatial analyses can better represent the complexity of human-environment systems and strengthen cumulative effects assessment within SEA. The approach supports more informed, decision-making and offers a transferable method for applying GIS to sustainability challenges in data-limited contexts.

Where Should Ireland's Next Train Stations Be? A GIS-LISA Approach to Demand-Led Rail Network Expansion Benchmarked Against EU Modal Shift Targets

Fabiola Iasi de Barros Costa, University College Cork

Rail use in Ireland is strikingly low by European standards. With approximately 7 journeys per capita annually — about one third of the EU average of 18, and between one fifth and one tenth of best-practice countries such as Austria, Germany and Switzerland, where figures reach 33–68 journeys per person per year (Eurostat, 2023) — Ireland faces a significant modal shift challenge. This gap is not merely statistical: the TEN-T Regulation (EU) 2024/1679 and the Connecting Europe Facility require member states to demonstrate evidence-based, demand-led investment prioritisation in transport infrastructure, making the question of where to expand the rail network both urgent and policy-critical. This paper presents a GIS-based spatial analysis to identify where new rail stations along the Iarnród Éireann network would generate the greatest modal shift potential. Using Local Indicators of Spatial Association (LISA) applied to Census-derived travel behaviour and population data, the analysis identifies statistically significant High-High clusters — areas where both rail shift propensity and neighbouring demand are elevated — alongside High-Low outliers corresponding to underserved towns proximate to the existing network. Results are presented as a ranked candidate location map overlaid on the national rail corridor. Findings are contextualised against Eurostat modal share

data reported by Ireland to the European Commission, illustrating the spatial dimension of Ireland's gap relative to EU peers. The paper argues that LISA-based demand mapping offers a reproducible, policy-aligned spatial decision-support tool for transport planners, and that the identified demand clusters represent a measurable, evidence-based case for targeted network expansion consistent with EU transport policy obligations. This work contributes to broader debates on the role of GIS in infrastructure governance and the spatial operationalisation of EU compliance at national level.

Historical geographies of connection, integration and resilience (1)

Bench Marks of Change: Reading Ireland's Landscape through Micro Heritage

Catherine Porter (University of Limerick)

Hundreds of thousands of Ordnance Survey bench marks were cut into stone during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as height markers across Ireland and other jurisdictions. Crow's feet, as they are colloquially known, are increasingly recognised as a form of micro heritage, yet their lack of formal protection means their survival is increasingly precarious, with many destroyed, often unknowingly, over time. Drawing on the participatory project 'Locating Bench Marks, Preserving Heritage', which aims to visit all known bench mark locations in County Limerick, this paper argues that heritage absence is not merely a record of loss but a form of evidence. Integrating participatory GIS, archival cartography and community knowledge, the project reveals patterns of disappearance that expose shifting material conditions and priorities in Ireland's built and natural environments. Further, unlike most tangible heritage, bench marks occupy rural and urban contexts, offering a rare opportunity to explore landscape change across multiple scales and geographies. By reframing bench marks as indicators of broader transformations then, their disappearance paradoxically becomes a resource for understanding changes to Ireland's landscape. In doing so, the paper positions bench marks as artefacts through which historical geographers can interrogate the themes of connection, integration and resilience in landscape and heritage.

Capturing a Therapeutic Trace: Assembling a Relational Geography of the St. Ann's Hill Hydro.

Ronan Foley, Department of Geography, Maynooth University

Historical Geography and Geographies of Health and Wellbeing are both shaped by relational components that link time, space and place. In adding the word trace into the mix, it opens up potential for a further exploration of relations - tracing connections, bodies and material remains and memories in and through a specific geographical setting. There are further links with therapeutic landscapes research and excavating trace from within a designated heritage healing landscape. All of this is to be found in the history of the St. Ann's Hill Hydro at Tower, County Cork and the tracing out of the Hydro's material, social and medical history. Informing that trace is an assemblage of material from newspapers, visitor accounts, texts, family archives and oral histories. The Hydro existed as a working sanatorium/health resort from 1843 to 1953. It was built and managed by four generations of the Barter family and had a complex relational spatial form, reflected in the piecemeal business history of a healing colony that ebbed and flow over its lifeworld. The Hydro's social history was all about connection building, social capital and social networks along with the lived experience of owners, workers, patients and visitors - all reflected in a relational history of bodies and emotions. Finally the medical

history of the Hydro provided a relational trace of hydrotherapy and its shifting forms from cold to hot, exemplified by the development and exportation of a new form of Turkish Bath, as well as other hydrotherapeutic treatments at the Hydro. Its trace is now almost completely gone, but documenting its healing history will hopefully reinscribe that trace.

Unwanted resilience – landlords, landscape ‘improvement’ and the micro-geographies of population change during the Great Irish Famine

Arlene Crampsie, School of Geography, University College Dublin

Accounting for variations in population change during the Great Irish Famine has generated research examining a range of factors including farm size, house class, tenancy arrangements, income diversity, poor relief uptake and potato crop loss at scales from county to electoral division. Yet even when combined the explanatory power of these factors have significant limitations for understanding local geographies of population change. Taking a micro-geography approach, townland level studies illuminate vast diversities in famine outcomes across more local areas where subtle changes in landscape type and farming practices appear to offer a more accurate explanatory tool. Exceptions to these explanations lie at the hands of local landlords whose wealth and power was sufficient to shape famine trajectories across their estates when they chose to do so. Taking a micro-geography approach this paper presents findings from a range of townland studies that highlight the interconnected nature of the physical landscape, farming practice and settlement type in predicting local famine outcomes. It will then present findings from the one county that sits as an outlier in all attempts at famine variation mapping – Donegal – examining the role that a group of improving landlords played in building resilience in marginal landscapes on the eve of the famine. Their dismantling of the rundale system, although unwanted and strongly resisted by local populations, combined with estate improvements and diversification of farm practices entirely reshaped population resilience and in turn famine outcomes on their estates.

‘Essential to her very existence in the country’: connections and resilience in maintaining Church of Ireland glebe landscapes after disestablishment (1869)

Jonathan Cherry, DCU

The churches and ecclesiastical residences (rectories) of the Church of Ireland were dominant and striking components of Ireland’s colonial landscape, that reflected its status as the state church. On its disestablishment in 1869, all church’s property was transferred to the Commissioners of Church Temporalities, who vested in the newly created Representative Church Body (RCB) any glebe houses and adjoining gardens alongside up to an additional 10 acres necessary ‘for the convenient enjoyment’ of the residence, which the church wished to purchase. By 1880, the RCB had purchased 896 glebe houses and associated lands across the country at a cost of just over £500,000. Over 44% of this was donated by a resilient and determined church membership, demonstrating their connections and loyalties to the welfare and prosperity of local parishes. Using examples from diocese of Derry and Raphoe, this paper illustrates the complexities of the process, whereby each parish and diocese had to identify and justify to the Commissioners the lands they wished to maintain. As cartographic evidence shows, many glebe houses were located at the centre of essentially miniature demesnes, and coupled with practical reasons, adhering to the 10 acres limit proved unworkable in many instances. As a result, when the process was completed by 1880, the church retained a significant and in some instances an undisturbed landscape presence in many places, providing a welcome sense of continuity and security for its members in a period of uncertainty.

Historical geographies of connection, integration and resilience (2)

Connection, integration and resilience – Drumcondra’s evolving institutional landscapes from the 19th century to the present

Ruth McManus, DCU

The north Dublin suburb of Drumcondra has long been associated with a concentration of religious institutions which have given the locality a distinctive character. Although most of the better-known sites originated with the resurgence of the Roman Catholic church from the middle decades of the 19th century, other denominations have also made their mark. Drawing from research for the forthcoming Irish Historic Towns Atlas of Drumcondra, this paper examines the connections which resulted in this complex tapestry of institutional sites and draws on case studies to chart their subsequent evolution. As societal change altered the role of these institutions, particularly from the late 20th century, many of these sites have become integrated into the community in new ways. Despite development pressures, in the majority of cases the physical structures have been remarkably resilient and are increasingly being woven into new contexts.

Building New Homes – The Thomond Artisan Dwelling Company Limerick 1902 – 1968.

Helene Bradley Davies Department of Geography, Mary Immaculate College

Early twentieth century efforts to improving living conditions in Ireland, while limited in scale, marked an important shift in approaches to the provision of working-class housing. Legislative reforms expanded the power of municipal authorities, enabling them to issue clearance order for dilapidated housing and to access public funds for new developments. These developments signaled a growing recognition of housing as a distinct social issue that required a coordinated response. Alongside municipal reform, the emergence of artisan dwellings companies, offered an alternative model for addressing working-class housing needs. Operating on a philanthropic basis, these companies sought to balance social improvements with financial sustainability. The Thomond Artisan Dwelling Company (TADC), established in May 1902 typified this approach. Like similar companies established elsewhere in Ireland, the TADC aimed to improve living conditions for the working classes through the provision of quality housing. Its funding model, based on a share dividends scheme, successfully attracted private investment from key figures in the city which facilitated the building of a limited number of quality housing units in Limerick city. This paper will first explore the establishment and internal operations of the TADC, focusing on its efforts to reconcile its dual objectives of improved housing provision for the working classes and financial sustainability. Issues of accessibility and affordability will be analysed utilising original rent books, financial accounts and contemporary newspapers. Finally, the paper will assess the extent to which the company and its tenants succeeded in fostering a sense of community and place-based identity during the first half of the twentieth century.

Counter-Archive as Infrastructure of Resilience in the Irish Community Action Tenants Union

Tommy Gavin, Trinity College Dublin

Since 2019 the Community Action Tenants Union (CATU) has organised across the island of Ireland to challenge and resist entrenching processes of extraction, dispossession and exclusion in housing mediated by property. CATU is a mass member organisation with members organised into local branches on regional levels. As of March 2026, there are over 2000 members across 30 branches over the island of Ireland. CATU was formed as the direct successor of a wave of campaigns and actions that sought to intervene in the housing crisis that materialised in the wake of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (Gavin and O'Callaghan, 2024). One of the predecessors to CATU is the National Association of Tenants Organisations (NATO) which organised a national rent strike of public housing tenants in 1972 and 1973. However, before a CATU-directed research project excavated that history, there was an almost total absence of information available about these actions (Tubridy, 2023). Furthermore, secondary source literature by eminent housing scholars suggests that no significant social housing tenants' rights movement developed in Ireland. This corrected error in the historical record illustrates the necessity for the housing justice movement to develop a capacity for autonomous memory work and knowledge production; a capacity referred to by some as a practice of data justice (McElroy, 2019). CATU is a democratic organisation that generates a large amount of information and at the same time, the dispossessive effects of the housing crisis means that local CATU branches can have a high turnover of branch members and committees. This contribution will describe the work of the CATU Archive which is tasked with the collection, preservation and access to the institutional memory of the organisation and its members. This will ensure the housing movement and associated struggles in Ireland are recorded and remembered, and the lasting legacy of the union is preserved. This repository approach also has the potential to enable sophisticated research projects based on the co-ordinated collection of data around issues such as evictions, informal tenancies, illegal rent increases, short term lets, and offending landlords. Finally, the memory work explicit in an archival approach allows for the mobilisation of a counter-history of the present rather than a fetishisation of the past. It can provide "territorial authority" (Burgum, 2020) and as per the critical archivist Elena Carter: "if we're not inspired into the future, then what's the point? [... if the archive] doesn't collectivise the people coming together, in a way it's failed in its historical task" (Carter, 2017).

Aid, Authority, and Development Politics in Liberia's Customary Land Governance

Keegan Covey, Trinity College Dublin

Customary land formalisation has emerged as a prominent development intervention across sub-Saharan Africa and has been promoted as a means of enhancing tenure security, reducing land disputes, and strengthening community participation. In Liberia this has been attempted in the form of the 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA), which formally recognises community land ownership and establishes community-based governance structures alongside preexisting customary authorities. While often framed as a predominantly technical or legal reform, formalisation is embedded within broader aid-driven development agendas that prioritise investment, productivity, and market integration, and is inherently transformative to "custom" as generally conceptualised. This paper examines how foreign-supported customary land formalisation occurs in practice in Liberia, and how it reshapes authority, participation, and dispute management within customary land governance. The paper draws on a qualitative interpretive research design combining semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Empirical material is based on ninety-one interviews conducted across approximately sixteen towns in two counties and three districts engaged in USAID-supported formalisation initiatives. Participants include customary leaders, community members, NGO workers, and state officials. Documentary sources include national legislation, donor strategies, and USAID project materials. The analysis applies thematic coding to examine how governance, dispute processes, and participation are structured and negotiated through formalisation. Findings

suggest that formalisation operates as a form of political management rather than a straightforward resolution of land conflict. While it may reduce the intensity of disputes by delineating and channelling them into recognised procedures, it shifts responsibility onto communities without providing commensurate capacity to exercise the authority granted them. At the same time, donor priorities shape implementation, privileging future economic use and integrability with the global market economy. Customary land is accordingly increasingly framed as investable, and “custom” is reconstituted through aid-mediated governance.

Just Transition, Climate Action and Adaptation in Rural Ireland

Centering Community Voices in Biogas Development: A ‘Just Transition’ Case Study from the West of Ireland

Niamh Donnelly, Department of Geography, School of Natural Sciences, TCD

This paper examines the contested development of large-scale biogas infrastructure in Swinford, Co. Mayo, as a case study through which to explore the place of community perspectives within rural energy transitions in the West of Ireland. Drawing on feminist methodologies, including autoethnography and collaborative research methods, it analyses the socio-spatial implications of biogas development and considers how local communities experience, interpret, and contest the expansion of for-profit “green” energy projects. In doing so, the paper contributes to wider debates on spatial justice and the uneven geographies of low-carbon transition. The analysis is based on more than two hundred letters of objection submitted by local residents, alongside interviews with a range of community stakeholders and detailed document analysis. Together, these materials provide a nuanced account of the local socio-political ecology and of the tensions emerging between policy-led decarbonisation agendas and lived rural realities. The paper is framed by the concept of the Just Transition, with particular attention to how transition processes can be made more inclusive. By centring community voices, it highlights the tensions between climate action objectives and already marginalised socio-economic conditions. It argues for transition policies that are more attentive to rural contexts, that take local concerns seriously, and that recognise the importance of community agency in shaping energy futures.

Rural Ireland in the Uneven Geographies of “Green” Capitalist Development: The Case of County Clare’s Countryside

Criostóir King, Maynooth University

Conversations about the future of rural Ireland almost always return to the age-old issues of population decline and livelihoods. Rural development issues facing the Irish state in 1922 have, in many ways, not gone away. As the green transition represents both novelty and continuity in the (under)development of rural Ireland, it is worth connecting the question of just transition to the broader and older question of Irish rural development. The polarising tendencies of dependent economic development under capitalism are such that places experience development differently, not according to the needs of the people who live in them, but according to the needs of capitalism. In contemporary Ireland state interventions to stem such polarising tendencies have largely been abandoned and radical rural mobilisation is mainly defensive, contesting the worst effects of development. In the context of “green” capitalist development, where does this leave rural Ireland? Are rural places simply to play the role of “playground and dumping ground”, as Epp and Whitson argue? Here, I present

preliminary findings from my PhD research in County Clare, examining how historical regimes of development have interacted with one another to shape the position of Clare's countryside in the uneven geographies of "green" capitalist development today. As opposed to some just transition scholarship which takes for granted the range of development possibilities for rural places under a green transition, I argue that an engagement with the politics of rural development and a re-imagining of development possibilities is crucial to thinking about a rural just transition.

Examining the relationship between the climate-ecological crisis, carbon markets, afforestation, and the emerging 'Land Rush' in Ireland.

Oscar Mooney & Susan Murphy, Trinity College Dublin

Global-to-local social, economic, and climate-ecological challenges are transforming Ireland's forestry sector to balance carbon sequestration, habitat creation, timber provision, and rural development. Justice-related issues have arisen from market-led afforestation under the umbrella of 'carbon colonialism' and 'green grabbing', with carbon offsetting afforestation projects reinforcing asymmetrical power relations across geographical sites and scales. While once the "Isle of Woods", Ireland had 1% forest cover by independence, following centuries of conflict and colonialism. In the early years of the new State, forestry emerged as a solution for Ireland's socio-economic development through job creation, livelihood diversification, and the development of an indigenous timber industry. However, over a century since independence, land commodification, intensification, privatisation, and speculation have led to an afforestation model that unearths cultural memories of colonialism, landlords, control, and the Irish Land Question. This paper explores forestry-related tensions through key stakeholder interviews, multiscale policy analysis, and interrogation of increasing land prices, suggesting a "Land Rush". Informed by assemblage thinking and Polanyi's Double Movement, this study explores how forestry plantations led to discursive and material conflicts of power from international policy to the place-based experiences of rural communities along the Irish western seaboard. As the third-least forested country in Europe, Ireland faces challenges in meeting its EU Nature Restoration Law targets through coherent policy, mindful of the country's turbulent history and ongoing forestry-related conflicts.

Just resilience? Interrogating the space between rhetoric and reality in Irish adaptation planning

Maeve McGandy, Trinity College Dublin

While ideas of a "just transition" have been variously mobilised in the context of Irish climate policy, their articulation remains largely confined to the realm of decarbonisation. Justice considerations vis-à-vis adaptation remain comparatively underdeveloped. This is notable given the increased recognition of adaptation's uneven and highly localised nature. In response, this paper examines how the emergent discourse of "just resilience" is being articulated and operationalised within and beyond national climate policy. While this discourse appears, at least symbolically, to place questions of equity, power and participation at the heart of adaptation planning, its translation into practice remains underexamined. Drawing on findings from a period of community-based action research conducted during a participatory adaptation planning process on Ireland's west coast, the paper examines the relationship between national policy narratives and local experiences of adaptation, including forms of action that extend beyond formal planning arrangements. Findings reveal a significant disjuncture between such framings and local realities. While policies increasingly emphasise the centrality of community participation and "just resilience", such commitments remain insufficiently mobilised in

practice. At the macro level, emerging justice-oriented discourses lack clarity, resourcing, and broader institutional scaffolding. At the local level, participatory adaptation processes are structurally constrained by limited resources and ambiguous mandates within local authorities, as well as a broader overreliance on community actors to drive climate action. Beyond formal governance spaces, communities are increasingly self-organising to address immediate climate impacts in the absence of adequate institutional support. These dynamics expose a governance gap wherein responsibility is effectively devolved without adequate resources or recognition, limiting the scope for meaningful engagement and highlighting the inherently political, context-specific nature of adaptation planning. This paper contributes to national-to-regional scale debates on the direction of planning for climate change by foregrounding the scalar politics of adaptation. Empirically, it demonstrates how the central tenets of climate justice are variously articulated and operationalised across scales, raising critical questions about the capacity of current approaches to deliver a just transition, however envisaged. In doing so, it calls into question a climate governance framework that rhetorically centres communities while failing to materially resource and recognise existing forms of community-led climate action.

Keynote ‘Connected Peatlands: Integrating process, place and policy’

Alice Milner, Royal Holloway University of London

Peatlands sit at the centre of some of today’s most urgent environmental challenges, linking carbon and hydrology with biodiversity, land use, governance and community priorities. In this talk, I reflect on how peatland research can move beyond disciplinary silos to produce knowledge that is both scientifically robust and useable in real decision-making. Drawing on examples from long-term field observatories, evidence synthesis and international community-led agenda setting, I explore what it means to build integrated and connected environments in practice: connecting scales (from sites to national strategies), connecting methods (measurement, synthesis and modelling), and connecting people (researchers, practitioners and policymakers) to reshape what we study, how we collaborate and how evidence travels into policy and practice.

Keynote ‘Connecting places: National allegiance and sporting citizenship in international football’

David Storey, University of Worcester

Sport provides a useful lens through which the complexities of national identity and citizenship can be explored. Competitors don the national colours, salute the anthem and face the flag, becoming the embodiment of the wider imagined community. Traditionally, those who compete

for countries have usually been born and raised there or have lived there for most of their lives. However, in recent years the selection of competitors born in other countries has become more common. A combination of national citizenship requirements, residency qualifications and the shifting regulations of sporting bodies has seen an increasing number of ‘transfers’ of national allegiance. In football, many national teams now draw heavily on players born elsewhere but often with familial links to the country, a long-standing practice for the Republic of Ireland men’s team. These scenarios serve to draw attention to the often complex, multi-layered and contingent nature of national identity and an apparent divergence between national identity and sporting citizenship. A player’s identity space may be one that connects them to more than one country, pointing to a need to explore the ways in which individual identities may be entwined with multiple places transcending the confines of the bounded nation-state.

Livable Cities: Inclusive and Creative Urbanisms

(Re)Thinking Urban Encounter and Sociality Through Neurodivergence

Therese Kenna, Department of Geography, University College Cork

Encounters with others have long been deemed central to urban life. The now wide-ranging literature has considered the spaces of sociality and encounters in the city that allow people to come together, connect, spaces for a range of social groups to be visible and accommodated. Less has been said about different types, modes or ways of being ‘social’. In this paper, I offer a contribution to deepen and extend recent work by considering neurodivergent modes of sociality and the ways these come together in moments of both harmony and friction with others in urban space. Neurodivergent individuals interact and experience the city and social encounters in different ways through different styles and modes of socialising and differences in how neurodivergent bodies communicate. Drawing on qualitative research on the embodied experiences of those who are neurodivergent, the paper reveals differences in how sociality and encounter are performed in urban spaces, focusing on themes such as temporality, familiarity, and masking. The paper also considers the ways dominant modes of sociality and expected ways of interacting socially, can force neurodivergent bodies to ‘fit’ or perform in expected or acceptable ways, with the possibility of difference being silenced and marginalised. Considering neurodivergent modes of sociality reveals unique experiences of connections to others, which can have implications for sociality and encounter, and to being part of, and visible within, cities. Neurodivergent modes of sociality exceed, complicate, and make visible the neurotypicality of mainstream understandings of encounter and social infrastructure, disrupting the neuronormativity that informs scholarship.

Planning Exclusion in Brasilia: Neurodiversity, Race, and Colonial Legacies through Documental and Spatial Analysis, with Implications for Empirical Research

Victor Guevara (University College Cork), Therese Kenna (University College Cork), Eileen Pfeiffer-Flores (University of Brasilia)

Brasilia is now the third most populous urban area in Brazil, despite being only 66 years old. Conceived within a modernist project of national development, the capital was built under the promise of progress, encapsulated in the slogan “fifty years in five”, and promoted as the “capital of hope,” symbolising rapid growth and integration in the largest country in South America. However, over the past seven decades, the territorial organisation of Brasilia has revealed how regimes of ableism, racism, and coloniality have operated in the production of

urban space. While the city's design was grounded in a utopian vision of integration and equality, and recognised in 1987 as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site for its architectural and urbanistic significance, it remains one of the most socio-spatially unequal capitals in the country. These tensions are central to understanding how urban space is experienced and how power operates in everyday life. This study investigates how urban space shapes the conditions of life for neurodivergent populations in Brasilia through two complementary approaches: (1) a documental analysis of 15 key urban policies that have regulated the occupation of the Federal District, combined with a spatial analysis of its territorial configuration; and (2) an empirical research project examining the lived experiences of neurodivergent populations. Preliminary findings from the documental and spatial analyses indicate that Brasilia's functionally zoned planning model has produced a hierarchical and segregated polycentric structure that remains largely intact. The limited popular participation in decision-making processes during the city's formation appears as a key factor in the reproduction of these exclusionary dynamics. As observed in other capitals shaped by the African diaspora, Black populations in Brasilia are disproportionately concentrated in peripheral and under-resourced areas, while White populations are more prevalent in central and better-serviced regions. These findings underscore the importance of approaching neurodiversity studies through an explicitly urban and intersectional knowledge. They provide a critical foundation for future research on the lived experiences of disabled and neurodivergent people in Brasilia and in other cities marked by colonial legacies.

Dublin's Cultural Audit: Mapping Dublin's Cultural Life

Claire Duggan - Dublin City Council Culture Company

To support informed decision making in policy, strategy and planning, Dublin City Council requires a comprehensive knowledge base of the city's cultural landscape. That is why Dublin City Council Culture Company in partnership with Dublin City Council developed the Cultural Audit and Map. The project brings together geographic and descriptive data for a wide range of cultural areas such as arts and heritage, parks and nature, sport and fitness, food, hobbies, community involvement and education, as well as artists and makers who call Dublin home. Developed using a cultural mapping methodology, the Cultural Audit is integrated within the Council's existing Geographical Information Systems (GIS). It is also a public resource, a website called Culture Near You, that makes the city's cultural buildings, organisations and networks easier to find and connect with. This resource holds both hard and soft infrastructure together in one place where people can see cultural places, organisations and infrastructure. Public engagement and ongoing research enhances the scope and accuracy of the dataset. The Cultural Audit and Map provides an accessible and up to date resource for both internal and public use. It improves the visibility of cultural infrastructure, supports analysis and decision-making and enables users to discover and connect with culture across Dublin. The Cultural Audit and Map is an evolving tool that strengthens connections between communities, practitioners and policymakers, while supporting a more informed, data-driven approach to cultural planning and development.

Urban Regulation and the Everyday Governance of Street Performance in Dublin

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As urbanisation accelerates, cities face mounting challenges in the governance of public space, with the nature, quality and accessibility of public space under increasing pressure. These challenges are particularly acute in neoliberal contexts, where privatisation and commodification reshape access and control, rendering public space more contested. Street performance occupies a distinctive position within these dynamics: as an informal activity that takes place in public space, it is increasingly subject to regulation, surveillance and administrative intervention. Therefore, examining street performance offers a valuable lens through which to explore broader questions of public space governance, participation and everyday urban management. Focusing on Dublin, an international city characterised by growing diversity as well as persistent inequalities, this paper situates street performance within evolving policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks shaping contemporary public space. The study adopts a qualitative, governance-oriented approach combining policy and document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of administrative records. Key materials include the Street Performers Bye-Laws 2016, related legislation, cultural policy documents, and datasets on permit applications, inspections, complaints and warning notices provided by Dublin City Council. Data are analysed thematically using NVivo, with attention to governance rationales, regulatory interpretation, and everyday enforcement. The paper examines how street performance is governed in practice in Dublin, focusing on the interaction between regulatory frameworks, institutional responsibilities and everyday enforcement. It explores the role of complaints, inspections and discretionary decision-making in shaping regulatory responses, and considers how multiple policy frameworks and institutional arrangements structure everyday practices of administration and control. Additionally, attention is also given to the ways in which governance is negotiated and interpreted in specific situations and locations. By examining street performance as a situated and everyday practice, the paper contributes to wider debates on the governance of urban public space. It highlights how informal cultural activities are shaped by regulatory logics, institutional arrangements and administrative practices, and demonstrates the value of street performance as a lens for understanding the tensions between creativity, control and participation in contemporary cities.

Methodological approaches to critical land justice research

Methods and methodology of a semi-ethnographic participatory research project on afforestation in Co. Leitrim.

Oscar Mooney - Trinity College Dublin

The Irish government's afforestation schemes and market-driven carbon sequestration strategies have been criticised for furthering the financialisation and commodification of land. A consequential "land rush" is thus experienced by local communities as traditional agricultural landscapes are replaced by non-native conifer plantations: places disembedded from locality; socio-ecological relations redefined. To delve into the contextual implications of Ireland's forestry model, this PhD project explores perspectives and experiences of afforestation in Ireland's most forested county, Co. Leitrim. Inspired by ethnographic methods, the researcher is currently engaged in a year-long situated participatory research approach, embedded in place, engaged in community, seeking local knowledge, and observing how days unfold in this rural county. While the Polanyian Double Movement has remained a staple concept since the inception of this research project, a blend of assemblage thinking and critical realism has enabled the researcher to critically assess forestry as both a process and object informed by evolving and enduring structures, geographical distributions of power, and a diversifying range

of actors. This research project also uses narrative as a structural tool to develop a historicity of forestry in Northwestern Ireland. During the presentation of this paper, the researcher will also give details on inflection points in the development of this project, the decision for their choice of case-study area, and their evolving positionality throughout this participatory research approach.

Composite methods for tracing ownership, control, and land use change in Irish forestry

Sara Benceković, Dublin City University

Land justice research often begins with a deceptively simple question: Who owns the land? In contemporary land ownership models, that question no longer identifies the full chain of control. Ownership is increasingly fragmented across legal shells and distant owners, while management is delegated to separate institutions and strategy is exercised at an even greater remove through funds and subsidiaries. This paper asks what kind of method is needed once power over land ceases to appear in a simple proprietary form. Drawing on JUSTLAND research, the paper follows these questions into Irish forestlands. Framed as polyvalent solutions in a warming world, as carbon sinks and building material substitutes, climate crisis mitigators and risk offsetters, forests emerge as key sites where public subsidy and private investment strategy converge with ecological transformation and changing land configurations to reorganise forestland as an investible asset within the green finance era. As such, forestland comes into view only as a split object, dispersed across title, subsidy, delegated management, corporate vehicles, planning systems, and lived landscape, each of which captures it according to a different logic of value, control, and use. With this in mind, the paper develops a composite method approach that follows forestland as its form changes across records, institutions, scales, and material traces. In doing so, the paper argues that opacity is not just a research difficulty but part of the political technology of contemporary land control. When authority is dispersed across institutions and records, that dispersion is itself doing work; it distances decision-making, distributes responsibility, and obscures who acts upon land and in whose interest. The struggle over land is, therefore, first and foremost a struggle over traceability, and a critical land justice methodology must reconstruct chains of control.

Predicting floods to protect property regimes: the case of flood modelling in the river Poddle catchment in Dublin, Ireland

Laure de Tymowski (Trinity College Dublin), Elliot Hurst (independent researcher)

How do sciences and land relations intersect? Flood adaptation governance has already long been called out for supporting neoliberal real estate regimes. Going a step further, drawing on a published interdisciplinary work, this paper presents data outlining the profound entanglement of flood modelling practices and neoliberal property assumptions. It does so by looking at the flood modelling practices that have underpinned a flood scheme project underway in the catchment of the river Poddle in Dublin. It focuses more specifically on two outcomes of the flood modelling process: a flood map and map of catchment areas to be protected by the forthcoming flood scheme. It shows how these maps greatly empower already powerful real estate actors while further marginalising those less advantaged in current property relations. Ultimately, two main learnings can be drawn from the data to progress critical land justice research: first, environmental modelling practices, ubiquitous in climate policy, must be thoroughly scrutinised for their underlying land relation and property regime assumptions; second, such a critical engagement with modelling practices is best conducted through interdisciplinary solidarity.

Valuation as Logistics? Tracing housing assetisation and urban displacement through critical accounting methods

Richard Goulding, The University of Sheffield

The aim of this paper is to assess critical social accounting as a method for exploring displacement within the assetisation of urban land and housing. Over the past decade there has been a growing interest within economic geography in both financialisation (understood as increased financial dominance in the economy and society) and assetisation (the transformation of ‘things’ into revenue-bearing assets) as key dynamics within contemporary capitalism. Within this literature, methodological debates have explored how best to analyse these trends, with ‘follow-the-money’ and related techniques used to trace the circulation and extraction of value across variegated and often opaque wealth chains. In doing so, critical accounting and financial geography have converged on common research questions, including the contested nature of valuation techniques, the calculative practices used in asset construction, and the temporalities by which accounting methods capture future income streams. However, there has so far been less engagement in financial geography with critical work that explores the uneven distribution of accountability within these practices, and the implications for how these dynamics interrelate with representations of displacement as the result of the creation of new asset geographies. This paper contributes to these debates through a reflection on the methods used in a three-year research project that explored processes of housing financialisation and assetisation in Manchester, England. Drawing on critical studies of urban infrastructure, the paper explores valuation and accounting methods as financial logistics, with financial territories constructed through the interplay of legal standards and financial reporting techniques. In doing so, the paper argues for the need for a more explicit theorisation of accountability within the assetisation literature, and for interdisciplinary methods sensitive to the political implications of how processes of displacement are made visible.

Participatory and Just Energy Transitions (1)

Local social experiments and the multiscalar governance of EU energy policy

Emily K. Gray, University of Galway

Participatory governance is required for a just energy transition in the context of the European Green Deal. In this presentation, I explore how local social experiments, which co-produce new expertise through “learning by doing” (Brown et al., 2003), contribute to participatory, experimental governance approaches to energy transitions in distinctly geographical ways. I present empirical findings from the project SHARED GREEN DEAL, in which 24 local social experiments stimulated shared actions on Green Deal topics across Europe in 2023 and 2024, drawing on participant observations, reflective surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Focusing on the eight social experiments specifically related to energy, four that undertook community visioning for clean energy futures and four that formed efficient home renovations knowledge networks, I argue that through such experiments, local actors come to understand the European Green Deal and take shared action towards its energy goals, mediating scale to govern the policy. Through acknowledging place-based and spatial difference, providing for both the continuity and disruption of socio-spatial energy systems, and the formation of new

networks of trust, the local social experiments contributed to the multiscalar governance of energy transitions across the eight locations.

Ireland's Biogas Boom: A New Frontier for Green Extractivism?

Niamh Donnelly, Trinity College Dublin

This paper examines how participation is negotiated and contested in Ireland's emerging biogas and biomethane sector. While 'green gas' is increasingly promoted in national and EU policy as a key component of climate action, its implementation raises important questions about who gets to participate in shaping energy transitions, on what terms, and with what consequences. The paper analyses the institutional, political, and discursive conditions through which some actors are recognised as legitimate stakeholders while others are marginalised, dismissed, or rendered obstructive. It shows how community concerns about regulation, risk, and procedural fairness reveal deeper struggles over spatial justice in low-carbon transitions, pointing to a creeping tendency towards green extractivism and gas infrastructure lock-in. In doing so, the paper contributes to debates on just transitions by challenging dominant framings of biogas and biomethane as a universally beneficial green energy solution.

No Energy Citizenship on Crusoe's Island: A Relational–Institutional Approach with Evidence from Ireland and Switzerland

Benjamin Schmid, University of Lausanne, Frances Fahy, University of Galway

Energy citizenship is widely referenced in transition debates yet often operationalised as an individual attribute (attitudes, behaviours, motivations), detaching it from the institutionalised relations of membership, rights, and participation that define citizenship as a political concept. This paper argues that energy citizenship is best understood as a relational-institutional configuration: a patterned arrangement of relations among actors, institutions, and discourses through which citizenship roles, rights, and responsibilities in the energy system are constituted. Drawing on citizenship theory, relational sociology, and strategic-relational institutionalism, the paper specifies energy citizenship across four intertwined relational dimensions (actor–actor, actor–institution, institution–institution, and discursive relations) and identifies two key mechanisms that shape how configurations operate: institutional selectivities that enable some actors and forms of participation while constraining others, and policy feedback, through which governance instruments may reshape civic motivations and norms over time. The approach is illustrated through Ireland and Switzerland, two countries with different institutionalised forms of citizenship. Ireland's centralised tradition and limited local government autonomy shape energy citizenship configurations in which collective initiatives and intermediaries compensate for narrow scope of local state government. Switzerland's direct-democratic institutions and extensive communal autonomy produce configurations where energy participation is embedded in comparatively dense existing local government structures but remains limited in scope outside of formal democratic channels. The comparison demonstrates that formally similar invitations to participate, co-produce, and engage generate different configurations of roles, responsibilities, and voice depending on the broader institutional ecology. Overall, the paper contributes a structured framework for taking energy citizenship seriously as a theoretically grounded analytical concept, and shows that, just as there can be no citizenship on Crusoe's island, energy citizenship becomes incoherent when detached from the institutional relations of political community.

Reflections on Participatory and Just Energy Transitions in Ireland

Frances Fahy, Director of the Ryan Institute, University of Galway

Ireland has a unique opportunity not only to decarbonise its energy system, but to lead internationally in shaping transitions that are both fast and fair. This paper draws on over 15 years of European research on energy citizenship, community energy, and participatory governance to examine how people-centred approaches can move just transitions from rhetoric to reality. Empirical evidence from projects such as ENERGYPROSPECTS, ENERGISE, and SHARED GREEN DEAL demonstrates that when communities are enabled as co-creators of energy futures, outcomes extend beyond decarbonisation to include enhanced wellbeing, social cohesion, and local resilience. However, despite growing policy recognition of participation, significant gaps remain in how energy governance frames and supports citizen engagement. Participation is often short-term, technocratically framed, and unevenly accessible. This paper argues for a shift from participation as an ‘add-on’ to participation as infrastructure. It highlights the critical role of trusted intermediaries, long-term funding, and deliberative and creative methods in enabling meaningful engagement across scales. It also explores how participatory practices reshape understandings of energy, from a technical system to a social and cultural domain. Positioning Ireland as a living laboratory, the paper contributes to geographical debates on justice, agency, and governance in energy transitions, offering insights into how participatory approaches can be institutionalised to support more inclusive, equitable, and transformative energy futures. Reflecting on these emerging research insights, alongside national policy engagement and developments in the energy space, the paper concludes with an overview of some of the forthcoming opportunities in the areas of just energy transitions at the national level.

Participatory and Just Energy Transitions (2)

Democratising energy citizenship

Niall Dunphy & Breffní Lennon, Sustainability Institute, University College Cork

Energy is tightly intertwined with people’s everyday lives, it is so essential that it has been described as the only true universal currency. It is often wryly observed that energy only becomes truly visible through its absence. But this is perhaps only true for those with socio-economic privilege, as procuring energy for daily life is a constant concern for many and it does not take an energy crisis for it to become an issue for them. There is a growing realisation that the success of the ongoing energy transition is dependent on the perceived legitimacy and social acceptability of the energy system. Citizen participation in the energy domain is seen as an important aspect of the energy transition – albeit the shape of this participation is still to be determined. Recently, energy citizenship, long a somewhat abstract term, has gained currency in the energy transition discourse as a means of imagining (new and existing) roles for citizens around energy. However much of this discussion has been led by researchers in developed countries with resultant conceptualisations inherently taking a global north orientation (and arguably a classist one at that). Building on a recent energy poverty book collaboration involving scholars from across the global south and north, this paper reflects on how the concept of energy citizenship can be made more relevant to those whose relationship with energy is very different from the archetypal ‘energy citizen’ so often portrayed in both the media and academic literature.

Niche developments in a misaligned regulatory context: An multi-level perspective of Ireland's sustainable energy communities

Jeanne Magnetti, Dublin City University

The European Union Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) has recognised the critical role of community owned energy in accelerating the energy transition, and advanced regulations to support sustainable energy communities (SECs). Although SECs are uniquely positioned for key niche innovations within the transition and Ireland's transposition of the RED II directive is considered "following good practice", development of SECs in Ireland remains limited and uneven in practice. In Ireland, many SECs struggle to scale due to persistent regulatory, infrastructural, and financial constraints. This paper asks: how do niche innovations evolve under conditions of regulatory constraint, and what forms of innovation emerge in response? The paper engages the Multi-Level Perspective (MLP) literature on niche development and recent work on niche–regime interactions. Empirically, the analysis draws on 85 survey responses and 35 interviews with SECs across Ireland. It identifies a range of "fit-and-conform" strategies through which communities sustain activity, including innovations in contracting and procurement, partnerships with intermediaries (e.g. universities and credit unions), and trust-building practices. These strategies enable participation but tend to favour actors with the capacity to navigate complex institutional environments. The paper demonstrates how regulatory environments actively shape niche trajectories foregrounds social innovation as central to sustainability transitions. It argues that niches are not simply enabled or constrained but are reconfigured through ongoing interaction with regime structures.

The Dangers of Performative Public Participation: The case of Ireland

Emanuela Ferrari, Maynooth University

With expansion of environmental governance and environmental policymaking over recent decades, especially in the context of 'a just transition' and 'just sustainability' public participation has become central to conceptions of effective and fair policy-making. But with little clarity as to whether participants' input has an actual impact on decision-making processes, the risks of participation being merely performative are growing. Integrating both theoretical and empirical evidence, this paper expands and updates critical participation literature by exploring the risks of performative participation. Addressing superficial and tokenistic inclusion, the concept of performative participation is introduced and developed. The analysis suggests that participatory processes within sustainability transition processes could be reducing and eroding citizen power, rather than accruing it. By giving the illusion of an inclusive democratic process, participatory processes might be curtailing meaningful engagement in policy processes. This danger is particularly likely within multi-stakeholder governance processes dominated by industry actors. Several characteristics of performative participation are identified including: (1) an emphasis on procedural and managerial mechanisms, (2) forced consensus and coercive social acceptance, (3) the remodelling of citizens role in governance and (4) disregard of power dynamics particularly community vulnerabilities juxtaposed to corporate power, as associated with performative participation. Empirical examples from Ireland, a country that has been increasingly promoting different forms of inclusive participatory processes are provided to demonstrate the risks. Reflections on how performative participation reinforces a neoliberal governance framework, where the pretence of political action conceals issues of climate obstructionism and market power, are also discussed.

Optimising Public Engagement in Energy Transitions: Recommendations to Strengthen Impact Evaluation

Aoife Deane¹, Alexandra Revez¹, Brian Ó Gallachóir², Clodagh Harris¹, Evan Boyle^{1,3}

¹Sustainability Institute, University College Cork, ²Department of Government and Politics, University College Cork, ³Dept of Sociology and Criminology, University College Cork

As Europe transitions towards climate neutrality, public participation is recognised as central to achieving this ambition. Government bodies and energy infrastructure developers must implement effective public engagement strategies as Europe's energy system changes. However, there is an inherent tension between accelerating the low-carbon transition and the time needed to meaningfully engage citizens in transition processes. Furthermore, what constitutes 'effective' in this context and how it is assessed presents a challenge given the multi-dimensional nature of impact. Our research investigated the implementation of Ireland's transmission system operator's evolving public engagement strategy as they redevelop their approach to support the expansion and upgrade of the network. The research highlights opportunities for various public engagement practices to support societal action and impact on the energy transition. However, across the range of engagement approaches taken in this field, a key challenge faced by organisations relates to impact evaluation. Public engagement strategies are designed to include community voices. Impact evaluation adds legitimacy and accountability to these goals, yet it is generally an underdeveloped aspect of public engagement and participation processes. Drawing on research in this space we present reflections on evaluation of public engagement intended to inform wider practice and support actors in leveraging opportunities to articulate and enhance societal impact. More systematic and participatory evaluation can serve to highlight the potential of public engagement and participation processes to empower communities as active agents of change, and demonstrate the broader transformative potential of these processes in fostering longer-term citizen participation in a just transition.

PECN: Navigating your PhD and Early Career Research

Panel Convenor(s): Niamh Donnelly / Geographical Society of Ireland Postgraduate and Early Career Network (Criostoir King, Laure De Tymowski, Richard Scriven, and Niamh Donnelly)

A central aim of PECN is to collaboratively explore and address issues faced by postgraduate (PGR) and early-career researchers (ECRs) in Irish Geography. Our (2021) research on academic precarity highlighted common challenges faced by this cohort. Concerns about balancing responsibilities, skills development, and career progression were common themes in our findings. Building on this research and continuing this important conversation, PECN invite you to a panel discussion on the theme of Navigating your PhD and Early Career Research. This event brings together a panel of current postgraduates, post-doctoral researchers, and seasoned academics to share their experiences, tips, and key lessons learned. While there is no 'perfect' PhD or early-career pathway, this session will provide a platform for essential dialogue on the key challenges currently facing researchers. Ultimately, this event offers an opportunity to explore how PGRs and ECRs can navigate their academic careers in solidarity by sharing personal experiences and tips.

Political Geographies of electoral processes and outcomes

INFORMER: Improved engagement for marginalized groups

William Durkan, University College Cork

This project investigates the topic of low political participation among migrant communities in the Republic of Ireland. Low political participation among a select group in society is problematic for representative equality, and recent local elections in Ireland provide an opportunity to explore this topic in detail. Using electoral register analysis and spatial analysis methods, this project will identify areas of high/low turnout among migrant communities in Dublin. Targeted surveys will explore the potential barriers to participation faced by communities, and a series of community workshops will create a toolkit for community groups that wish to better increase awareness and political engagement. This project, in partnership with the Immigrant Council of Ireland and An Coimisiún Toghcháin, aims to foster community level interventions to support increased democratic equality within Ireland by helping to address political disengagement and potential marginalisation among specific cohorts of society.

Is 'living at home' linked to differences in electoral participation?

James Clarke, Anthony Trindle & Ciara O'Riordan, An Coimisiún Toghcháin

The number of young adults in Ireland 'living at home', or cohabiting with their parents, has increased substantially over the last decade. Cohabiting with parents has previously been identified as an important determinant of voter turnout among young adults. This paper examines variation in the association between living with parents and reported voting behaviour for respondents aged 18-34, based on data from the Irish National Election and Democracy Study (NEDS). Using a logistic regression model, we find that the effect of living at home on turnout is age dependent. An initially positive association between living at home and turnout diminishes and becomes negative as the age of respondents increases. We explore possible mechanisms underlying our findings and discuss future avenues for causal identification. Additionally, we take the opportunity offered by our analysis to catalogue some of the challenges and data constraints facing turnout-oriented inferential research in the Irish context. We identify areas for improvement and signpost opportunities for future data collection initiatives.

Women's representation following General Election 2024 in the Republic of Ireland

Dr. Caoilfhionn D'Arcy Queen's University Belfast/Maynooth University

This paper aims to analyse women's descriptive and substantive representation following General Election 2024 in the Republic of Ireland. General Election 2024 experienced an increase of gender quotas from 30%-40%, resulting in the highest level of women candidates selected (36%). Despite this positive trend, representation following the general election resulted in 25% of seats being won by women, an increase of just 2% from 2020 levels. This paper will analyse the spatial dimension of women's representation with a focus on structural, cultural and social factors. This project takes a mixed-methodological approach, incorporating (geo)spatial data analysis, through data collection and GIS to identify women's (under)representation on a constituency level basis. Qualitative methods involve semi-structured interviews which capture the lived experience of women in electoral politics to understand the barriers women face in political processes. This project aims to underpin why

women's representation is experiencing a slow increase in the Republic of Ireland, particularly in rural constituencies, considering macro and micro level analysis, and how issues faced by women in politics can be further addressed.

Plus ça change? The changing/unchanging geographies of electoral participation in the Republic of Ireland

Adrian Kavanagh, Department of Geography, Maynooth University

When I was finishing my PhD research on voter turnout in the early 2000s, the Republic of Ireland had just recorded its lowest ever national turnout levels for a local election contest (1999) and a general election contest (2002) in quick succession. The following decade saw an improvement in electoral participation levels at the national level, peaking with relatively high turnout levels for the 2009 City and County Council elections, but turnout levels fell again in the 2010s and new record low turnout levels were recorded at the election contests in 2024. But, is it all bad news? The use of a geographical lens shows there are different stories evident in different parts of Ireland, while a more place-based perspective, using the marked registers of electors as a research resource, allows for an even greater understanding of the different forces at play here. For this paper, I will revisit my 1999 and 2002 voter turnout research, focusing on Lucan and Laois County, and compare these trends with those for the 2024 County and City Council elections in those areas, with the use of the marked registers allowing for the identification of micro-geographies of turnout and turnout change.

Public geographies in the 21st century

Pedagogies of Connection: Doing public geography with and for communities in the West of Ireland

Dr. Alma Clavin, Dr Ann O'Brien, Community Engagement, University of Galway; Dr Gesche Kinderman, School of Environmental Science, University of Galway; Dr Nessa Cronin, Centre for Irish Studies, University of Galway, Dr Sinead Mitchell, School of Business, University of Galway; Steve Dolan (CEO) and Dr Anne Cassidy Galway, Rural Development; Sharon Horkan and Justin Salmon (CEO) Mayo North East; Dr Sinead Duane, School of Business, University of Galway.

In a 2026 paper in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Lisa Schames and colleagues state that Geographers are well suited to be public scholars because they are equipped to 'ground truth'. This, according to the authors is due to our specialised training and interdisciplinary perspectives. They go on to argue, however, that the gap in public relevance for Geographers, relative to other disciplines has been documented for decades and Geographers are often absent, erased, and muted from public discussions, even where their presence would make the most sense. The authors advocate instilling confidence and associated engagement skills in Geographers going forward. This presentation tells the story of a public engagement project involving Geographers in the West of Ireland. The project, initiated by rural development leaders, is situated in North/East Mayo and East Galway, and involves five communities. The work is place-based and interdisciplinary in approach. Importantly, it is seen to be based on a geography of need, where groups in these areas identified the need for better engagement between communities and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) more generally, and specifically with regard to the impact of the climate and ecological emergency. The purpose of this work is

to unearth voices of lived experiences in communities, and unite with academic practices of research, teaching and learning, to co-create a public sustainability course and associated learning experiences that are responsive to the needs of the people who live there. In co-formulating a response, a new transdisciplinary micro-credential is being planned and co-created, using a novel and blended pedagogical approach. What has unfolded is a new and ongoing partnership with communities, exploring a critical, digital pedagogy of “problem-posing education” for sustainability, in which student and teacher hierarchical relationships are replaced by individual and collective learning, nurturing new geographical and place-based pedagogies of connection, both within and outwith the University.

Making public geographies: a mapping support collaboration

Zoë O'Reilly, Mary Gilmartin, Maynooth University

Accessing support for newly arrived migrants in Ireland, as well as beyond, has become increasingly urgent and increasingly complex in a context of consciously hostile environments and the increased visibility of far-right and anti-migrant sentiment and practices. Migrant-led and migrant-supporting organisations and groups continue their important work, but often have to reduce visibility in the face of this threatening environment. In 2025, MobiliseCare set about mapping migrant support organisations in Ireland, as part of creating better understandings of migration and care. Team members quickly came across two maps created by the IRC in (year?), aiming to present organisations supporting refugees and migrants in an accessible online format. Rather than ‘reinventing the wheel’, MobiliseCare proposed to the IRC to collaborate on updating their existing maps, expanding participating organisations and making the maps more accessible to online users. In this paper, we outline the process we have undertaken as a group of collaborators from Maynooth University, the Irish Refugee Council and the original creator of the map, a freelance web designer; we share the challenges that have emerged throughout this work, and we show examples of the work in progress. Despite the challenges, we argue for the importance of geographers to engage with public organisations to share expertise for public good. By reaching out to the Irish Refugee Council and building on work already started, we aim to ultimately create a resource that will facilitate the access of support to newly arrived migrants in Ireland.

Democratising Policy for Urban Just Transitions.

Dr Dean Phelan and Professor Niamh Moore-Cherry, School of Geography, University College Dublin

The need to transition toward environmentally and socially just urban futures is an urgent one, requiring fundamental paradigm shifts in how policies aimed at urban transitions are designed, serviced and governed. Yet, in many countries, politicians, policy-makers and planners continue to rely on traditional top-down governance models. These top-down approaches often overlook the place-specific and hyper-complex ways that societal challenges manifest in towns and cities, thus risking alienation of citizens and businesses by failing to account for the nuance of lived experience and expertise. In recent years, there is an increasing scholarly and political interest in democratising urban governance to bridge the gap between national or regional policy goals and local realities and action. This paper contributes to these debates by presenting findings from the CONUNDRUM project, funded by Research Ireland, which focuses on democratising sustainable urban mobility planning in Irish towns through utilising co-creation methodologies grounded in participatory action research. Working alongside more than 570 diverse stakeholders, we facilitated the development of community-led mobility strategies in selected case study towns. To date, several co-created actions have been

successfully implemented in our case study towns, proving that co-creation approaches can enable effective democratic urban planning that addresses policy ambitions. Our findings demonstrate that when stakeholders are positioned as active co-designers rather than passive recipients of policy, the resulting strategies offer more appropriate, empowering and potentially impactful pathways for achieving urban just transitions. Thus, our paper highlights the central role of geographical knowledge, and of geographers, in strengthening the science-policy interface.

Queer Geographies

Stretching Normativity: Middle-Class Lesbian Bodies and Embodied Placemaking in Shenzhen and Tokyo

Meiyun Meng, University College Cork

Lesbian geographies foreground how heteropatriarchy, class, and reproduction intersect to constrain lesbian lives. Yet this scholarship remains predominantly Western. This paper addresses that gap through queer phenomenology (Ahmed, 2006) and multi-sensory ethnographic fieldwork with 14 highly educated Chinese lesbians in East Asia. It reveals how Confucian familial obligations and state demographic imperatives orient women's bodies toward heterosexual marriage and reproduction, while middle-class meritocratic rationality simultaneously marks professional achievement without reproductive marriage as failed womanhood. Rather than establishing separate lesbian territories or seeking concealment, these women engage in what I term "stretching normativity": temporarily expanding acceptable womanhood within mainstream leisure spaces where female bodies are conventionally positioned as spectators. In basketball courts and rock music venues, they demonstrate athletic and artistic excellence through redefined feminine styles, stretching meritocratic and countercultural frameworks to encompass competencies beyond marriageability and reproductive capacity. Yet such reorientations remain structured by class privilege, revealing which lesbian bodies can negotiate heteropatriarchal constraints and which cannot. Conceptualising "stretching normativity" as a classed embodied spatial practice, this paper enriches lesbian and queer geographies with a non-Western analytic that moves beyond visibility and concealment binaries.

Rebellious belonging in STEM after LGBTQ+ equality: Hacking progressive campus climates

Dr Andrew McCartan, Department of Geography, University College Cork

Discourses of 'it gets better' have long promised marginalized LGBTQ+ people hopeful futures of acceptance and belonging, and for LGBTQ+ young people university campuses have often been imagined and sold as inclusive places where diverse cohorts are encouraged to 'find their tribe'. However, the institutional spaces of STEM subjects have consistently been stereotyped and critiqued as heteronormative and exclusive of LGBTQ+ students, through perceived tensions between queer identity and rigid gendered imaginaries of who constitutes objective STEM scientists. Yet, advances in LGBTQ+ equalities along with growing efforts within STEM disciplines to retain diverse students for competitive industries are changing sociopolitical environments and expectations for LGBTQ+ people in STEM. This paper explores how progress after marriage equality in Ireland has altered spatiotemporalities of belonging in STEM on an Irish university campus. Drawing on interviews with LGBTQIA+ students in STEM, I engage a theoretical framework of 'glitch' subjects and 'hacking' infrastructures to build new understandings

of how these students shape their sense of belonging through negotiations with others, their disciplines and its spaces. Hacking has been used within urban geography to conceptualise how individuals resist and disrupt inflexible spatial logics through innovative means, and within queer theory to conceptualise queer tactics of subversion. In this paper, hacking is used to examine how diverse LGBTQ+ students 'cope' with new exclusions, 'contravene' reconfigured stereotypes, and 'create' new glitches in ways that challenge the linearity of progressive narratives with implications for how universities can remain inclusive for contemporary LGBTQ+ cohorts.

Beyond Landscapes of Allonormativity: Locating Ace Liveabilities in Ireland

Rachel Bayer, University College Dublin

Compulsory sexuality positions sexuality as mandatory, and is upheld by allonormative structures and worldviews that reinscribe allosexuality as 'natural', universal, and privileged (Przybylo, 2019). These logics are reflected and (re)created in and through space, and across sites and scales (Bayer, 2025) – forming cohesive landscapes of allonormativity that orient us around allosexuality and towards allosexual futures (Ahmed, 2006). Allonormative landscapes impact and constrain the lives of asexual (ace) people in multiple intersecting ways, as they (re)construct compulsory sexuality as coherent and 'everywhere.' Yet these landscapes are also dynamic, contingent, and can be contested. Drawing from qualitative interview data collected from 27 ace participants living across Ireland, I contribute to emerging explorations of asexual geographies (Jukes & Bayer, 2025) by examining how participants imagined and envisioned more liveable lives for themselves (and others) – developing situated understandings of ace liveabilities in Ireland today (Banerjee & Browne, 2023). I argue that ace liveabilities can thus create fissures in allonormative landscapes while illuminating pathways towards better worlds for not only ace people, but for us all.

Asexual Geographies of Home in Ireland

Wenmei Bai

Asexual geographies of home sit at the nexus between queering everyday spaces and nonsexual geographies, which is tangential to but ultimately apart from sexual expressions of identity usually seen in scholarship on queer geographies of home. In the absence and/or queering of allosexuality, asexual geographies of home pose a question of how asexual identities are housed in domestic spaces in both the house-as-home and beyond-home paradigm. This project explores asexual and other asexual-identifying individuals' geographies of home, and to ground lived experiences in the pragmatic and/or aspirational dimensions of home in Ireland. Ireland has tended towards social and religious conservatism with homes seen as the site of the social reproduction of conventional, heterosexual reproductive families. Homes are also private spaces and understood to be the primary space for comfort, belonging, and safety. The opacity and privacy of home simultaneously obscures sexuality as it upholds assumptions of relationalities and allo/heteronormative processes within home spaces in participants' current and aspirational conceptions of home and homemaking. Ultimately, this project contributes to a small but growing body of work on queer nonsexual geographies and queering everyday spaces to include conceptions of space beyond their functions in sex society as well as contributing to an asexual utopic futurity through homemaking in Ireland.

Rethinking the production and integration of knowledge systems: the contribution of the indigenous.

Multiple Stressors and Biocultural Diversity Based Livelihood Resilience: Insights for Policy and Practice

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Globally, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) have evolved rich ecological knowledge systems and cultural practices collectively termed biocultural diversity (BCD). Drawing on these biocultural resources, IPLCs have historically engaged in autonomous adaptation through incremental learning and collective action to cope with livelihood risks. However, this resilience is increasingly challenged by interacting stressors, including climate change, ecological degradation, socio-economic and institutional transformations, which undermine the biocultural resource base and thus weaken the adaptability and livelihood resilience of IPLCs. Although BCD is being recognized in global environmental policies (e.g., SDGs, IPCC and IPBES), the mechanisms through which it shapes livelihood resilience under multiple stressors remain insufficiently understood, limiting its effective integration into policy-making and livelihood interventions. Guided by resilience theory, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis of 1,774 publications from the Web of Science database to systematically identify key stressors affecting BCD-based livelihood resilience and to synthesize adaptation strategies adopted by IPLCs, drawing on biocultural resources. The results reveal a pronounced imbalance in the literature regarding both stressor sources and adaptation strategies: climate and ecological stressors are frequently discussed, whereas political and institutional stressors receive relatively limited attention. Among adaptation strategies, knowledge- and culture-based practices emerge as the most commonly reported responses. Co-occurrence analysis further shows an asymmetric distribution of “stressor–strategy” linkages, with strong coupling between climate stressors and knowledge-based strategies, while political and institutional stressors are rarely associated with specific adaptive responses. This suggests that existing research focuses primarily on environmental adaptation practices while paying less attention to the structural conditions that generate vulnerability. This study, therefore, calls for the establishment of clear and scalable indicator systems, as well as cross-scale institutional coordination mechanisms, to bridge the critical knowledge gap between stressor identification and adaptive practices, thereby facilitating a shift of BCD from policy discourse toward structural transformation in institutions and practice.

Looking backward to find a path forward for the sustainable flow of suitable potato varieties to Eritrean potato farmers

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The lack of a sustainable flow of suitable potato varieties is a major contributing factor to low productivity and production of potato in Eritrea. This study examined the history of potato variety introductions to identify weaknesses, a path forward and enable the sustainable flow of suitable potato varieties to potato farmers. The research approaches included: reviewing the

history of potato variety introductions to Eritrea, consultation with local and international stakeholders and a survey assessing potato variety preference. Over 70 varieties of potato have been introduced and 14 varieties approved through the official system but with only three currently available. Many farmers rely on poor-quality seed from unofficial sources. The analysis led to the identification of priorities for improvement: strengthening research institutions to create networks for potato variety sourcing; strengthening local regulatory institutions to implement registration and release standards; engaging potato farmers in the variety evaluation process; considering Plant Variety Protection and Plant Breeders Rights when establishing potato variety conservation; designing maintenance and multiplication strategies and allowing the private sector to participate in potato variety seed sourcing and distribution. These options could be the basis of a roadmap making improved potato varieties and seeds available to potato farmers in Eritrea.

Bridging Indigenous and Scientific Knowledge in Agricultural Climate Adaptation: Evidence from Gokwe South, Zimbabwe

David A. Chikwaza- Dublin City University

Agricultural climate adaptation continues to be largely framed through scientific and technocratic approaches, often marginalising non-Western and indigenous knowledge systems despite growing recognition of their value (Makondo and Thomas 2018, IPCC, 2023; Carmona et al., 2023). This paper engages directly with debates on how different knowledge systems can be meaningfully integrated by examining the interface between Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) and Western Scientific Knowledge (WSK) in smallholder agriculture in Gokwe South, Zimbabwe. Drawing on qualitative fieldwork, including in-depth interviews, talking circles, and walking transects, the study explores how rural-Indigenous farmers conceptualise climate change, mobilise ILK, and engage with externally promoted scientific adaptation strategies. The findings show that ILK remains central to climate risk interpretation, agricultural decision-making, and ecological stewardship, reflecting deep biocultural relationships with the environment. However, its contribution is often constrained by policy and development frameworks that privilege scientific expertise, resulting in partial, uneven, and sometimes conflicting forms of knowledge integration. Rather than a simple complementarity, adaptation in practice emerges through negotiated, hybrid “knowledge encounters” shaped by power, history, and institutional context. These processes can generate both innovation and maladaptation, particularly where local knowledge is instrumentalised or undervalued. The paper argues that effective and just climate adaptation requires moving beyond tokenistic inclusion toward co-produced, context-specific approaches that recognise Indigenous communities as legitimate knowledge holders. By foregrounding lived experiences and knowledge pluralism, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on knowledge integration, community-engaged adaptation, and the role of Indigenous knowledge in shaping more equitable climate policy and practice.

Integrating indigenous knowledge and climate smart agricultural technologies – critical reflections on the impact of collaboration in rural Malawi

Adwoa Ofori (University College Dublin), Karen Keaveney (University College Dublin), Miriam Kalanda Joshua (University of Malawi)

Vulnerability of agriculture to climate change persists in much of rural Africa. This is a significant problem given that agriculture is the source of livelihood for many rural farmers who are primarily small-scale subsistence farmers. Such vulnerability impacts food security. Even though there is the development and promotion of climate smart agricultural practices,

adoption by rural farmers can be low due to their lack of involvement in the process. On the other hand, there is limited recognition of indigenous/ traditional and local knowledge and practices. However, many rural smallholder farmers have acquired such knowledge and practices on agriculture through their forefathers as well as through active engagement with their natural environment. This paper emerges from an ongoing project on integrating indigenous and traditional knowledge with climate smart agricultural technologies for sustainable food production in Malawi. The study examines the nature and the impact of collaboration between various stakeholders regarding blending the indigenous/ traditional with the climate smart in three rural Malawian communities. 141 interviews and 6 focus group discussions were undertaken across three rural communities. 35 high-level interviews were undertaken with experts and government officials at national and district level. Experimental farms were established using indigenous and modern/non-indigenous crops and methods to gather data. Results highlighted that increased collaboration, relationship-building and trust between communities and district level agricultural extension and crops officials positively impacted not only the integration of the indigenous/traditional with the climate smart but also food production, income generation and behavioural change.

Interwoven Futures: Integrating Biodiversity Conservation and Socio-Economic Resilience in High-Nature-Value Landscapes

Caroline Crowley (Crowley Research), Brendan O'Keeffe (O'Keeffe Social Research), Karen Keaveney (University College Dublin)

This research looks at the integration of nature conservation, community engagement, and rural livelihoods through a socio-economic lens, drawing from the team's experience of evaluating place-based nature conservation projects in Ireland. These initiatives operate within High-Nature-Value Farmland (HNVF) landscapes characterised by semi-natural vegetation that support high biodiversity but face significant challenges from rural depopulation, peripherality, and the dominance of productivist agricultural models. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the studies synthesised data from questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups involving three primary stakeholder groups: farmers, local communities, and professional stakeholders. Our approach was grounded in a Social-Ecological System framework and went on to incorporate the '4 Returns' framework, which assesses outcomes across natural, social, financial, and inspiration dimensions. Findings from the Corncrake/Traonach LIFE project highlight an increase in the breeding bird population, demonstrating the efficacy of an umbrella species approach that provides broader co-benefits for regional biodiversity. Crucially, these natural returns were facilitated by significant social returns, including the cultivation of trust between the project team and local actors, attempts to heal legacy 'power over' state interventions, and the normalisation of nature-friendly farming practices within communities. Despite these successes, the research identifies persistent barriers, most notably the short-termism of project-based funding, which creates financial uncertainty and hampers long-term planning for farmers and conservation staff. Stakeholders emphasise the necessity for joined-up policy alignment across agriculture, environment, and rural planning to address systemic pressures such as planning restrictions and declining farm incomes. The study concludes that ensuring the future of these interwoven social-ecological systems requires a transition toward bioregional, catchment-based governance characterised by egalitarian co-production and the integration of traditional local knowledge with scientific expertise within a more holistic and nested worldview rooted in mutually beneficial interdependency.

Revisiting Radical Approaches to Irish Geography: Dependency and Uneven Development in Irish Political Economy (1)

The structure of neo-colonialism revisited: Ireland's role in global transnational networks today and its developmental implications

Proinnsias Breathnach, Department of Geography, Maynooth University

In an article titled "The structure of neo-colonialism: The case of the Irish Republic" which appeared in the journal *Antipode* in 1980, I outlined how Ireland, at that time, was experiencing a form of development then common among postcolonial societies whereby the old colonial primary export economy was being supplemented by dependent industrialisation involving the establishment by transnational firms of branch plants using cheap unskilled labour. While the transnational presence went on to become the dominant element of the Irish economy, it has also undergone a profound transformation in terms of its productive configuration and internal economic impact. Nevertheless, the overall effect has been to produce an economic configuration which, while quite exceptional among post-colonial societies, retains what is essentially a dependent, neo-colonial, structure. The paper concludes with some observations on the profound contradictions that are emerging between the rapidly-expanding transnational sector and an internal governance system which remains a legacy of the old colonial era.

'Geography No Longer Protects Us': Dependency, Militarisation, and Comprador Geopolitics

Dr Rory Rowan, Trinity College Dublin

Over recent years successive Irish governments have undertaken a radical reorientation of Irish foreign and defence policy. They have sought to reposition Ireland's place in world affairs through a series of significant policy shifts: an erosion of Ireland's tradition of neutrality; closer involvement with EU and NATO military initiatives; a move away from UN diplomacy and peacekeeping; increased military spending. Rather than approach these developments through the narrow assumptions of European and British security policy that dominant public debate this paper seeks to understand these transformations through the lens of political economy, Marxist theories of imperialism, and critical geopolitics. The paper first locates Ireland's position within the capitalist-imperialist world system, as an economic dependency of the United States, whereby an FDI-based economy has produced economic growth at the cost of sovereignty. This paper contends that the current drive towards militarisation needs to be understood in the context of economic dependency, and as part of a plan to secure continued US capital investment in intertwined energy and technology infrastructures to maintain economic growth. Whilst the security commentariat argue that Ireland's neutrality must be scrapped in order to protect sovereignty and that new threats mean the State cannot rely on 'geography' for defence, the State's current plans focus on investing in the defence of corporate infrastructures that trap Ireland into economic dependency, expose the current to security risks and economic shocks, whilst further diminishing sovereignty. The paper pays particular attention to the discourses of Irish and international security experts in think tanks and popular media, and the role they play in justifying and furthering these dynamics. It argues that we are seeing the emergence of a specialized cadre of experts who promote 'comprador geopolitics'.

Transformative eco-social policy: An analytical framework for building post-growth foundations within a growth-dependent Ireland.

Lúcás Rohan, Sciences Po Paris

The commitment to endless economic growth is both the core driver of our existential ecological crisis and the central obstacle to current attempts at averting climate collapse. With existing climate policy increasingly recognised as inadequate, post-growth has become a prominent alternative paradigm; a normative end-point for an ecologically sufficient and socially just transition. Pathways for such a post-growth transformation are deeply constrained, however, by neoliberalised global capitalism. Neoliberalisation has structurally embedded market dominance and a growth dependency into essential institutions, while exacerbating inequalities and degrading state capacity. It is therefore difficult to chart a transitional pathway to post-growth without imperilling socio-economic wellbeing. In this paper, I argue that policy for a post-growth transition must focus on building a structural foundation of ecological and social wellbeing that can exist independent of growth. I define transformative eco-social policy as policy that can build such a bedrock within the constraining environment of neoliberalised capitalism - laying in the process the foundations to support a paradigm shift. I present an analytical framework for gradual transformation that identifies the gaps within existing state-level growth models for transitional eco-social policy to embed itself. The framework is operationalised with the case study of Ireland. Ireland's current growth-dependent trajectory is deeply deficient and unsustainable on ecological, social, and economic grounds. These deficiencies are well-described in existing literature, as are the theoretical contours of a normative post-growth alternative. The necessary paradigmatic shift is deeply constrained, however, by Ireland's subordinate semi-peripheral position in global capitalism and its accompanying dependency on FDI-led growth. The analytical framework identifies gaps in the Irish growth model for feasible yet transformative eco-social policy to embed itself, building in the process the foundation for a post-growth transition away from the current deficient trajectory.

The Geopolitical Ecology of AI

Patrick Brodie, UCD

Drawing from Bigger and Neimark's influential approach (2017), this talk will articulate what I call the "geopolitical ecology of AI" – the increasing overlap between geopolitical, economic, and ecological interdependency during the so-called "twin transition" of digitalisation and decarbonisation. At a time of rapid AI expansion and industrialisation, alongside necessary attempts to decarbonise the economy, the conflation of economic, environmental, and national security complicates and undermines attempts to develop truly just and democratic twin transition policies. Arguing this in the context of Ireland's economic dependency on the US and pressure to fall into line with European industrial security interests, I will show how Ireland's compromised twin transition policies are undermining democratic accountability and economic sovereignty in the context of infrastructural, resource, and ecological development, directed towards the growing supply chain security demands of AI systems amidst a "green/digital cold war" between the US and China (Alami 2025). In the current milieu, whereby US tech monopolies control the infrastructure and technologies at the heart of AI growth, EU industrial policy is thus deepening rather than reducing dependence on US supply chains. This takes more extreme shape in Ireland, where the country's exceptional dependency on the US has seen over 1/5 of the country's electricity used by data centres (Bresnihan and Brodie 2025); and its energy/resource supply chain security explicitly undermined by US geopolitical pressure (Bresnihan, Brodie, and Rowan 2025). The talk thus illustrates the ways that the displacement of

sustainability for digitalisation and security in industrial policy is deepening the contradictions of an eco-modern transition whose terms are dictated by monopoly tech.

Geopolitics in Ireland: Territory, capabilities, and neutrality

Gerry O'Reilly (Dublin City University & EUROGEO) & Nuno Morgado (Corvinus University of Budapest & School of Geography, UCD)

Ireland's geopolitical narratives largely center on tensions between its long-standing policy of military neutrality and growing cooperation with EU and NATO defence structures, its open, globalized economy and its exposure to external shocks, and the contrasting nationalist and unionist perspectives on the status of Northern Ireland. At the same time, the saying "all politics is local" is especially relevant in Ireland, shaped by its historical development following independence in 1921, the Civil War of 1922–1923, and its use of a Proportional Representation (PR) electoral system within a liberal democratic framework. Given its geographic position, relatively small size, and modest population, Ireland is often described as needing to "punch above its weight," particularly since its accession to the EU in 1973. These key themes are examined using both qualitative and quantitative methods, with a focus on Ireland's role within the EU and the broader international system, especially in the period since 2016.

Revisiting Radical Approaches to Irish Geography: Dependency and Uneven Development in Irish Political Economy (2)

Chair: Patrick Bresnihan (Maynooth University)

Panellists: Criostóir King, Juliana Sassi, Jack S. Edmunds-Bergin, Conor McCabe, Proinnsias Breathnach and Conchúr Ó Maonaigh

In 1978, a group of Irish geographers convened in Dublin to debate "Radical Approaches to Irish Geography: Historical and Contemporary." The proceedings, later published in a 1980 special issue of *Antipode*, marked a decisive intervention in the development of a radical critique of Irish socio-economic formation. Contributors demonstrated that Ireland's development trajectory — including partition — had been profoundly shaped by (neo)colonialism, structural dependence on dominant capitalist economies, and a state-led, export-oriented model that reinforced Ireland's subordinate position within the world economy.

Nearly five decades on, this panel revisits and extends that landmark intervention in light of the profound restructuring of global capitalism and the deep entrenchment of foreign direct investment at the core of Irish political-economic strategy. While earlier radical analyses emphasised industrial dependency, the contemporary conjuncture is defined by financialisation, platform capitalism, global value chains, and unprecedented capital mobility. Yet, as was the case fifty years ago, Ireland continues to be positioned as a "success story" of global integration. This apparent prosperity, however, coexists with acute crises in infrastructure, workers' relations, environmental governance, and social reproduction, all of which are shaped by persistent and unequal core-periphery relations at the global scale.

Influenced by Marxism, Dependency Theory, Anti-Colonial Theory, World-System

Theory and the Irish Republican Socialist tradition, this paper session critically examines the evolving dependence–development nexus across key domains, bringing together contributions addressing militarisation and the geopolitical ecology of AI, analyses of the Irish growth model, and the structure of neo-colonialism in Ireland.

By reassessing Ireland’s integration into a financialised regime of capital accumulation, both sessions aim to renew debates in geography on growth, dependency, imperialism, and neo-colonialism, while remaining attentive to the real possibilities for reshaping Ireland’s political and economic path and people’s agency.

Sea level changes, storm surges and coastal management: a critical time for action.

Observed beach-profile and sediment change across Dublin Bay (2020–2023) and development of a MIKE 21 HD/SW modelling framework

Niamh O'Donoghue, UCC

Monitoring coastal erosion is critical in Dublin Bay, where high-amenity beaches are increasingly vulnerable to storm-wave conditions and ongoing coastal change. As part of the PREDICT project for Dublin Bay, this study examines beach change at five sites in the wider Dublin Bay region: Rush South Beach, Donabate Beach, The Burrow (Portrane), Dollymount Strand (North Bull Island), and Greystones South Beach. The aim is to evaluate the spatio-temporal dynamics of beach morphology and sediment grain size across the study sites, using these observations to characterise distinct morphological responses, which are then integrated into a numerical framework to test system-wide vulnerability under future climate scenarios. Repeat topographic surveys were conducted approximately bimonthly between March 2021 and September 2023. At each site, eight fixed cross-shore profiles were measured to capture alongshore variability. Sediment was sampled at nine cross-shore stations along three profiles, and at two depths, to assess both lateral and vertical grain-size variability. Particle-size distributions were determined using Malvern laser diffraction. Wind datasets available for interpretation include locally measured winds (Donabate and Bull Island) and Met Éireann wind records. Additional topographic context is provided by project datasets including LiDAR coverage for selected sites (including Portrane, Bull Island, Rush and Greystones) and a UAV/drone survey (August 2020) at Portrane and Donabate. The study is currently transitioning from observational monitoring to numerical simulation, with the development of a MIKE 21 HD/SW modelling framework. This framework aims to quantify hydrodynamic and wave-forcing drivers across the Dublin Bay system. By integrating high-resolution field data with numerical modelling, this project seeks to establish a robust evidence base for assessing coastal vulnerability to extreme storm events and sea-level rise.

100 years of sea level change in Ireland

Patrick McLoughlin, Ashly Kalayil Uthaman, Gerard McCarthy, Maynooth University

Rising mean sea levels threaten coastal communities worldwide, making an understanding of long-term change essential for effective adaptation planning. In Ireland, historical sea-level records are sparse, particularly in the south and west of the country. To reconstruct Ireland’s sea-level history, we digitized previously unavailable records from the southwest and integrated

them with well-established datasets from the north and east. This yields the first comprehensive, countrywide assessment of mean sea level over the past century. At the national scale, mean sea level rose at a rate of $2.0 \pm 0.1 \text{ mm yr}^{-1}$ over the period 1925–2024. Crucially, sea-level rise has accelerated markedly in the 21st century, increasing from below 1 mm yr^{-1} during 1925–2000 to over 4 mm yr^{-1} during 2000–2024, reaching approximately 6 mm yr^{-1} in 2024. Our results also show regional differences, with rates of sea-level rise in the south and west more than twice those observed in the north. These findings demonstrate that the accelerating global rates of sea-level rise are now clearly evident in Irish observations—climate change is coming home to roost. This historical analysis not only illuminates Ireland’s sea level rise but provides a robust anchor for future sea level projections and adaptation planning

Sea level changes, storms, coastal floods and issues of coastal policy and management in Ireland.

Robert Devoy (Dept. of Geography, UCC), Karen Wiltshire (TCD) & Iris Möller (TCD)

The greatest threat to Ireland’s future coastal resilience, and to its population, under rapid climate change is policy stagnation and a lack of real actions; especially as these concern key remedial measures of mitigation and adaptation. This talk will present, in particular, the different threats of sea-level rise, storms, surges and flooding for the island of Ireland. Sea-level rise rates around Ireland’s coasts range currently from 2-4 mm yr⁻¹, at least 1mm yr⁻¹ above the levels of the 1990s and form some of the highest rates of rise in Europe. Storms and associated storm surges are projected as continuing to increase from present levels, heightening substantially the risks of coastal flooding and erosion. Annual erosion rates for soft sedimentary coasts, where the majority of the island’s people live, have risen now in many locations to >1m yr⁻¹. A consequence has been an increase in other sites of the onshore movements of sand and silt sized sediments, driven by the increased available wave energy (i.e., from storminess and river runoff). This is particularly noticeable on Ireland’s south and west coasts, as moving into bay/ headland type environments. In contrast, other coastal sites, e.g., in the Dublin Bay region, have seen increased erosion and land losses under easterly storms. The threats of these climate driven changes of coastal systems for major cities and ports need integrated policy and action as a matter of urgency; as well as addressing the impacts of these changes on Ireland’s dispersed rural coastal populations. Climate justice demands resilient solutions for both these rural and urban coastal communities. Many of the Climate Change Council for Ireland’s identified policy points and the actions needed for Ireland’s coasts are also of global relevance.

Sustainable & Scalable GIS Solutions

Assessing the Future Climate Impact on the Breeding Distribution of Ground-Nesting Birds

Paul Holloway, Wayne Greene-Salm, Parvaneh Nowbakht, & Paraic Ryan, University College Cork

Climate change and concomitant urbanisation have led to many species shifting their geographic distribution, while many other species have simply gone extinct. In Europe, ground nesting birds are a preponderant example of an ‘at-risk’ species, with ground-nesters 86% more likely to decline than birds with other nesting strategies. In Ireland, several of the species that are on the Red and Amber lists of the Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland 2020-2026 are ground-nesters. We explored the impact of climate change on multiple ground-nesters, including critically endangered Eurasian Curlew, Red Grouse, and Hen Harriers. We implemented this using a species distribution modelling framework with newly generated bioclimatic variables and breeding distribution data from the National Parks & Wildlife Service. We found three different patterns, range expansion, range contraction, and no substantial change. Further, we integrate these results into an IPCC risk framework, quantifying the spatial overlap with vulnerabilities, providing a new methodology to species distribution modelling.

The Ireland BioClim dataset for observational and future climate projections

Parvaneh Nowbakht, University College Cork, Paraic C Ryan (UCC), Jingyu Wang (UCC), Jenny Harmon O’Driscoll (UCC), Rosa Rogers (UCC), Mark Stewart (University of Technology, Sydney), Enda O’Brien (ICHEC), Basanta Samal (ICHEC), Paul Nolan (ICHEC), Paul Holloway (UCC).

Bioclimatic variables are essential indicators used across disciplines including ecology, geography, environmental science, and regional planning. While global datasets such as WorldClim and CHELSA provide climate information, the absence of regionally tailored datasets limits the ability to capture fine-scale climatic variability, which is critical for regional analysis. The Translate project addresses this gap by providing high-resolution (1 km) observed and projected climate data for Ireland, enabling the generation of region-specific bioclimatic variables. The observational dataset was derived from long-term climate records using quality-controlled interpolation of national station data. An ensemble-based approach using ~200 Regional Climate Model (RCM) simulations was developed to generate percentile-based projections (10th, 50th, and 90th percentiles) across Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs 2.6, 4.5, and 8.5) and multiple time periods. These percentiles represent a range of plausible climate futures and support uncertainty assessment. Three complementary approaches were applied: full-ensemble, period-specific, and scenario-specific outputs across RCPs and time periods. The observational and full-ensemble datasets each comprise 57 GeoTIFFs, with additional outputs provided for period- and scenario-specific analyses.

Investigating potential capacity to expand high-protein crop growth across the EU and Ireland under Social, Environmental and Economic contexts.

Talia Huffe (Teagasc, UCC Department of Geography, Environmental Research Institute), Lilian O’Sullivan (Teagasc), Paul Holloway (Environmental Research Institute)

Self-sufficiency and feeding a burgeoning human population, amid significant climatic changes, soil degradation, and carbon emissions are critical global concerns. Evidence highlights animal-based feed systems are unsustainable across all metrics. We aimed to identify EU and Irish regions where economically important, high protein plant crops suitability would increase, decrease, or remain, to aid in transitioning to a plant-based feed system. We projected the suitability of eight high protein-output crops (*Avena sativa* - oat, *Chenopodium quinoa* - quinoa, *Glycine max* - soy, *Lupinus albus* – white lupin, *Lupinus angustifolius* – blue lupin, *Lolium perenne* – perennial ryegrass, *Pisum sativum* – pea, and *Vicia faba* – faba bean) by combining climate, elevation, slope, aspect and soil types. Results were mapped across shared socioeconomic pathways (SSPs) 2-4.5, 3-7.0 and 5-8.58, for 2041-2060 and 2061-2080. Using GIS, LPIS agricultural holdings, social vulnerability, ecological sensitivity, infrastructural

constraints, and crop parameters suitability was aggregated to a 1km hex grid. Large areas across the EU and Ireland show increasing suitability particularly for faba and peas. Stakeholder investigations show high social vulnerability, but significant environmental benefits from high-protein crop systems. Network analysis highlights key infrastructure opportunities based on minimum location-allocation and service network investigations, indicating area and facilities that should prioritise initial investments in animal-grade protein feeds, expanding to human-grade plant protein products. This transferable model and its' results could guide policymakers, agronomists, seed merchants and producers in planning the transition to plant-based, high-protein isolates, flours and secondary products. Self-sufficiency and feeding a burgeoning human population, amid significant climatic changes, soil degradation, and carbon emissions are critical global concerns. Evidence highlights animal-based feed systems are unsustainable across all metrics. We aimed to identify EU and Irish regions where economically important, high protein plant crops suitability would increase, decrease, or remain, to aid in transitioning to a plant-based feed system. We projected the suitability of eight high protein-output crops (Avena sativa - oat, Chenopodium quinoa - quinoa, Glycine max - soy, Lupinus albus – white lupin, Lupinus angustifolius – blue lupin, Lolium perenne – perennial ryegrass, Pisum sativum – pea, and Vicia faba – faba bean) by combining climate, elevation, slope, aspect and soil types. Results were mapped across shared socioeconomic pathways (SSPs) 2-4.5, 3-7.0 and 5-8.58, for 2041-2060 and 2061-2080. Using GIS, LPIS agricultural holdings, social vulnerability, ecological sensitivity, infrastructural constraints, and crop parameters suitability was aggregated to a 1km hex grid. Large areas across the EU and Ireland show increasing suitability particularly for faba and peas. Stakeholder investigations show high social vulnerability, but significant environmental benefits from high-protein crop systems. Network analysis highlights key infrastructure opportunities based on minimum location-allocation and service network investigations, indicating area and facilities that should prioritise initial investments in animal-grade protein feeds, expanding to human-grade plant protein products. This transferable model and its' results could guide policymakers, agronomists, seed merchants and producers in planning the transition to plant-based, high-protein isolates, flours and secondary products.

Towards Voluntary Local Reviews of SDGs in Ireland. Examining Locally Disaggregated SDG Indicator Data in Cork City and County

Daniel Carr, Dr Paul Holloway, Dr William Durkan, Department of Geography, University College Cork

Local action and sustainable development goal (SDG) localisation are frequently discussed as key factors in achieving substantive progress in any the of the agenda 2030 targets. Increasingly, local and regional governments across the world have conducted voluntary local reviews (VLRs) and voluntary subnational reviews (VSRs); in partnership with academia, communities and business; to assess SDG implementation and local monitoring capacity. Over 250 VLRs are listed on a dedicated UN site at the time of writing. GIScience has potential to enhance insights on SDG progress at a granular local level where suitably disaggregated data is available. Although it also is unclear how much further 'advanced' GIS analysis is desired by policymakers, local or national. At the time of writing no city or county on the island of Ireland has conducted a VLR. Although increasingly commitments to do so are coming from both national government, via successive National SDG Implementation Plans, and energy within local government, the Lord Mayor of Cork committing to a VLR of Cork City while attending a UN Forum in Geneva last year. This study incorporates Irish census data from 2016 and 2022 by reprojecting onto a hexagonal grid (H3 method) to assess localised variations in SDG indicator progress. 10 SDG indicators with suitably available localised data were systematically selected for analysis in the study. Further advanced analysis for the each of the indicators is showcased by a LISA (Local Indicators of Spatial Autocorrelation) analysis wherein areas of statistical

significance in SDG progress can be identified. The study also incorporates the voice of Irish local government, a key coordinator in future Irish VLRs, is heard via a brief feedback survey. Provisional survey results will be presented and help inform this paper's finding in tandem with the GIScience methods detailed before.

SUV City

Electrifying the SUV City: Tracing the Evolution of EV Technologies in Ireland

Conchúr Ó Maonaigh, Maynooth University

This paper examines the evolution of electric vehicle (EV) technologies within the Irish automobile market since 2010. Drawing on scholarship on the multi-level perspective, I analyse how the automobile market has prioritised larger, more resource-intensive EVs in order to fit and conform with the demands of the SUV City. I highlight innovation shifts within EV technologies across three key areas. First, I examine how battery sizes and ranges have increased to enable 'seamless' travel in Ireland, while placing greater demands on resources in frontline mining communities in the Global South. Second, I assess the ways in which charging infrastructure has shifted to accommodate these larger ranges, in turn, neglecting the needs of early-generation EVs and placing additional pressure on electricity grid capacity. Third, I explore how the weight and dimensions of EVs have increased to accommodate larger battery packs, particularly with the surge of e-SUVs in Ireland. This paper, then, shines a light on how the current trajectory of EV technologies is shaped as much by the demands of the SUV city as by climate action strategies. The result is increased consumption of road space, raw materials, and energy across the spaces of the EV transition. Taking stock of these findings, I argue that EV technologies need to be redeveloped with principles of sufficiency in mind to support a more inclusive and just transition.

Ghosts of the 'inner tangent': tracing the production of dereliction through infrastructural failure in Dublin

Cian O'Callaghan (Trinity College Dublin), Maedhbh Nic Lochlainn (UCC), Kathleen Stokes (DCU)

Dublin is a city currently characterised by advanced clusters of techno-finance and a 'hot' real estate market yet retains noted problems of vacancy and dereliction. Why have vacancy and dereliction persisted as features of Dublin's urban landscape and discourse, despite periods of significant urban redevelopment? This contradiction raises critical questions about the role that urban vacancy and dereliction play in urban development processes. Building on recent theoretical debates we argue that rather than being a simple indication of blight, vacancy and dereliction can be produced as much by the exigencies of speculative urban growth models as by those of urban decline. Drawing on an analysis of debates about vacancy and dereliction in Dublin from the late colonial period to the 2008 crash, we propose to understand shifting patterns of vacancy and dereliction as the outcome of successive phases of state intervention and development failure in the context of a post-colonial state. Inspired by the session call, we focus here on one set of stories around the proposed 'inner tangent' relief route – an orbital road proposed in 1973 that would encircle north and south city centre – as well as road widening and housing projects, all of which were never fully implemented. In proposing but failing to deliver on these public infrastructure projects, Dublin Corporation are seen to have produced a trail of

vacancy and dereliction. Thus the ghosts of planning for the motor car are reflected in contemporary development challenges in the built environment.

Growing compact: The uneven erosion of minimum housing standards in post-crash Irish cities

Maedhbh Nic Lochlainn, University College Cork

Beds in sheds, students in hutches, coliving residents in parking spaces, and apartments in tennis courts. This paper takes seriously the session's description of the lived experience of the SUV city as compression by noting a key feature of the SUV city paradox: while cars are getting larger, some people's homes are getting smaller. The speculative wagers of those deemed too big to fail, and the fallout from the ensuing socialisation of risk and privatisation of profit following their failure, have shaped and reshaped contemporary Ireland. Notably, the post-crash period has seen developers, investors, and property sector lobbyists wage a propaganda war against the purportedly overgenerous requirements of minimum housing standards. In the context of post-crash housing, then, the paper argues that size matters, and treats the minimum size of 'units' as one instructive variable within a wider calculus of spatial inequality and housing injustice.

Dunkettle Mon Amour: ninty nine words for SUV (and one for Alethia)

Denis Linehan, University College Cork

TBC

Teaching Migration in the contemporary world

Chairs: Malene H. Jacobsen and Mary Gilmartin

Panellists: Caitriona Ni Laoire, Kathy Reilly, Sara Hannafin, Jonathan Harris, Emma Petersen

Join us for an engaged discussion of the importance and challenges of teaching migration in the contemporary world. Our point of departure is the recently published book *Migration: A Critical Introduction* (published by Wiley (2026), as part of the *Critical Geographies* series). From this starting point, the panel provides a critical conversation about the challenges we face as educators interested in the geographies of migration, how those challenges have persisted or changed, and our strategies for responding to those challenges in the classroom and beyond. In doing so, this panel will explore critical geographical approaches to teaching migration and related topics including but not limited to borders, belonging, diaspora, displacement, global climate change, labour, and migration justice.

Towards Healthy and Sustainable Urban Societies and Economies

Reaching a sustainable transport consensus in Clondalkin

Liam Mannix, TU Dublin

This presentation overviews the approach undertaken to build consensus on active and sustainable transport proposals for Clondalkin as part of its Local Area Plan. Earlier public engagement had stalled due to resistance to perceived high-intervention measures. A heavily modified consultation process reframed engagement through intensive, in-person negotiation, involving 59 meetings with residents, community groups, businesses, and schools. The process emphasised empathy, shared definitions of success, and iterative testing of proposals. Outcomes included a refined package of modest, community-acceptable measures prioritising safety, accessibility, and modal shift. The presentation reflects on how deliberative, place-based negotiation can rebuild trust and enable consensus in contested planning contexts.

Operationalizing Urban Health: Policy, Indicators, and Spatial Evidence from Jakarta, Indonesia

Florence Elfriede Sinthauli Silalahi, Ainhua Gonzalez Del Campo, and Christine Bonnin, School of Geography, University College Dublin

This research examines how health and well-being can be operationalized within sustainable urban planning, using Jakarta as a Global South case study. A quantitative policy mapping methodology was applied to Indonesian legislation (1945–2024) to trace the evolution of health and well-being considerations across shifting socio-political contexts. The findings indicate increasing recognition of these dimensions; however, policy integration remains inconsistent, constraining effective implementation. Building on this analysis, key global urban health frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals, Health in All Policies, New Urban Agenda, and the ISO 37100 series were systematically reviewed. This synthesis identified 21 aligned indicators capturing core structural determinants of urban health, including air quality, water access, housing, mobility, public space, environmental sustainability, service provision, and participatory governance. The next phase spatially applies these indicators in Jakarta to establish a baseline, assess intra-urban disparities, and evaluate the extent to which policy intent translates into measurable outcomes. Policy mapping manuscript has been accepted (*Journal of Public Policy*), while health framework is under review. A final paper will present the geospatial analysis and additional manuscript will examine linguistic standardization challenges in implementing SDG-related health policies within Indonesia's legislative system. By integrating policy analysis, urban health metrics, and geospatial data, this research advances a transferable, evidence-based framework for promoting healthier, more equitable, and resilient cities. Future work will investigate urban health inequality trajectories using SDG-based indicators and national survey data.

Gambling Promoting Environments: An exploration of National Lottery advertising in Ireland

Dr Frank Houghton (Technological University of the Shannon), Prof. Ann Campbell (QUB), Mia Daly (UCC), Daisy Houghton (UL)

Gambling is increasingly acknowledged as a significant Commercial Determinant of Health (CDoH) in many countries. Recent estimates of 'problem gambling' in Ireland are significantly higher than previous industry funded assessments. Underage gambling is a particular concern

as it is associated with significantly higher rates of gambling issues in adulthood. Despite these threats gambling advertising is ubiquitous in our physical and online environments. This research focuses on an examination of the prevalence of gambling advertising in one urban village, while also drawing on allied research conducted by the research team. The vast majority of the gambling adverts identified were from the National Lottery, which alarmingly is exempt from the Gambling Regulation Act, 2024. The implications of these findings are discussed, as well as future directions for policy and research.

Creating Ireland's first county scale SME strategy

Liam Mannix, TU Dublin

This paper examines the creation of Ireland's first county-scale SME strategy, the Limerick SME Action Plan (2026), highlighting both its pioneering nature and the methodology underpinning its development. As the first attempt to design a comprehensive SME policy at county level, the project represents a shift toward place-based, sub-national economic planning in Ireland, with the explicit aim of fostering an ecosystem of success for SMEs. The paper focuses on the mixed-methods approach used to construct the strategy. This included detailed socio-economic profiling, spatial and sectoral analysis, and a structured stakeholder engagement process involving over 50 workshops, interviews, and consultations with SME owners, public agencies, educators, and financial institutions. Qualitative insights were systematically integrated with quantitative data to identify systemic barriers, opportunities, and the conditions required for SMEs to thrive.

Urban Climate Neutrality: Experimentation, Integration, and Resilience

A meso-scale integrated modeling framework for CO2 fluxes assessment in Ireland

Gerald Mills¹, Xinyue Dong¹, Ankur Prabhat Satia¹, Kazeem Ishola² & Rowan Fealy²

¹Geography, UCD, ²Geography, Maynooth

Land use plays a pivotal role in the terrestrial carbon cycle. In the context of accelerating global warming, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories provide a feasible framework for quantifying greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals; however, inventory-based approaches often fail to deliver sufficiently accurate estimates due to variations in geographic and climatic conditions. While Earth system modeling can produce more precise results, it is highly time- and computationally intensive. To address these limitations, this study develops a meso-scale projection framework for CO2 fluxes assessment by integrating a cellular automaton model with numerical simulation model. Ireland's land system is predominantly composed of grasslands, which account for approximately 73% of the total land area and represent the largest contributor to GHG emissions. In addition, the forest carbon sink has declined due to reduced afforestation rates, aging forest stands, and increased harvesting activities. Using Ireland as a case study, this research applies the proposed CO2 fluxes assessment framework to project land-use changes and corresponding CO2 fluxes under different scenarios up to 2050. The results demonstrate that the proposed framework performs well at the meso-scale and provides a scientific basis for future land-use management in Ireland.

Spatial Variations in Residential Building Emissions: A Neighbourhood Classification Framework

Ankur Prabhat Sati¹, Gerald Mills¹, Rowan Fealy²

¹Department of Geography, UCD, ²Department of Geography, Maynooth University

Achieving urban climate neutrality depends on understanding how residential buildings contribute to energy use and emissions across different neighbourhoods. This study develops a neighbourhood classification framework focused on building-related characteristics, offering a spatial perspective on residential emissions. Using census data, the analysis brings together information on housing type, age of buildings, number of rooms, heating systems, and household characteristics to capture how energy demand varies geographically. To analyse these diverse datasets, the study applies Multiple Factor Analysis (MFA), a method that allows different groups of variables to be examined together while maintaining balance between them. This approach identifies key patterns in the data, such as differences between older and newer housing, small and large dwellings, and varying heating systems. These patterns are then used to group neighbourhoods into distinct types using clustering techniques. The results show clear spatial differences in building-related emissions. For example, some neighbourhoods are dominated by older, gas-heated houses, while others consist mainly of newer, electrically heated dwellings or older apartment areas. Heating type emerges as a particularly important factor in distinguishing neighbourhoods, more so than the age of buildings. Larger homes and older housing stock tend to be associated with higher energy use, while socio-economic characteristics further shape these patterns. By focusing on neighbourhood-level variation, this research highlights how residential emissions are unevenly distributed across urban areas. The classification framework provides a practical tool for identifying areas where interventions such as retrofitting or changes in heating systems could have the greatest impact. This place-based approach supports more effective planning and policy decisions in the transition toward climate-neutral cities.

Agent-based modelling to link activities and emissions in a city

Dipyaman Sinha (Postdoctoral Fellow, University College Dublin), Gerald Mills (Professor, University College Dublin), Rowan Fealy (Professor, Maynooth University), Ankur Prabhat Sati (Climate Research Scientist, Dublin City Council & University College Dublin)

Globally, cities account for 70% of direct and indirect carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and are major drivers of anthropogenic climate change. Consequently, cities have become a focus for carbon mitigation policies that target the drivers of these emissions; these drivers are embedded in a complex urban system characterised by exchanges (and feedbacks) between components. Mitigation policies are usually designed to address specific system components (such as housing or traffic) without considering their complex interactions, many of which are associated with assumed behavioural responses (such as reducing energy demand). Our research will examine these interactions using a model that captures the overall behaviour of the urban system and the spatio-temporal interactions among its components. Specifically, we draw on complexity science via agent-based modelling (ABM) to simulate the energy use (and carbon emissions) of Dubliners. The objective of this work is to create a framework to understand and test sector-based policies in terms of their climate performance; for example, which is more efficient from an emissions perspective—retrofitting old houses in the city centre or building new ones in the suburbs with improved public transport connectivity? Ideally, this work can provide a means of designing the ‘optimum’ policy tools to manage city-scale carbon emissions. In this project, ABM is used to simulate the actions and interactions of people

(agents) within a bounded space (the city limits). These agents link the components of the system by occupying buildings (home, work, school, leisure, etc.) and travelling. It explores emergent patterns at a city scale by assigning simple 'rules' to the energy-related behaviour of each agent. These 'rules' describe energy behaviour patterns at home, at work, and while travelling within the city. The agents represent a range of citizens with respect to their family structure, marital status, age and income, house type, travel patterns, mode of travel, etc. The ABM is applied to describe and understand the spatial and temporal patterns of energy use in Dublin City; in 2016, it was estimated that Dublin City Council emitted over 2.8 Mt of CO₂eq across residential (34.7%), commercial (33.2%), and transport (24.8%) sectors. The model developed here will build upon different ABM models to account for the transport and building sectors and the time-varying geographic patterns of energy demand and use.