

Research and Library Services



Northern Ireland Assembly

Research Paper 93/08

June 2008

# MUSEUM POLICY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Research and Library Services

This paper provides an examination into the levels of public sector investment in museums in Northern Ireland and includes a comparison with other regions in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

Research Papers are compiled for the benefit of Members of The Assembly and their personal staff. Authors are available to discuss the contents of these papers with Members and their staff but cannot advise members of the general public.

## SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- In Northern Ireland DCAL provides funding to a number of museums and museums organisations including the following<sup>1</sup>;
- The National Museums in Northern Ireland – responsibility for holding and managing collections of national significance
- The Museums Council in Northern Ireland – a company with charitable status which supports local museums and holds collections of local significance
  
- Over the period 2007-2008, DCAL has allocated just under £18 million (£17,992,000) for the provision of museums in Northern Ireland. Of This amount the museum sector has received the following<sup>2</sup>;
  - (1) Northern Ireland Museums Council - £263,000
  - (2) National Museums Northern Ireland – £14,977,000
  
- There has been an increase in visitors to museums in Northern Ireland by 22% over the past 5 years; over the same period £9.45 million was spent on capital development.
  
- This PWC Report states that the following are potential benefits from the museum sector in Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup>;
  - (1) Tourism
  - (2) Knowledge Economy
  - (3) Regeneration
  - (4) Social cohesion and inclusion
  - (5) Education
  - (6) Employment/economy

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<sup>1</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>2</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>3</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper provides an overview of the research that has been conducted into the levels of public sector investment in museums in Northern Ireland and a comparison with other regions in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

This paper examines the level of public funding in the museums sector in Northern Ireland, the other devolved regions and the Republic of Ireland. The information included highlights the breakdown of the funding allocations to the museums sector in each of the above mentioned administrations.

## **SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS BRIEFING PAPERS**

Two papers have been previously submitted in relation to the economic and social impacts of art, sport, libraries and museums in Northern Ireland. The first dealing specifically with the above mentioned impacts. The second paper outlining the abandonment of the second phase of the VALCAL study conducted by PriceWaterHouseCoopers (PWC).

### **Economic and Social Impacts of Arts, Sports, Libraries and Museums in Northern Ireland**

The paper 'Economic and Social impacts of Arts, Sports, Libraries and Museums in Northern Ireland' examines the economic and social benefits that can be derived from sport, arts, museums and libraries in both the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Highlighted in this paper was the role played by non-profit arts organisations in America and how they contribute to the economy and society. Non-profit arts organisations in the United States of America generates some \$134 billion through its total economic activity per year; supporting some 4.9 million full-time equivalent jobs. The Bureau of Economic Analysis details that consumers spent \$9.4 billion on admissions to performing arts events in 1998 - \$2.6 billion more than admissions to motion pictures and \$1.8 billion more than total spending on spectator sports. In Canada sport spending per annum totals almost C\$16 billion and supports 2% of the jobs in the country. Estimates of health-care spending due to physical inactivity range from \$2.1 billion to \$5.3 billion annually, representing as much as 4.8% of total health care costs.

There are over 42 million visits each year to major museums and galleries in Britain with 43 per cent of the population attending a museum or gallery at least once during the past year. The public libraries in the United States of America currently have four strategies operating in relation to workforce development, including creating job information centres, expanding access to technology and tech training, providing targeted employment outreach and adult literacy training and community support centres. Sport related employment in England was estimated at 434,000 in 2005, accounting for 1.8% of all employment in England. In England, sport-related economic activity has increased from 1985 to 2000, representing an increase from £3,358 million to £10,373 million.

Impacts such as education, social inclusion, community cohesion and reduction in crime are complicated to quantify. Many of the benefits of these activities can not be

measured initially in financial terms. Any benefits derived, will likely be seen at a local and community level rather than at a regional level.

### Phase Two of VALCAL study in Northern Ireland

This paper outlines the decision of the Project Steering Group in relation to the PWC 'Research into the Social and Economic value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland (ValCAL) study and the abandonment of Phase 2 of the research into the economic modelling of quantifiable benefits of DCAL activity.

Phase 2 of the PWC study, was intended to test whether the available data could be used to build an economic model of DCAL activities. The requirement of the economic model was that it be robust and capable of being expressed in monetary terms. Evaluations are often uncertain and subjective evaluation itself can prove to be a costly undertaking. Indirect costs and benefits can prove more difficult to value, particularly if they have no market prices. An alternative approach to valuation is required in order to quantify potential social, health or environmental impacts. It is often difficult to assess the reliability of estimates emerging from a single study using a single method.

Areas that the project steering group has identified as problematic in relation to progressing to Phase 2 of the PWC report are as follows;

- (1) The available data for the 4 DCAL business areas is not sufficient for the more stringent demands of economic modelling;
- (2) The areas of Museums and Libraries are more straightforward in relation to DCAL intervention. However, Arts and Sport are more complex;
- (3) Where data limitations were identified, assumptions from specialist literature would inform the economic model;
- (4) Due to such data limitations, the economic model would be based on a high frequency of assumptions; and
- (5) Only one of the 4 DCAL business areas, that of Libraries, would be suitable for economic modelling.

The construction of a model inclusive of social benefits would rely heavily on assumption, which in turn undermines the robustness of the economic modelling itself. The PWC report states that this is due to the nebulous nature of social benefits. Libraries had the largest amount of available data for modelling; however this data varied in its ability to be quantified to the specifics of the economic model. The study states that a series of approaches could be taken in order to produce quantifiable benefits of DCAL activity. These include focusing on historical data, benefit ratios, the regional level and general themes rather than individual projects.

**LEVELS OF PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDING FOR MUSEUMS IN NORTHERN IRELAND  
(PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS VALCAL)**

In Northern Ireland DCAL provides funding to a number of museums and museums organisations including the following<sup>4</sup>;

- The National Museums in Northern Ireland – responsibility for holding and managing collections of national significance
- The Museums Council in Northern Ireland – a company with charitable status which supports local museums and holds collections of local significance

Over the period 2007-2008, DCAL has allocated just under £18 million (£17,992,000) for the provision of museums in Northern Ireland. Of this amount the museum sector received the following<sup>5</sup>;

- Northern Ireland Museums Council - £263,000
- National Museums Northern Ireland - £14,977,000

**NORTHERN IRELAND MUSEUMS COUNCIL: MAPPING TRENDS IN NORTHERN IRELAND'S MUSEUMS**

The most universally accepted definition in the United Kingdom of a museum is that given by the museums Association in 1998<sup>6</sup>;

*“Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens which they hold in trust for society”*

Out of the 37 museums surveyed (from the total of 40 museums in Northern Ireland) for this report, some 18 were run by local councils in Northern Ireland, 14 are independent or voluntary museums, 4 come under the National Museums of Northern Ireland and finally 1 operates within Queen's University Belfast<sup>7</sup>.

The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 sets out how National Museums of Northern Ireland will operate and how local district councils may provide museums and galleries. Of the 26 district councils in Northern Ireland, 9 councils currently do not run a museum or a museum service. These include the following<sup>8</sup>;

- (1) Antrim Borough Council
- (2) Ards Borough Council
- (3) Banbridge District Council
- (4) Belfast City Council
- (5) Castlereagh Borough Council

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<sup>4</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>5</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>6</sup> Mapping Trends in Northern Ireland's Museums 2007, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/7\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/7_file.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Mapping Trends in Northern Ireland's Museums 2007, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/7\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/7_file.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Mapping Trends in Northern Ireland's Museums 2007, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/7\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/7_file.pdf)

- (6) Cookstown District Council
- (7) Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council
- (8) Magherafelt District

## **THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MUSEUMS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

### **Income of the museum sector in Northern Ireland**

Income of the museum sector can be seen to highlight the overall level of activity. It can also help in illustrating the level of “dependence” of the sector on public subsidy. Of the 38 registered museums in Northern Ireland 22 do not charge an admission fee and are therefore reliant on other sources of income such as grants and merchandise sales<sup>9</sup>.

This report, ‘An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums In Northern Ireland’, states that museums are dependent on public funding, with approximately 70% of funding originating from central government and a further 14% from local government sources.

Income also differs among the various types of museum, with National museums receiving more income than other museums. National museums accounted for just over 70% of the total income of the sector as a whole. The National museums, (Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and the Ulster American Folk Park) received almost 90% of government funding. If these four museums were to be excluded, the funding from central government accounts for 30% of the sector’s total income. National museums received a much larger percentage of their income from central government while other museums and charitable/independent museums received a larger proportion of their income from sale and admission charges. In 2000/2001 the total expenditure by the museum sector in Northern Ireland was approximately £16.2 million, around 68% of which is accounted for by the National museums. Over 67% of the sector’s total expenditure is on salaries and wages<sup>10</sup>.

As part of the survey that was conducted for this Report, museums in Northern Ireland were asked to estimate what they put back into the local economy, the proportion of their expenditure that was spent within Northern Ireland and the proportion that was spent elsewhere. On average museums in Northern Ireland reported that they spent 85% of their expenditure (including salaries and goods and services) within Northern Ireland, totalling almost £14 million. There is also the multiplier effect as those employed by museums and those supplying goods and services recycle their income through the economy<sup>11</sup>.

However, multiplier effects used elsewhere in similar studies suggest that the multiplier will fall between 1.1 and 1.4 i.e. for every £1 of direct expenditure, there is another 10p to 40p generated in the economy<sup>12</sup>. An economic impact study of the arts sector in Northern Ireland (Myerscough, 1996) used a multiplier of 1.2. Using the

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<sup>9</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

1.2 multiplier, it is estimated that the impact of the museum sector in Northern Ireland is around £16.8 million. This is the equivalent to less than 0.1% of GDP in Northern Ireland, (which is estimated at around £17 billion)<sup>13</sup>.

### **MUSEUM VISITOR NUMBERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

There has been an increase in visitors to museums in Northern Ireland by 22% over the past 5 years; over the same period £9.45 million was spent on capital development. All museums now have a web presence and 90% of all museums currently offer collections based sessions to schools. The number of full-time staff in museums fell by 9%<sup>14</sup>.

The Northern Ireland Museums Council offers a number of grants to museums, in order to carry out various improvements to the services offered by the museums. The four types of grant and the total allocations during 2006-07 are listed below<sup>15</sup>;

- Collections Care - £13,717.75
- Access and Interpretation – £60,747.74
- Museums and Galleries Month - £4,420.00
- Specimen Purchase Grants - £7,350

### **Comparison with South West England**

There is a lack of comparable data and studies into the economic impact of museums. One of the few studies that has been carried out was in relation to South West England<sup>16</sup>.

The data in this study suggests that while Northern Ireland has fewer museums than either South West England or Scotland, National Museums in Northern Ireland tend to be larger, with an average income of just over £3 million, whereas all other museums in Northern Ireland had a smaller income than those in Scotland or the South West of England at an average of £120,000.

The major area of economic impact is in terms of visitor numbers where Northern Ireland museum visitors, (800,000) are just over 8% of the total in Scotland (9.8 million) although in terms of visitors per museum, the proportion is over two thirds of the Scottish average (21,000 per museum per annum in Northern Ireland compared with 30,000 in Scotland).

A NISRA recent survey (2000) estimated that in Northern Ireland there are 400 facilities that are categorised as, museums, archival centres, heritage centres or, historic and listed buildings that are not registered museums. Of these 400, 88% stated that they housed objects, documents or interpretive displays. Each of which are generating expenditure and attracting visitors in varying proportions; therefore, to

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<sup>13</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Northern Ireland Museums Council, *Annua Report and Financial Statements*, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/pages\\_53/11\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/pages_53/11_file.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Northern Ireland Museums Council, *Annua Report and Financial Statements*, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/pages\\_53/11\\_file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/pages_53/11_file.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)



provide estimates of the impact of all museums in Northern Ireland, would require further in-depth, primary research, which is beyond the scope of this study.

Myerscough (1996) noted that the total value of the arts sector in Northern Ireland (including, museums, galleries and performing arts) at that time was approximately £150 million and sustains over 5,000 jobs. Based on results from this survey we estimate that registered museums contributed approximately 10% of this value<sup>17</sup>.

#### **DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE**

The Museums Branch of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure has stated that the funding allocations as allocated in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review for the financial year 2008/09 are as follows:

National Museum Northern Ireland – £12.85 million (Recurrent)  
£590K (Capital)

Somme Museum £30K (Resource)

The internal reallocation during the June monitoring process has meant that National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) capital budget has increased to £7.911 million. However, this allocation includes £291K which has been awarded to cover an overspend in 2007/08 and this will be clawed back later in the financial year.

#### **DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT LEVELS OF FUNDING**

The table below shows the allocation of monies to various museums in England. The allocations for 2006-07 are taken from a total of £478 million, the 2007-08 allocation for a total of £522 million and finally the 2008-09 from a planned allocation of £534,052<sup>18</sup>.

#### **Museum Allocations in England**

<b>Museum</b>	<b>2006-07 (£m)</b>	<b>2007-08 estimate</b>	<b>2008-09 plans</b>
British museum	42,929	44,898	50,875
National Maritime Museum	17,008	18,491	19,570
National museums Liverpool	21,203	22,325	22,488
National Museum of Science and Industry	37,329	38,484	39,158
Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester	4,059	4,171	4,803
Museum of London	7,931	8,809	0

<sup>17</sup> An Initial Review of the Economic Impact of Museums in Northern Ireland Final Report 2003, [http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page\\_8/2/file.pdf](http://www.nimc.co.uk/crossfire/files/page_8/2/file.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Annual Report 2008*, [http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/dcms\\_annual\\_report\\_08\\_01.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/dcms_annual_report_08_01.pdf)

In the case of the Museum of London, from 2008-09 responsibility for the museum has transferred to the Greater London Authority (GLA).

**LEVELS OF PUBLIC SECTOR FUNDING IN SCOTLAND**

The Scottish Parliament’s latest figures in relation to the public sector investment of museums are listed below;

- National museum of Scotland – £28.864 million
- Non-national Museums - £4.041 million

In total, £93.118 million was allocated to the whole museum sector including achieves, galleries and monuments.

The Scottish Arts Council is the main channel for government sponsorship of the arts in Scotland. The table below highlights the planned budgets for this area for 2007-08 will be over £66 million, an increase of 69% on 2002-03. There is no correlation between the funding allocated and targets to be measured. Post devolution, the funding allocation has increased and by 2007-08 will have more than doubled<sup>19</sup>.

Category	£m
Scottish Arts council	42.069
National Theatre	4.000
Music tuition	10.000
Scottish Screen	3.308
Festivals	4.325
Cultural Organisations	2.36
Arts Research	0.005
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.067</b>

**WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

The Welsh Assembly Government has allocated £24.5 million to fund National Museum Wales in 2008/09. In addition, museums may also apply to a range of different schemes funded through the Welsh Assembly, e.g. Aggregates Levy Fund, Arts Council of Wales, Economic Development Funding and the Strategic Change Investment fund. The amounts awarded vary from year to year.

<sup>19</sup> Choices for a Purpose: Review of Scottish Executive Budgets: Report of the Budget Review Group, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2007/05/23114346/6>

The Welsh Assembly Government makes £405,000 available annually to local museums through CyMAL Competitive Museums and Sharing Treasures Grant Schemes. In addition, local museums may also apply to the joint Museum, Archives and Libraries cross sector grant scheme (£280,000).

### **THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

The National Museum of Ireland received the following amounts in 2007;  
Capital: €6,000,000 and Current: €13,512,000.

In 2008 it is due to receive;  
Capital: €4,630,000 and Current: €14,428,00.

Other museum that the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism supports are;

- The Hunt Museum (Limerick),
- The National Print Museum,
- Foynes Flying Boat Museum,
- Cork Butter Museum
- National Maritime museum.

In 2007 the total allocated to these museums was over €656,000 with a further €100,000 allocated for individual Regional Museum Projects under a scheme established in 2007.

In 2008 the total allocations for all these museums including the Regional Museums Programme is €819,000.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS ARISING FROM INVESTMENT IN MUSEUMS**

The rationale for supporting museums is largely centred on the premise that they constitute a public good. This suggests that the market (private or voluntary/community sector) may fail to provide museums for a number of reasons<sup>20</sup>;

This rationale proposes that government intervention can help to promote continued access to museums across all members of society. Government can also invest in areas where the benefits are mainly social and ensure the wider pool of benefits is realised by society<sup>21</sup>.

The following points set out the objectives of the Northern Ireland Government document 'Priorities and Budget 2005-2008' and how museums can potentially provide benefits towards policy objectives<sup>22</sup>;

Museums have the ability to foster social cohesion and cross community involvement. Museums provide young people with an introduction to civil society, through the free, neutral and safe space which characterises the museum, which is

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<sup>20</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, 2007*

<sup>21</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, 2007*

<sup>22</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland, 2007*

regarded as conducive to access. Museums can help foster a community focus and facilitate collective activity and interaction between citizens.

This PWC Report states that the following are potential benefits from the museum sector in Northern Ireland<sup>23</sup>;

- Tourism
- Knowledge Economy
- Regeneration
- Social cohesion and inclusion
- Education
- Employment/economy

#### Employment/economy

The Northern Ireland Museums Council highlights that expenditure by sector on goods and services has a 1.1 multiplier impact on employment. Therefore an estimate can be made that an additional 10 jobs in Northern Ireland are sustained by spend on museums by local authorities<sup>24</sup>.

In 2004, the gross cost of museums to local authorities in Northern Ireland was estimated to be £3,737,535 by The Northern Ireland Museums Council and the net cost was £2,933,653. It is estimated that local authority run museums spend around £375,000 per annum on goods and services, of which approximately 85% (£318,750) is spent locally<sup>25</sup>.

#### Tourism

The total number of visitors to museums in Northern Ireland in 2005-2006 was 1,205,923. Of these 456,921 visited local museums and 749,002 visited national museums. Museums in Northern Ireland attracted an 8% share of visitors in 2004 to the country; spending approximately £37.8 million compared to £24.2 million spent in 2001. The PWC Report states that, museums have an important community function by providing a neutral space in which both of the two main communities can feel they have ownership. The Report further states that research shows that high levels of participation in museums by religion with the rate for the Catholic Community standing at 29% and 34% for the Protestant Community<sup>26</sup>.

#### Education

In 2001, there were over 164,000 school pupil visits to museums in Northern Ireland; the National Museums Council also estimates that over 30% of museums had formal involvement with adult education college and university courses.

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<sup>23</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>24</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>25</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

<sup>26</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007

The table below shows the number of participants in education programmes to National Museums 2004/2005<sup>27</sup>

<b>Museum</b>	<b>Number of participants in education programmes</b>
Ulster Museum	32,669
Ulster Folk and Transport Museum	23,793
Ulster American Folk Park	28,619
Armagh Country Museum	3,260
W5	39,051
<b>Total</b>	<b>127,392</b>

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<sup>27</sup> PriceWaterHouseCoopers, *Social and Economic Value of Culture, Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland*, 2007