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Analytical summary of the public engagement for the Joint Bilateral Review of the relationship between Scotland and Ireland

Disclaimer

This is a report of the public engagement exercise conducted as part of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review. It is based on analysis carried out by Scottish Government Social Researchers and was produced in line with the principles of the UK Government Social Research Code, ensuring outputs are rigorous and impartial, legal and ethical, accessible, and relevant.

The aim of the report is to summarise the views submitted to the public engagement exercise conducted in Ireland and Scotland as part of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review, and to acknowledge the responses received. These views are also acknowledged in the report of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review published by both Governments on www.dfa.ie. The views summarised in this report are those of the organisations and individuals who chose to submit them to the public engagement exercise. This report does not comment on the accuracy of views or the feasibility of suggestions summarised in it. **The report does not represent the views or intentions of the Government of Ireland or the Scottish Government.**

Acknowledgement

The Government of Ireland and Scottish Government are grateful to all those who participated in this engagement exercise, and to those individuals and organisations that shared the Review Questionnaire with friends, family and colleagues.

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List of Acronyms

CiFA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DRNI	Dementia Research Network Ireland
EPSRC-SFI CDT	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Science Foundation Ireland Centres for Doctoral Training
EU	European Union
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
HIE	Highland and Island Enterprise
IIBN	Irish International Business Network
IIEA	Institute of International and European Affairs
KA203	Key Action 203
KIC	Knowledge and Innovation Community
LEADER	Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale
LGIU	Local Government Information Unit
NICE	Network for Intercultural Competence
OPW	Office of Public Works
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
RIISS	Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies (University of Aberdeen)
RSE	The Royal Society of Edinburgh
SINAPSE	Scottish Imaging Network: A Platform for Scientific Excellence
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin
UHI	The University of the Highlands and Islands
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Summary

Introduction and Policy Context

This report provides an analysis of the contributions from the public received to inform the joint bilateral review process. The review was launched by the Government of Ireland and the Scottish Government to look at how the countries can strengthen their relationship and work together over the next five years. It is the first undertaken by the two countries, and covers co-operation in key policy areas such as trade, research and culture, as well as exploring ways to collaborate to help our rural and island communities thrive. The Bilateral Review Steering Committee was keen to draw upon the widest range of ideas and experiences from both countries, and designed an open engagement approach that included an online questionnaire to specifically invite contributions from those with an interest in the relationship between Scotland and Ireland. This questionnaire ran for three months until 20 March 2020. The engagement focused on existing collaboration and potential areas for development, while the questionnaire asked a range of general interest questions to explore perceptions of the Scotland-Ireland relationship, as well as providing the opportunity to offer views and ideas on the five main themes of the review¹:

- Business and economic interests
- Community and diaspora links
- Culture experience and exchange
- Rural, coastal and island communities
- Academic, educational and research links

Method

1,068 responses were submitted to the online questionnaire via Citizen Space. Following the closure of the online questionnaire, all responses were screened for offensive content, and 1,062 responses were then analysed. All closed questions were analysed using descriptive quantitative cross-tabs, illustrating frequencies of responses and grouped according to where respondents are based. All responses to open questions were read, summarised and coded in a qualitative analysis. These codes were then aggregated into sub-themes that are nested within the five main themes of the engagement. Responses submitted directly via email were recorded, summarised and content allocated to the sub-themes and incorporated into the analysis. This report therefore presents the combination of online and email submissions, from both individuals and organisations, responding to both open and closed questions on the nature of the bilateral relationship. The data has been generated by a self-selected sample of respondents, and therefore should not be interpreted as representative of the views of either country's population.

¹ For simplicity, in the report of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review published by both Governments on www.dfa.ie these themes are referred to as: Business and Economic Relationship; Community and Diaspora; Culture; Rural, Coastal and Island Communities; Academic and Research links.

Response

The online engagement exercise attracted a total of 1,068 responses from the length and breadth of both countries, including 70 responses from 'elsewhere'. Three responses were received which had been developed jointly by institutions in both Scotland and Ireland. Overall, 73% of the online contributions originated in Scotland. Almost 30% of these 778 Scotland-based responses were from the Council areas for Glasgow and Edinburgh, while over half of the 216 Ireland-based responses were from the Dublin/Leinster region, with 18% from Ulster and 16% from Munster.

The vast majority submitted via Citizens Space were from individual respondents (96%). Forty-nine organisational responses were submitted via email or email.

Questionnaire Results – Closed Questions

Overwhelmingly, the online responses demonstrated a positive view of the Scotland-Ireland relationship, with 79% viewing it as positive overall, and 39% viewing it as very positive. Over 90% of respondents based in Ireland viewed the relationship positively compared to just over 75% of respondents based in Scotland. When asked how they view the relevance of the relationship in the coming five years, more than three-quarters of online respondents viewed it as increasing in importance. That view was most strongly held among respondents based in Ireland at 92%, compared to 71% of those based in Scotland.

Half of the online contributors felt that the image of the other country had improved in the past five years. Scotland-based respondents said the most visible element of Ireland in Scotland was community and diaspora activity (61%), and Ireland-based respondents said that sporting activity and events were the most visible element of Scotland in Ireland (64%). When asked to rank how important various aspects of the relationship were, a shared interest in sustaining rural, coastal and island communities recorded the highest support from respondents, with 73% considering this very important. In contrast, when asked where the economic relationship might expand, energy and tourism scored highest with all contributors, regardless of country of origin.

When asked to identify the range and extent of personal engagement with the other country, it is notable that over half of respondents indicated they were already aware, active or keen to do more in each of the categories explored. Patterns varied across activities and between countries. While the degree of interest and engagement was stronger across responses from the Ireland-based sample, in general both the Ireland-based and Scotland-based respondents were most extensively engaging with the other country through watching and/or reading film, literature or media, and attending or participating in arts and sports events. Over half of respondents were interested or engaged in gathering with relatives from the other country, and with gathering with diaspora from their own country.

In terms of commercial or professional engagement, respondents from both countries were most active in consuming products and goods from the other country,

followed by academic engagement and engaging with business counterparts. The category with lowest existing engagement related to property and investment.

Questionnaire Results – Open Questions

The questionnaire and submissions generated over one thousand separate comments, ideas and responses on the five themes the review explored, providing a rich variety of material for the review. Many contributors provided responses on more than one theme. Generally across contributions, while the largest number of comments were received for culture experience and exchange, the most substantive and detailed comments were submitted under the theme of academic, educational and research links. Respondents also provided a number of contributions that fell outwith the remit of the joint bilateral review, and often beyond the jurisdiction and competence of either government.

Five Themes

- **Business and economic interests**

The theme ‘business and economic interests’ received 135 thematic contributions to open questions. The questionnaire closed at the time the Covid-19 lockdown began. However, prior to this happening, most respondents identified the tourism sector as an area they expected to see the most economic growth in in the coming years. Concerns about post-Brexit trade and business collaboration also featured in responses. Contributors generally set out a strong support for sustained and improved business links between Ireland and Scotland and identified a wide range of existing and potential links to be better developed. While Tourism emerged as the theme most discussed in terms of common business development, transport was identified as a critical enabler of better business links. There was general support for the exploration of ways to develop trade and business, with specific interest in exploring a range of business co-operation and collaboration mechanisms.

- **Community and diaspora links**

The theme ‘community and diaspora links’ received 202 responses to open questions. In the main, responses to this theme emphasised the strong connections established between both countries as a result of their shared history, migration flows and diaspora communities in both countries. In general there was more discussion of Irish diaspora and community events in Scotland than of Scots in Ireland. Nonetheless, there was strong support and interest in the range of events and initiatives organised by organisations and governments to forge links at local and national levels. In particular, festivals and events marking St Patrick’s Day or St Andrew’s Day were mentioned as positive experiences of community exchange, alongside the desire to find ways to recognise and respect a broad range of cultural expressions.

- Culture experience and exchange

This theme received 300 responses to open questions, providing rich and diverse information on the range of existing and potential collaborations between both countries. In these responses, language emerged as the strongest theme, and 'Gaelic', 'Gaeilge', 'Gàidhlig', 'Scots', 'Ulster-Scots' and the phrases 'shared language' and 'shared culture' predominated. In general these responses sought the better promotion, teaching and use of these languages and were enthusiastic about their role in tourism and the arts, identifying the potential for initiatives to champion this shared heritage. Language was strongly associated with music and dance traditions, but contributors also called for the promotion of exchanges in contemporary arts and that both governments support collaborative media ventures, early-career artists and live performances in particular. Organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge Glaschú and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann were mentioned as good exemplars of promoting language, culture and music. Major annual events in Scotland such as Celtic Connections and the Edinburgh Festival(s) were noted for their strong presence from Ireland every year. With regard to sport, contributions were enthusiastic about the role of rugby and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) in both countries.

- Rural, coastal and island communities

Of all the joint bilateral review themes, Rural Coastal and Island communities attracted the most connected and overlapping contributions with the other themes due to their relevance in these particular locations and communities. This theme received 134 open questions contributions, which commonly highlighted that rural and coastal communities in both countries share historical connections and similar contemporary challenges. Another unifying topic that emerged strongly in this theme was how addressing climate change was both a particular opportunity and a challenge for these communities, and that Ireland and Scotland have much to learn from each other in the areas of sustainable tourism, renewable energy and developing processes and markets in relation to agricultural and fishing produce. Across the responses on this theme, concern and uncertainty were expressed in relation to the continuation of Ireland-Scotland cooperation in various EU-funded schemes, once the Transition Period ends following the UK's (and Scotland's) exit from the EU.

- Academic, educational and research links

This theme received 117 submissions to open questions from respondents, highlighting the wide range of existing collaborations and exchanges in detail. Under this theme the majority of responses expressed concern about any possibility for alteration in participation in EU-based funding once the transition period ends, and the potential impact on Scotland and on bilateral academic engagement between both countries. In discussion of the existing and potential collaborations between higher education institutions in both Scotland and Ireland, a very wide range of

research interests were identified, from across the spectrum of disciplines. Contributors were enthusiastic about the potential for deeper thematic collaboration, suggesting a range of mechanisms to support this. Beyond the research environment, there was appetite to explore collaboration opportunities in the teaching and learning environments of the secondary and tertiary education sectors more generally, and this appetite was often connected to the topics that the joint bilateral review is focusing on. Interest was also expressed in developing better bilateral connections with the policy environments in both countries to build on the already established expertise and experience.

1. Introduction and Policy Context

As part of the joint bilateral review undertaken by the Scottish Government and the Government of Ireland to look at how to increase and improve cooperation between Scotland and Ireland over the next five years (2021-2025), an online questionnaire sought the opinions of those with an interest in the relationship in Ireland, Scotland and beyond. The joint bilateral review was led by the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh and the Scottish Government Office in Dublin, supported by Irish and Scottish Government officials.

In assessing cooperation between Scotland and Ireland in the areas of business and economy, community and diaspora, academic and research links, culture and rural, coastal and island communities, engagement with stakeholders included roundtable discussions, written submissions, one to one conversations, and an online questionnaire.

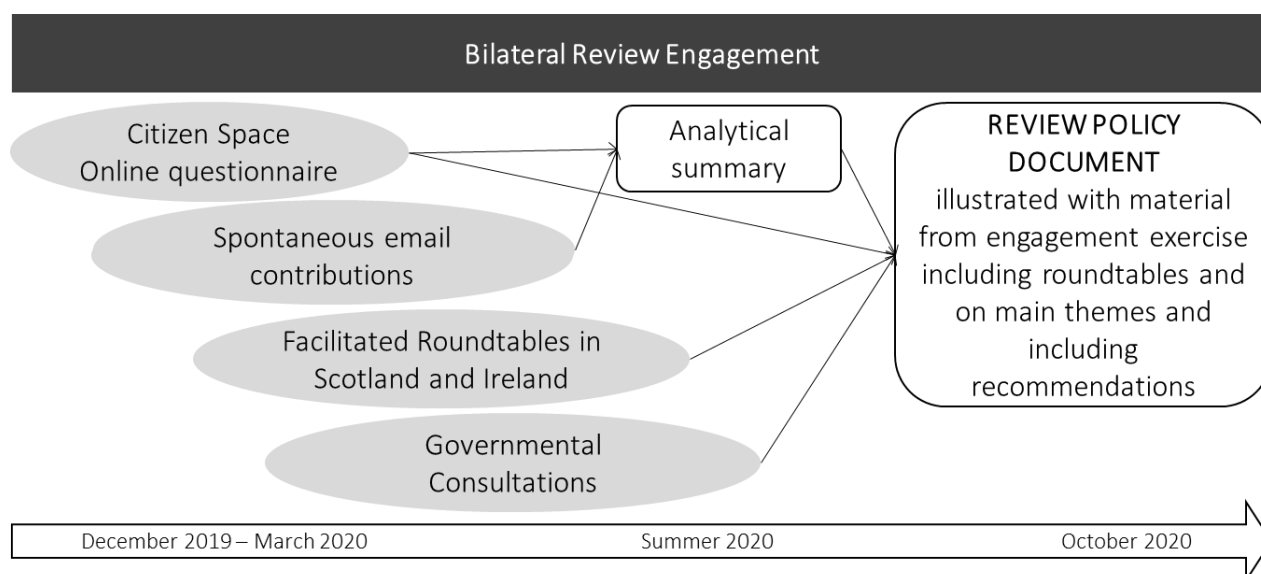
The online questionnaire was live from 23 December 2019 to 20 March 2020, and was promoted by both governments. It was hosted on the Scottish Government's Citizen Space service. A data sharing agreement in compliance with the Irish Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 is in place.

The questionnaire collected both qualitative and quantitative data from respondents, which are collated and summarised in this document. A number of new areas of cooperation became apparent in the responses. The trends in opinion expressed in this document, the analytical summary of public responses, are also reflected in the report of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review published by both governments ('Ireland-Scotland Joint Bilateral Review. Report and Recommendations 2021–25', accessible via www.dfa.ie). Opinions expressed by respondents which fall beyond the scope of the review have also been noted, some of which relate to unilateral domestic policy concerns.

It is important to note that the questionnaire results are not representative of the views of the general public, with very limited personal or demographic data collected.

The purpose of this report is to describe and analyse the responses submitted to the joint bilateral review through the online questionnaire and responses submitted directly via email.

Figure 1 Overview of the Ireland-Scotland Joint Bilateral Review



2. The online questionnaire – results

As part of the joint bilateral review of the Scotland-Ireland relationship, the questionnaire was intended to gather views from those with an interest in how Ireland and Scotland associate, cooperate, and collaborate as close neighbours, now and in the next five years.

The questionnaire was one part of a broader engagement exercise being conducted by the Scottish Government and the Government of Ireland to draw in a rich variety of experiences, views and ideas. This analysis of the questionnaire has informed the report of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review which focusses on five thematic areas²:

- Business and economic interests
- Community and diaspora links
- Culture experience and exchange
- Rural, coastal and island communities
- Academic, educational and research links

² For simplicity, in the report of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review published by both Governments on www.dfa.ie these themes are referred to as: Business and Economic Relationship; Community and Diaspora; Culture; Rural, Coastal and Island Communities; Academic and Research links.

The questionnaire collected basic information about the respondent (see Annex A), and asked a range of questions on the respondents' views of the Scottish-Irish relationship and then welcomed contributions on the review themes.

2.1 About the analysis – methodological approach

This online engagement of the Ireland-Scotland joint bilateral review was run on Delib's Citizen Space, the Scottish Government's digital platform for consultations to enable people to submit their response online. Citizen Space is managed by the Scottish Government's Digital Engagement Team, and the analysis of the data was conducted by Scottish Government social researchers who consulted with Department of Foreign Affairs officials, compliant with the data sharing agreement above.

The questionnaire included both quantitative and qualitative questions (see Annex A). Some contributions submitted via email, which followed the structure of the questionnaire, were also included in this analysis.

The methodological approach taken in analysing the responses is fourfold:

1. All responses were screened for offensive content, for example if they used inappropriate, defamatory or offensive language. These responses were either redacted or omitted if the entire response was offensive.
2. All closed questions were analysed using descriptive quantitative cross-tabs illustrating frequencies of responses. Responses were grouped according to where respondents are based.
3. All open questions were read, summarised and coded. These codes or key words were then aggregated into sub-themes that are nested within the five main themes of the engagement. These sub-themes enabled the analysts to structure and summarise the responses to illustrate the breadth and range of responses. Frequency of responses were indicated either by specifying the number of responses that relate to the sub-theme or by providing an estimate, such as 'a few' or 'many'.
4. Responses submitted directly via email were recorded, summarised, and content allocated to the sub-themes and incorporated into the analysis.

2.2 About the respondents and responses

This section describes the type of responses and provides details on the respondents. It illustrates the number of valid responses and outlines why few responses were omitted from the analysis.

The questionnaire opened on 23 December 2019 on Citizen Space and closed 12 weeks later on 20 March 2020. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were based in Scotland, Ireland or elsewhere at the time of their return. Respondents based in Scotland were invited to provide details of their location by local council area. For those based in Ireland, respondents could provide details of their location and had the option of selecting Connacht, Leinster (outside Dublin), Dublin, Munster, or Ulster. All respondents who indicated that they were based neither in Ireland nor Scotland (or who did not provide a location) answered a common questionnaire for those “elsewhere in the world.”

During this period, 1,068 responses were received, with nearly three in four based in Scotland (73%), 21% based in Ireland and 7% from elsewhere (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Respondents by location

Respondents	n	%
Based in Ireland	219	20.5%
Based in Scotland	779	72.9%
Based elsewhere, or not known	70	6.6%
Total	1068	100.0%

Respondents provided details on the specific region they or their organisation are based. Figure 2 below illustrates that for the responses based in Scotland, most stem from Scotland’s two largest cities. Seventeen percent of these responses are from Glasgow (17%), followed by 12% from Edinburgh. Whilst more responses were submitted from the local authorities on the west coast – such as the Highland Council, North and South Lanarkshire and Argyll and Bute – local authorities on the east coast, such as Fife and Midlothian, are also represented. The islands are not particularly well represented with one response received from Orkney, two from Shetland and eight from Na h-Eileanan Siar.

Figure 2: Share of responses based in Scotland by local authority (n=778)

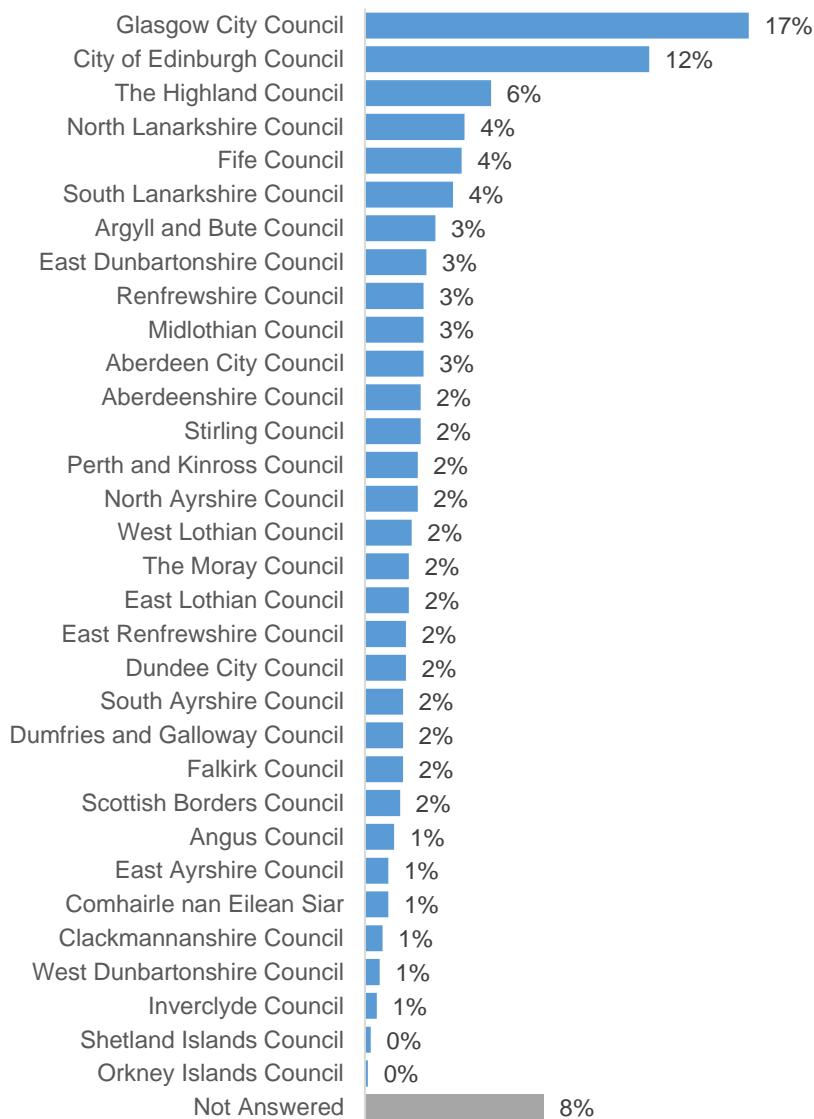
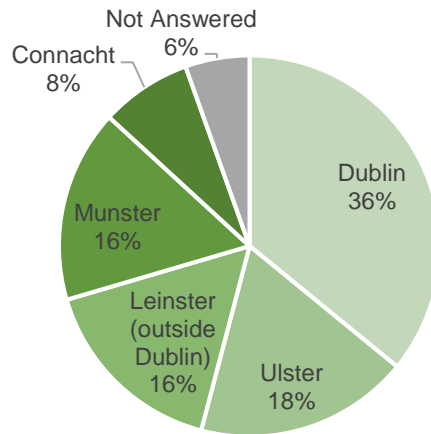


Figure 3 illustrates the regional profile of responses based in Ireland by province, with Leinster divided into 'Dublin' and 'rest of Leinster'. The largest proportion of responses were from Dublin with 36%. Respondents based in Ulster provided the next largest share (18%), followed by Leinster (outside Dublin) (16%) and Munster (16%). Eight percent of respondents based in Ireland indicated they were in Connacht. Respondents were also asked if they had recently been in contact with the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh or with the Scottish Government Office in Dublin. Of those 218 respondents based in Ireland, 18 had recently been in touch with the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh, compared to 12 of those based in Scotland and two based elsewhere. The number of respondents who had been in touch with the Scottish Government Office in Dublin is slightly higher, which also reflects the overall higher number of respondents based in Scotland: 89 of 774

respondents based in Scotland had been in contact, with 11 of those based in Ireland and three of those based elsewhere.

Figure 3: Share of responses based in Ireland by province (n=219)



Of all 1,068 responses, six were omitted from the analysis due to offensive language, two of which were organisational responses and four individual ones. Thus, 1,024 valid individual responses (96%) were considered and 38 (4%) organisational ones.

Respondents were informed that their responses would be summarised, but not published in full. Furthermore, 79% were content to be contacted in the future in relation to the joint bilateral review, 21% were not.

As outlined above, 1,068 responses were submitted to the online questionnaire via Citizen Space. An additional 17 contributions were submitted via email to the Government of Ireland and Scottish Government, either directly or sent to an email account that had been set up specifically for the purpose of this review. Of these 17 email contributions, 12 were confirmed to be organisational responses. These email contributions are included in the analysis in Chapter 4. Wherever necessary, joint submissions were highlighted. All organisations that responded to this review, either via email or Citizen Space, are listed in Annex B.

Chapter 3 summarises all responses to the closed questions. This analysis is quantitative. However, it does not represent the views of the wider public and solely reflects the opinions of the respondents to this engagement. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the range and depth of all comments submitted to the open questions, specifically focusing on contributions to the five key themes of this engagement. As explained in section 2.1, these themes are divided into sub-themes to illustrate the

areas of interest that emerged from the submissions. This analytical report aims to summarise these contributions and it needs to be highlighted that it is not the purpose of this report to review or reflect on the accuracy or feasibility of any suggestions made.

3. Views on the Ireland – Scotland relationship – Closed questions

More than 1,000 responses were submitted to this joint bilateral review questionnaire. However, despite the large number of responses it should be highlighted that this engagement exercise is not representative of all views across both countries. Thus, all trends in the data as laid out below only relate to the self-selected sample, and cannot be applied to the whole of the Scottish or Irish population.

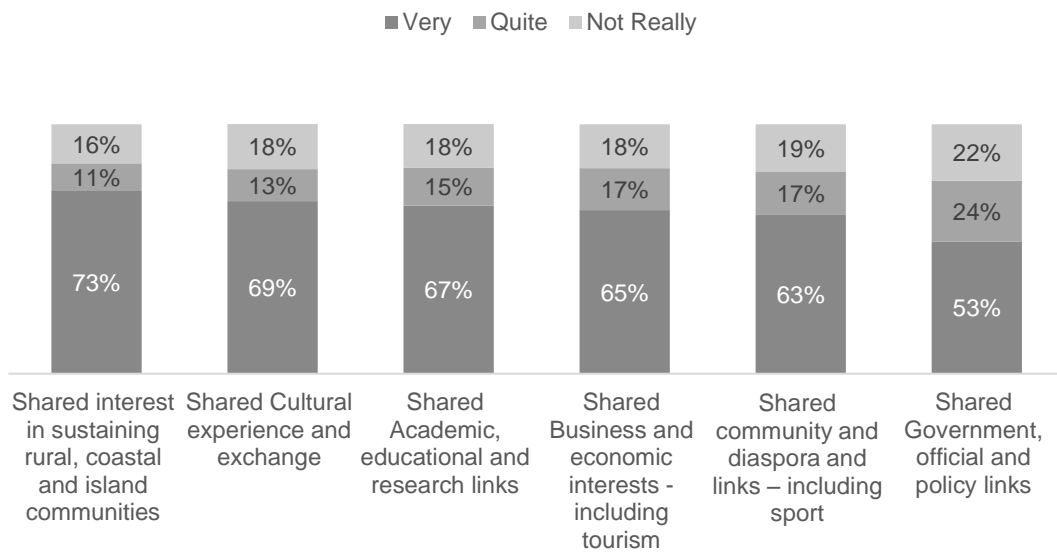
3.1 Positive views of the Scotland – Ireland relationship

Overall, those who responded to this questionnaire had a positive view of the Scotland-Ireland relationship, with 79% viewing it as positive overall, and 39% viewing it as very positive. Only 7% of respondents viewed the relationship negatively. Fourteen percent were neutral.

Over 90% of respondents based in Ireland viewed the relationship positively compared to just over 75% of respondents based in Scotland. Of those who viewed it poorly, 2% were based in Ireland and 9% based in Scotland.

When asked to rank how important various aspects of the relationship were, a **shared interest in sustaining rural, coastal and island communities** recorded the highest support from respondents, with 73% considering this **very important** (see Figure 4 below).

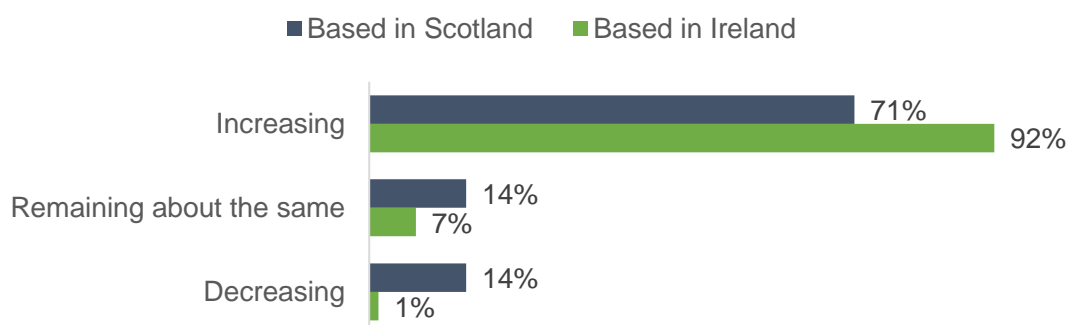
Figure 4: The relative importance of aspects of the Scotland-Ireland relationship – all respondents



Sustaining rural, coastal and island communities was deemed the most important aspect of the relationship among both respondents based in Ireland (88%) and based in Scotland (69%). Cultural experience and exchange was seen as the second most important aspect with the second most selections as ‘very important’ from both sets of respondents (81% of those based in Ireland and 65% of those based in Scotland). Respondents thought that government, official and policy links were quite important but over a fifth thought they were not really important.

When asked how they view the relevance of the **relationship in the coming five years, more than three-quarters of respondents viewed it as increasing in importance (see figure 5)**. That view was most strongly held among respondents based in Ireland at 92%, compared to 71% of those based in Scotland.

Figure 5: Expected change in the relevance of the Ireland-Scotland relationship in the next five years – Scotland and Ireland based responses³

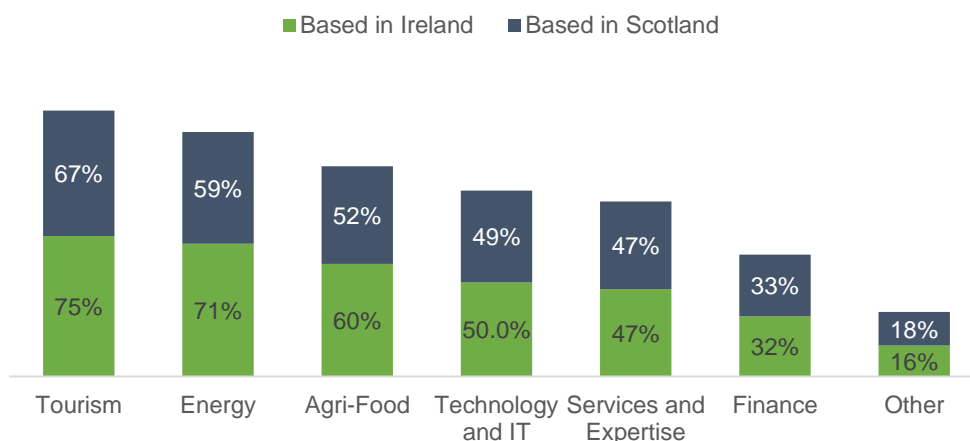


³ Not included in this figure are the 70 responses based elsewhere. Of these, 77% view relationships as increasing, 16% as remaining the same and 4% as decreasing.

3.2 Respondents' Interests in Economic Cooperation by Sector

When asked where they thought the relationship would expand economically, most respondents identified the tourism sector. Three-quarters (75%) of respondents based in Ireland and two-thirds (67%) of respondents based in Scotland thought that Tourism was the most likely sector to expand, the highest total for each country. Energy was next at 62% (71% for those based in Ireland and 59% for Scotland-based respondents). The sector identified by respondents as being least likely to expand was Finance, with a third of respondents identifying this as an area of expansion (see Figure 6 below).

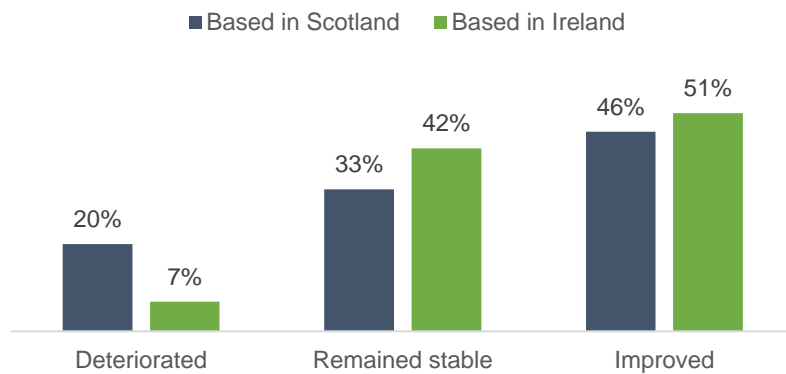
Figure 6: Expected sectoral expansion of economic relationship – Scotland and Ireland based responses⁴



Respondents in each country were asked about the image of the other country in their own over the recent past (Figure 7). Nearly half of all respondents thought the image of the other country had improved. Just over half (51%) of Ireland based respondents thought the image of Scotland in Ireland had improved compared to 47% of Scotland based respondents who thought Ireland's image in Scotland had improved. About a fifth of respondents thought that the other country's image had deteriorated.

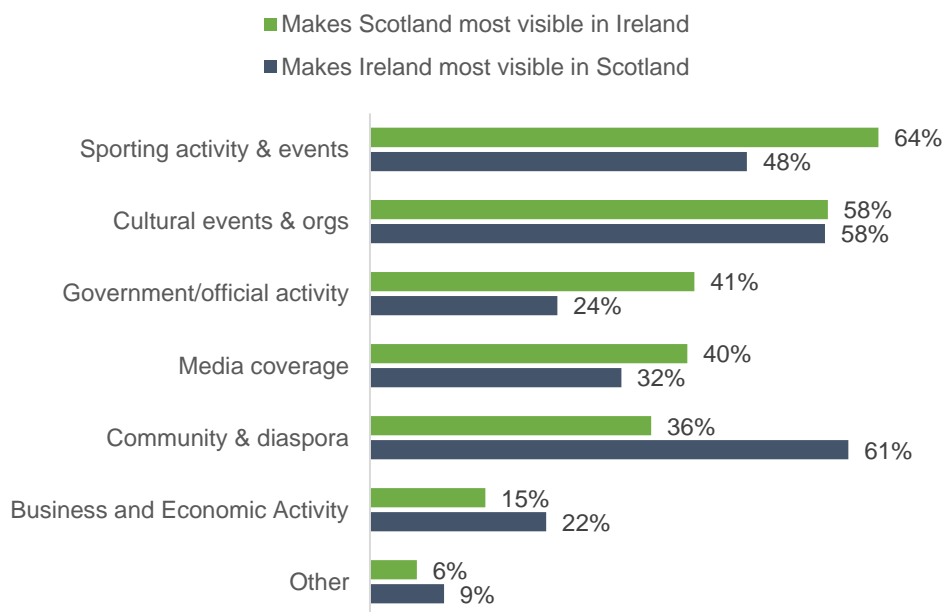
⁴ Not included in this figure are the 70 responses based elsewhere, of which 67% expect the economic relationship to expand in the Energy sector, 67% in Tourism, 41% in Services and Expertise, 41% in Technology and IT, 31% in Finance, 60% in Agri-food, and 33% in 'other'.

Figure 7: Views on the change in Scotland's and Ireland's image over the past few years – Scotland and Ireland based responses



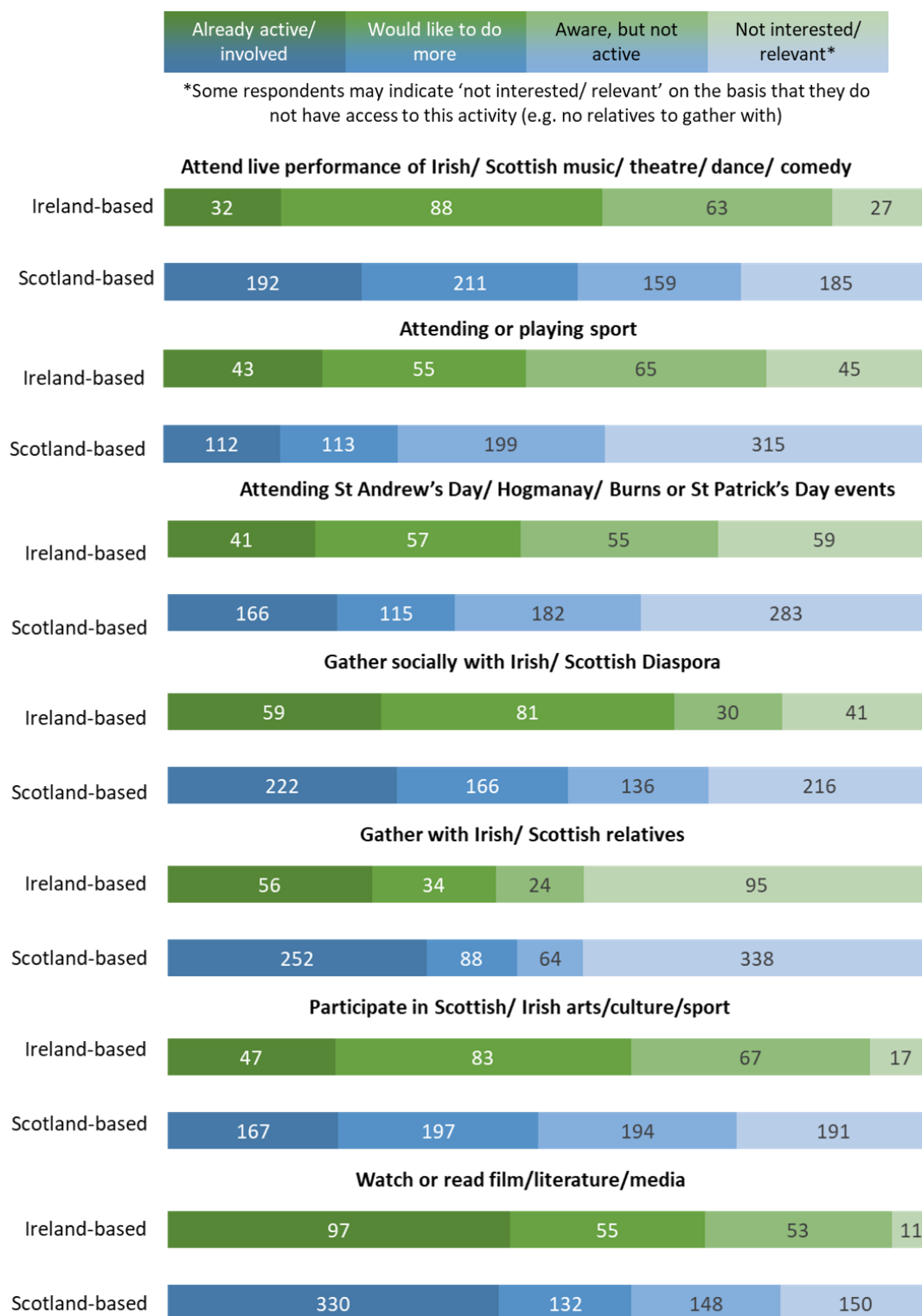
When asked what made the other country most visible in the country they are based in, there was a divide by location (see Figure 8). Scotland-based respondents said the most visible element of Ireland in Scotland was community and diaspora activity (61%). However, Ireland-based respondents said that sporting activity and events were the most visible element of Scotland in Ireland (64%). Over half of respondents in both countries thought cultural events and organisations were a visible element of the other country. Business and economic activities were viewed as the least visible element of presence in each country. It should be noted here that the vast majority of responses to the online engagement exercise were submitted by individuals, not by organisations (see section 2.2).

Figure 8: Activity that makes Ireland and Scotland most visible – Scotland and Ireland based responses



Individuals and organisations were asked to indicate how they engaged with the other country and trends appear to be similar between the Ireland-based and the Scotland-based samples. Those who answered the questionnaire as individuals were asked to select from a list of cultural and community-related options (Figure 9). Organisations and individuals were both invited to indicate what business, academic or official means of engaging with the other country they rely on (Figure 10).

Figure 9: How respondents personally engage with Scotland, Ireland – Scotland and Ireland based responses



Of the 219 answers submitted by individuals based in Ireland (Figure 9), the most common way respondents engage with Scotland is by watching or reading film/ literature and engaging with media (97 responses, 44%). This was followed by gathering with the Scottish diaspora (59 responses, 27%) or Scottish relatives (56

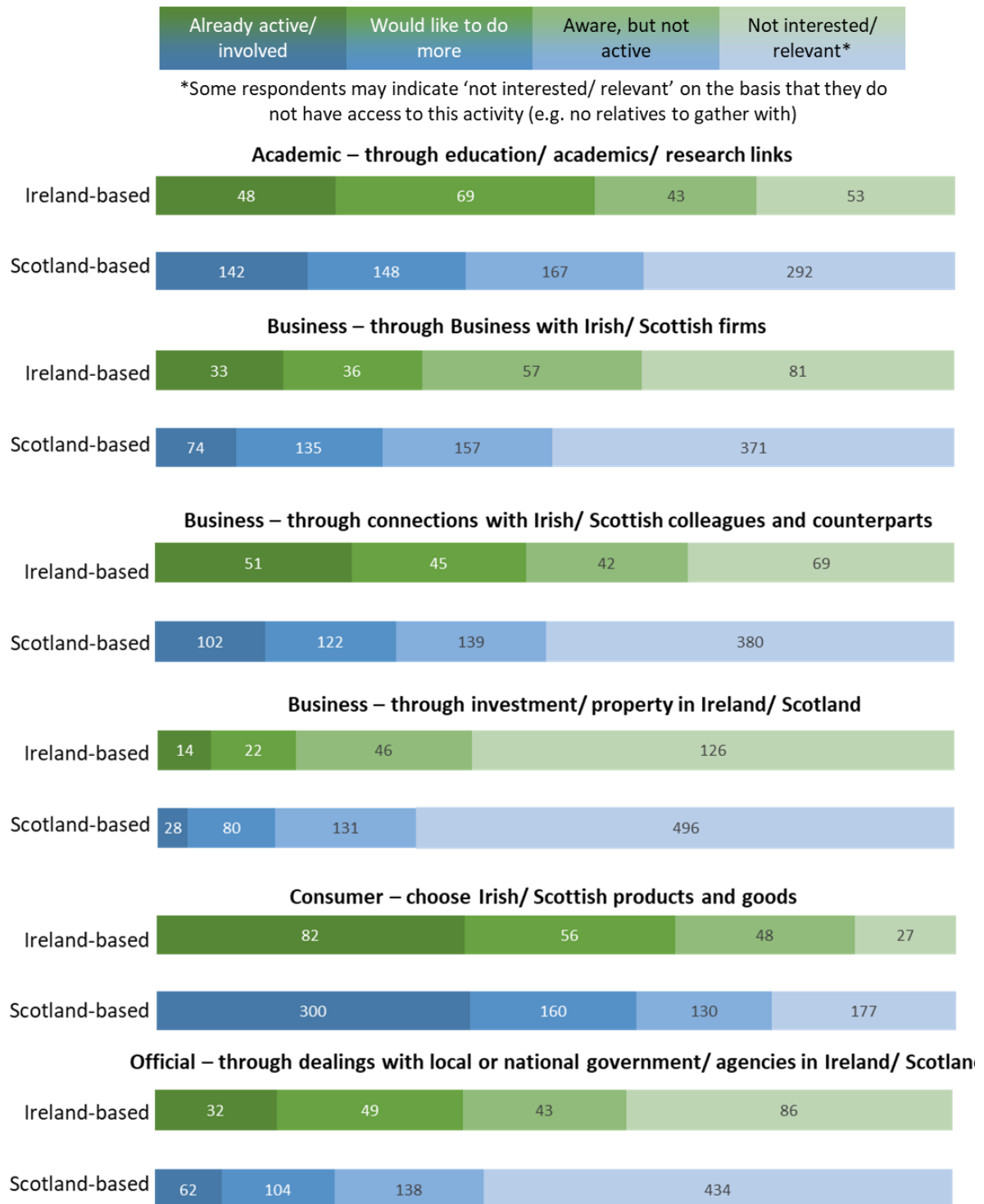
responses, 26%). Only 32 individuals (15%) indicated they already attend live performances of Scottish music, theatre, dance and/or comedy, but 88 respondents (40%) would like to do this more often in the future, followed by 83 (38%) who would like to participate in Scottish arts/culture and sport.

A total of 779 individuals based in Scotland offered their views on the same question. Similarly to the Ireland-based sample, watching or reading film/literature and media is the most common way individuals use to engage with Ireland (330 responses, 42%), followed by gathering with the Irish diaspora (222 responses, 28%) or Irish relatives (252 responses, 32%). Only 112 (14%) already actively attend or play sport to engage with Ireland.

Organisations and individuals were also given the opportunity to indicate if they engage with the other country through academic, official, consumer or business routes (Figure 10 below). Eighty-two of the respondents based in Ireland are already engaging with Scotland as consumers of Scottish products and goods, followed by 51 respondents who get involved through connections with Scottish colleagues and counterparts and 48 through academic links. Involvement through investment/property seemed to be the least engaged option with 126 respondents indicating they were not interested or it was not relevant to them.

Looking at the Scotland-based sample, the trend is similar with 300 respondents already choosing Irish products and goods, followed by 142 respondents with active academic links and 102 with business links. Property and investment was not of interest to 496 respondents, and 434 respondents were not engaging with Ireland through official links through local or national government/agencies in Ireland.

Figure 10: How respondents (including organisations) engage with Ireland, Scotland – Ireland and Scotland based respondents



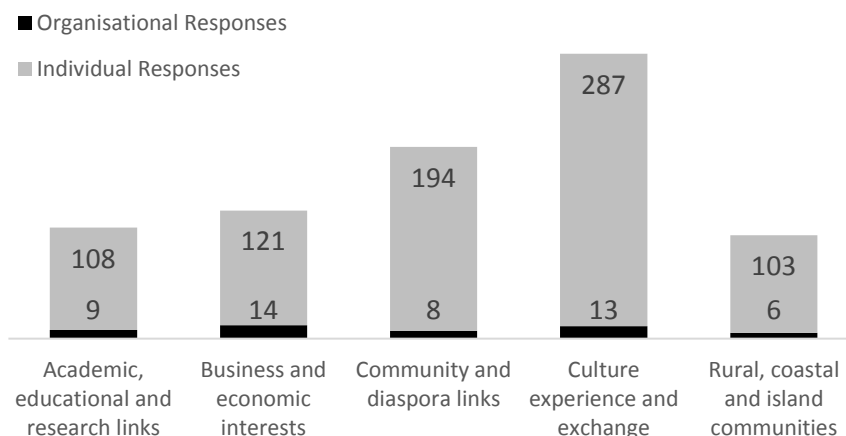
4. Insights in five thematic areas – Open Questions

Respondents were able to contribute their views on up to five themes. Respondents offered views on some, all or none of the five themes. Of all respondents (719), 68% commented on one theme, 10% contributed to two themes, 2% to three themes and 1% to four themes. Ten respondents (0.5%) offered their views on all five themes. A total of 577 respondents also took the opportunity to suggest any other areas beyond the five themes where Ireland and Scotland should collaborate, or could increase their collaboration. It needs to be highlighted, however, that not all responses submitted within the five themes always addressed the themes, and some contributions went beyond the scope of this review, reflecting personal views or opinions, often on unilateral, domestic policy considerations.

Whilst contributions sometimes overlapped between the themes, some themes received more responses than others. Figure 11 below illustrates that most contributions were received for the theme ‘Culture, experience and exchange’ with 287 responses, followed by ‘community and diaspora links’ with 194 responses. The remaining three themes received between 103 and 121 contributions.

Fifty comments on the themes were received from the 38 organisations that took part in the review, alongside responses from organisations submitted directly via email. These contributions to the questionnaire are included in the figures above and in Figure 11. Most popular themes for organisational responses were ‘Culture, experience and exchange’ with 13 contributions, followed by ‘Business and economic interests’ with 14 contributions and ‘Academic, educational and research links’ with nine responses. ‘Rural, coastal and island communities’ received six contributions and ‘Communities and diaspora links’ eight.

Figure 11 Comments received across the five themes



Some respondents provided comments within one theme which were more relevant to another. In such cases the contribution was reallocated to the better-suited theme

and analysed accordingly. The comments for each theme were analysed, and a number of sub-themes emerged. The following sections of this report present a summary of these sub-themes. Where relevant, information from the quantitative data generated in the Citizen Space questionnaire are referenced to illustrate links across the data, and examples are drawn from across the full range of responses and offered as examples of the range of views.

4.1 Business and economic interests

The theme 'Business and economic interests' received 135 responses to open questions. The questionnaire closed at the time the Covid-19 lockdown began. However, prior to this happening, most respondents identified the tourism sector as an area they expected to see the most economic growth in in the coming years. Concerns about post-Brexit trade and business collaboration also featured in responses.

As pointed out in Figure 4, 65% of respondents believe business and economic interests to be very important for the relationship between Scotland and Ireland, but only 15% of respondents based in Ireland and 22% of respondents in Scotland thought this sector increases the visibility of the countries.

Trade and business

Contributions on the Business theme often mentioned that Ireland and Scotland were already established trade partners with many existing business links and connections. In the past, both countries faced some common challenges including rural outmigration, although recent decades have seen patterns change.

There was broad support expressed for the practice of having business and trade delegations, and support for more regular visits and promotion of expertise. There was also positive reference to a number of organisations active in supporting business links, as well as the Scottish Government Office in Dublin and the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh. In terms of trade links, respondents identified agriculture and fishing, energy, tourism and the exploration of ways to support businesses as key areas for potential growth and deeper collaboration between Ireland and Scotland.

Respondents mentioned many potential areas of collaboration to address the shared challenges. Specifically, a number of responses saw potential in future collaborations in the areas of food and agriculture, finance, technology, manufacturing, tourism, renewable energy and transport. While more of the responses to open questions on this theme would like to see stronger links between Ireland and Scotland, some also framed their views in relation to Scotland's role within the UK.

Transport

Transport was one of the topics mentioned most often in contributions across all themes. This included internal transport issues and connectivity between Scotland and Ireland. The shared challenges presented by the geography of the two countries was mentioned alongside examples of existing cross-learning (e.g. for light rail schemes) and areas of potential expertise sharing (e.g. for transport links to the islands).

Affordability of travel and availability of travel links featured strongly within this theme. Certain transport-related contributions from those based in Ireland, Scotland and elsewhere expressed a wish for better and cheaper transport links to connect tourism, businesses, students, families and organisations, and particularly to connect less urban parts of the countries. In relation to travel between Scotland and Ireland specifically, respondents mentioned the cost of transit, shipping charges and the range of routes for flights. Ideas offered to address this ranged from sharing expertise on transport, to specifically exploring the possibility of a cross-national travel entitlement card for specific groups. A number of views both in favour and opposed to the idea of constructing a bridge between Scotland and the island of Ireland were received. Infrastructure projects such as this are out of scope for this review.

Respondents voiced concerns around any possible changes to travel arrangements that they perceived could arise for them in the context of Brexit. These were general concerns, and the Common Travel Area's maintenance of freedom of travel between Great Britain and the island of Ireland for Irish and UK citizens was not mentioned explicitly in these contributions. Relatedly, however, there were some further concerns expressed across the business and economic interests theme generally, in particular on the possibility that any additional bureaucracy may impact on business collaboration when the Brexit Transition Period ends. Though these responses account for observations only up to March 2020, several respondents were explicitly seeking support for what they interpreted as Brexit-related challenges, arguing for the better promotion of existing collaborations, and more funding and resources for post-Transition Period readiness.

Business Cooperation

Regarding business support, many organisations were mentioned that are already establishing business links and support between the two countries, and that can be referred to as positive examples to learn from. The organisation commended the most for bringing together Ireland and Scotland was Causeway: Ireland Scotland Business Exchange. Other organisations that were mentioned positively were the Scottish Business Network, Enterprise Ireland, the British-Irish Chamber of Commerce, and the Irish International Business Network (IIBN). Several multilateral fora, including the British-Irish Council, were also viewed as vital tools for bilateral collaboration and mentioned across several themes, while both the Consulate

General of Ireland in Edinburgh and the Scottish Government Office in Dublin were commended for their support for business collaboration.

In terms of sectoral support, several contributions highlighted the relevance and potential of more collaboration in the financial sector in particular, including the development of fintech. Suggestions for initiatives in this sector included bilateral cross-government and cross-institutional activity ranging from engagement with the industry to ethical finance initiatives. More generally, collaboration between Ireland's and Scotland's government departments supporting business was viewed positively, and a range of areas of focus were suggested – such as how incubator level companies, or women's business networks can be better nurtured.

Tourism

Tourism was consistently mentioned across all themes, and responses made connections between supporting the arts, language and heritage in both countries to underpin the tourism experience. The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) referred to the success of a three year marine and coastal tourism collaboration between its Centre for Recreation and Tourism Research (CRTR) and Limerick and Donegal County Councils, along with 15 other partners, and part-financed by the Atlantic Area Interreg programme. A range of views pointed to the perceived strengths of each country's tourism 'offer' and that expertise could be better shared. Suggestions included that Ireland could learn from how Scotland promotes its heritage sites, and from how Scotland has developed its marine tourism. Respondents suggested Scotland could learn from the Irish approach including on how live music events underpin the tourism offer. One response highlighted the potential for either country to join existing initiatives, and suggested that Scotland could join an intended collaboration between Ireland and Norway on Norse Gaelic Tourism.

Beyond sharing expertise, respondents expressed enthusiasm for exploring shared tourism opportunities between Ireland and Scotland, perhaps building on strengthened collaboration in the culture, sports and arts sectors. Respondents identified a range of areas where they considered collaboration would enhance the visitor experience across 'both sites', exploring common heritage, food and drink specialities, and the coastline environments. Some appetite was expressed for the explicit development of shared programming, and collaboration on transport links with the visitor experience in mind.

4.2 Community and diaspora links

The theme 'community and diaspora links' received 202 contributions to open questions. Contributions to this theme overlapped substantially with contributions to the theme 'Culture, experience and exchange', especially on the role of Gaelic, traditions, music and sports.

As seen in Figure 4, 63% of all respondents to this review believe that 'community and diaspora links' are very important to the relationship between the two countries, in contrast to 19% who view the theme as not really important. More respondents based in Scotland believe that community and diaspora make Ireland the most visible in Scotland (61%), compared to only 36% of those based in Ireland who think community and diaspora make Scotland the most visible in Ireland (see Figure 8).

Migration and Diaspora

Many of the contributions across all themes mentioned the shared links between Ireland and Scotland due to migration flows. This has led to many family links between the two 'nations of migrants' and to large diasporas in Ireland and Scotland. Figure 9 above indicates that over half of Ireland and Scotland based respondents to the questionnaire already engage, or would like to engage more, with relatives and diaspora. A shared identity was often mentioned in the comments.

Ireland's engagement with its global diaspora was cited as an example which Scotland could follow by several respondents. Responses drew comparisons with how Irish diaspora are visible and supported in countries such as the USA, while one response commended the Irish International Business Network's (IIBN) diaspora model as an example of effective business linking. A number of responses mentioned Irish community projects (such as those in Coatbridge) as examples of successful local initiatives in Scotland, and while some responses expressed a desire for more activity outwith the central belt, there was overall appreciation for the activity already underway.

Events

Across the themes, festivals and events were frequently raised as examples of positive experiences of community exchange, and many events were offered as examples that were valued and enjoyed such as St Patrick's Day or St Andrew's Day. In the closed questions of the questionnaire, 166 of the 779 Scotland-based respondents who answered this question said they already attended St Patrick's Day events and a further 115 would like to do so. Of the 219 answers received from Ireland-based respondents, 41 already attended St Andrew's Day/Hogmanay/Burns events, and there were 57 who would like to attend these in the future. The comments in this theme overlapped with those offered under the 'culture experience and exchange' theme, and music and the arts were prominent in the examples provided. In particular, events connecting Ireland and Scotland were mentioned,

such as Feis Glaschú or the Fleadh Cheoil, but also local community level events, such as exchange visits of local Karate clubs or Shinty/Hurling events. Beyond the arts, a number of responses cited specific Ireland-Scotland events which respondents felt had been successful - such as the Scottish Centre for European Relations – Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) joint event on Brexit. The Hiberno-Scottish Mission in Europe; a mission that was led by Irish and Scottish monks during the Middle Ages, was referenced as part of the shared heritage that should be celebrated.

There was considerable enthusiasm across the responses, particularly among those based in Scotland, for future collaboration on events specifically. Many suggestions were made on initiating or extending existing programming, and using community-based venues, such as libraries, more. Support for ‘twinning’ of schools, communities and colleges as well as towns was expressed.

Government and Organisations

More than 300 contributions referred to the role of governments, local communities and organisations in relation to governance, community development and diaspora support. Comments often referred to examples of good practice in both countries, alongside a general desire to learn from what each country does well. Most respondents on this topic also expressed a desire for more government and organisational initiatives, further and deeper bilateral collaboration between government departments, with some preferring more central coordination of projects. A number of responses noted the various ways in which each government engages with the public, suggesting opportunities for sharing of expertise between the jurisdictions. At the local authority level, the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) suggested that establishing learning networks for local government and partners in both countries, and utilising online communications would be of significant benefit across a range of shared policy challenges. These virtual networks could be further fostered through secondments and exchanges of key staff.

At community level, contributions referenced the potential for exchanging ideas on initiatives regarding the connectivity of people in rural areas, with extant initiatives in Scotland noted specifically for their likely value to Ireland to support rural communities with business development and connectivity. Many responses, including the organisational response submitted by Historic Environment Scotland, ask for collaboration between the public sector, government, local authorities, third and private sector for engaging and supporting communities at local level. These responses argued that best practice examples should be shared more widely between both countries.

Communities

Throughout the responses to open questions across the themes, views were provided on the prevalence of perceived sectarian division in communities known to

respondents. The majority of these views were expressed in the Scotland-based responses, and the references to Ireland were most often made in relation to the history and traditions of Northern Ireland specifically, although shared Scots and Gaelic traditions were also mentioned. The views and ideas offered extended to a range of institutions, practice and precedent, covering sports, education and cultural expression. Of those responses that expressed concern about the effects of community divisions that had been observed, a number argued that this was reason for both governments to work together to tackle intolerance and hate, while finding ways to recognise and respect a broad range of cultural practices.

4.3 Culture experience and exchange

The 'culture experience and exchange' theme attracted 300 qualitative responses overall - more contributions than any of the other themes. It also received a number of substantial email submissions from organisations, and these are highlighted where applicable. Contributions to this theme, and the 'Community and Diaspora links' theme often overlapped substantially, particularly in relation to language, arts, history, heritage and sports. Responses focused on those topics have been analysed under this theme. According to Figure 2, 69% of all respondents to this review believe that cultural experience and exchange are very important to the relationship between the two countries, in contrast to 18% who view the theme as not really important. This makes this theme the second most important matter to respondents after 'rural, coastal and island communities'. When asked in the closed questions of the questionnaire how respondents personally engaged with the other country, engaging with 'film, literature and media' was the most common method with over four in ten of respondents based in each country saying they already did so. Ireland-based respondents expressed a wish to 'do more' in terms of engagement, and specifically wished to attend Scottish performances and participate in Scottish art/culture/sport, with 40% and 38% respectively wishing to do more in those fields. Scotland-based respondents also identified these two categories of (Irish) activities as something they would like to do more of.

Language

The strength of connection between Ireland and Scotland through language featured strongly in responses across all themes, and across the topics within 'culture experience and exchange'. In the analysis of the responses to the open questions, 'Gaelic', 'Gaeilge' 'Gàidhlig', 'Scots', 'Ulster-Scots' and the phrases 'shared language' and 'shared culture' predominated. Responses provided existing collaborations to demonstrate the strength of this connection, while also generally commending that these languages be taught and used more widely. The Colmcille partnership programme between Foras na Gaeilge and Bòrd na Gàidhlig was among

the opportunities cited to celebrate the 1,500th birthday of St. Columba between 7 December 2020 and 7 December 2021.

The Irish approach to protect and promote the Irish language was noted in a number of Scotland-based responses, and the work of Údarás na Gaeltachta in Ireland was noted as of interest. Respondents suggested that Scotland could, for example, learn from the Gaeltacht scheme in Ireland and a response from Bòrd na Gàidhlig (in Scotland) noted the objectives in its National Gaelic Language Plan, and offered to share expertise further. The value of using social media and online resources in promoting Gaelic was mentioned, and while some contributors seemed unaware of the existing collaboration between BBC Alba and TG4, it was broadly encouraged. Conradh na Gaeilge Glaschú was referenced as an organisation promoting the Irish language in Scotland.

History and heritage

Celtic traditions, shared history and heritage were common themes and mentioned in many responses, and this topic attracted a number of substantive organisational responses also, such as from Historic Environment Scotland (HES), National Trust for Scotland, and the Scottish Poetry Library. Responses from individuals generally expressed support for capitalising on the respective and shared heritage of both countries, which was recognised as rich and diverse. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) highlighted the existing connections to the Office of Public Works (OPW), to Irish World Heritage Sites through UNESCO World Heritage and to the National Monuments Service, demonstrating the strong foundations established for future collaboration. Knowledge and skills are already shared across various areas such as traditional materials and World Heritage Management, and HES notes that both national agencies have adopted similar approaches to supporting local-led heritage groups, providing operational and technical advice alongside funding. UHI's submission referenced the 'Boyne to Brodgar' combined research and community development initiative which involves partners from both Ireland and Scotland. HES also mentioned that their Estates Peer Review process involves a panel of external experts carrying out assessments of the conservation and visitor management projects. Regarding archaeological links, HES points at the strategic partnership between CiFA and the Institute of Archaeologists (Ireland). The National Trust for Scotland suggested both countries learn from the historic trends of migration, and in particular learn from those families who settled in Scotland, to understand what life was like for them prior to their departure from Ireland.

Arts, Dance and Music

Strong support was expressed for further arts collaboration between the two countries, especially in relation to traditional forms of dance and music, which attracted almost 300 mentions alone. In particular, Irish music and dancing was popular in responses from Scotland and cultural music events such as the Fleadh Cheoil, as well as organisations such as Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, were all

mentioned as good exemplars of bringing together dance and music from both countries. There was also support for musical collaboration beyond the Celtic traditions, and the rich heritage of pipe bands in particular was recognised in a number of contributions, with support for closer working and touring between the countries expressed. With regard to classical music it was noted that the Scottish Opera performs in Dublin, and more broadly, that major events such as Celtic Connections and the Edinburgh Festival(s) attract many performers from Ireland every year.

Looking ahead, there was strong and consistent demand for more joint programming and more funding across these sectors, and both individuals and organisations expressed the view that there would be an audience for more provision. In relation to closer working between the commissioning broadcasters, there was interest expressed in further and more innovative collaboration between TG4, Raidió na Gaeltachta and BBC Alba. Responses from individuals based in both Scotland and Ireland provided a broad range of ideas and initiatives ranging from travel bursaries through Fèisean nan Gàidheal support for traditional music exchanges, cultural summer schools exchange models to joint festivals. A number of respondents argued that live music in smaller venues should be explicitly supported, alongside suggestions to focus on youth based collaboration. Among the Scotland-based contributions there is a clear demand for visiting performances to tour beyond Scotland's central belt. These views align with those expressed in the closed questions of the online questionnaire also (see Chapter 3). More than 500 of the 779 Scotland-based respondents and 171 of the 219 Ireland-based respondents expressed interest in attending a live performance of Irish or Scottish music/theatre/dance/comedy and participating in Irish or Scottish arts/culture/sport.

Sport

As discussed in Chapter 3, sporting activities are widely appreciated as helping to increase the countries' visibility. Sixty-four percent of respondents believe that sporting activities and events are the most effective in making Scotland the most visible in Ireland and 46% believe this is true for Ireland in Scotland. Half of the Ireland-based responses to the closed questions are aware of or already attend and play sports as a way of engaging with Scotland, and a further quarter of respondents wish to do so more often. Of the Scotland-based respondents, a quarter are aware of but not yet active in sport as a way of engaging with Ireland, while 112 already attend or play a sport related to Ireland, and 113 wish to do so more often in the future.

There were a range of views expressed in the responses to the open questions, in relation to the role of sports. The contributions which referred to rugby were consistent in their support for this as a positive link between Ireland and Scotland. The central role of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and the Camanachd Association linking hurling and shinty were noted, both for promoting these sports, but also for the collaborative work between sporting communities in Scotland and

Ireland. The strength, and growing popularity, of the GAA in Scotland was referenced by many respondents.

The responses from individuals which referred to football (soccer) spanned a wide range of views. While some contributions praised the role of soccer, and how people valued their strong connections to particular teams, other Scotland-based responses expressed the strong view that some Scottish clubs' rivalry may serve to contribute to sectarian tribalism that can detract from a positive perception of both countries. Others, again, argue that these clubs are potentially critical to tackling sectarian and offensive behaviour, citing the 'Everyone, Anyone' campaign by Rangers Football Club as an example of good work tackling racism.

4.4 Rural, coastal and island communities

Seventy-three percent of all respondents believed that 'rural, coastal and island communities' are very important for the relationship between Ireland and Scotland, which is the highest rating for any of the five themes. Only 16% thought it was not relevant.

This theme received 134 qualitative contributions. It also needs to be noted that many submissions under the remaining four themes could have been allocated to this theme, for example around climate change, tourism, language and heritage. Contributions across this theme highlighted that rural communities share a rural identity and that historical connections are valued between Ireland and Scotland's rural communities. Responses also referred, in general, to coastal contacts and networks between local businesses and communities. Across the responses on this theme there were references to various EU funded schemes Scotland and Ireland currently participate in (such as LEADER scheme for rural communities), and certain views noted the uncertainty around continuation of Ireland-Scotland cooperation in this area once the Brexit Transition Period ends.

Challenges – connectivity, depopulation and rural economy

Responses submitted under the theme 'rural, coastal and island communities' identified a number of challenges that both Irish and Scottish rural communities share. These are travel and connectivity, depopulation, and the pressure on service provision. These shared challenges were also identified in the UHI's submission which referred to the university's Island Strategy, suggesting learning that could be applied in Ireland and with other nations.

Comments on the challenges faced by the rural economy both praised the vibrant rural economies found in both countries, while some responses expressed concern at an 'over-reliance' on tourism in these and coastal communities. Collaborations facilitated through the EU funding programmes, such as the promotion of Community

Led Local Development programmes, were cited as valuable in a number of responses. Support for future collaboration to support rural development post-Brexit was also expressed, with one example specifically suggesting the establishment of Scotland-Ireland local action groups.

Regarding digital connectivity, there was a shared view among respondents that both governments and countries would benefit from addressing this challenge together, sharing expertise and experience. Specific proposals referenced the value of further formal structured cooperation in the area of rural development and connectivity as a potential mechanism to tackle this shared challenge. This approach, focusing on structured cooperation was also proposed among the responses that addressed the shared challenges of depopulation. Contributions relating to population sustainability in island, remote and rural areas acknowledged the need to address service provision in these areas. Therefore, suggestions to share policy learning in health and social care and housing provision accompanied a general appetite expressed to share strategies on 'depopulation' specifically. Generally there was broad enthusiasm for tackling shared challenges together, with one organisation suggesting for Ireland to look into the Scottish Islands Bill for its potential to improve the economy and wellbeing of island communities, and others proposing a focus on Scotland's greater islands populations, and Ireland's Údarás na Gaeltachta structures.

Agriculture, fishing and food & drink

Contributions related to agriculture, food and drink highlighted that Ireland and Scotland have much in common with regard to land use, hill farming, crofting, and fishing, and that these commonalities potentially underpin significant opportunities for collaboration across many parts of these sectors. While a number of responses highlighted the challenges in the fishing industry there was strong support across the responses to collaborate in these sectors, noting the markets for export and tourism that Scotland and Ireland share.

A number of respondents felt that technical expertise on aquaculture and horticulture could be better shared – particularly in relation to sustainable approaches and practices - and it was mentioned that Scotland could learn from Irish hill farming and from locally-led agri-environment approaches in particular. Certain respondents suggested that, in their view, Highland and Island Enterprise (HIE), the Crofters Commission in Scotland, and Údarás na Gaeltachta in Ireland are key organisations that could usefully share knowledge and best practice. In terms of business models to explore, support for exploring the potential of social enterprises was expressed in a small number of responses, alongside a number of contributions that highlighted the opportunities for specific sectors (for example dairy and whisk(e)y). The potential to exploit the marketing value of the connection through seafood, wild-organic west coast foods, whisk(e)y and artisan foods was mentioned several times, with one

respondent proposing the establishment of a dedicated and branded collaborative enterprise.

Climate Change

Many responses referred to climate change and the environment in both general and specific terms. Comments were received across the themes, particularly in relation to 'business and economic interests' and 'academic, educational and research links', but given that most of the examples and ideas offered referred to rural and coastal communities, this topic is addressed under this theme. Generally, the contributions highlighted that Scotland and Ireland, with their similar geographies and population sizes, could collaborate in the shared fight against climate change and together realise the potential of renewable energies and sustainable technologies. These responses also included references to environmental protection, and respondents were keen to see the sharing of policy directed at the climate crisis, such as through Ireland's peatland protection and restoration schemes. The challenge of supporting tourism in rural areas, while developing renewable energy infrastructure in these places, was recognised in a number of responses. Whilst few existing connections were illustrated, respondents pointed to many examples to learn from or to develop in the future. These included the existing Ocean Power Innovation Network, a three-year initiative bringing together cross-sectoral and cross-regional collaboration in the field of marine energy, including partners in Scotland, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. Responses tended to suggest that Scotland had much expertise and experience to share with Ireland in the areas of renewable energy and marine energy in particular. The various energy projects underway in Orkney were mentioned as a positive example for other island and coastal communities to learn from.

Respondents see potential for future collaboration in various areas, such as decarbonising the energy system in rural areas and islands, and cooperating on marine science and renewable energy generation, making use of hydrogen, wind and water energy, for example. Contributions highlighted the need for funding for these projects and for sharing skilled engineers and knowledge.

A number of responses suggested the establishment of collaborative mechanisms between governments to meet the climate challenge, such as Historic Environment Scotland proposing a platform to be facilitated by both governments to support the work on climate change that HES and Irish counterparts in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are undertaking.

4.5 Academic, educational and research links

Contributions to the theme ‘academic, educational and research links’ were relatively substantial and detailed. In total, 117 responses to open questions were received through the online questionnaire. This theme also attracted a number of organisational responses submitted via email. Of all respondents, 67% thought this area is ‘very important’ to the relationship between the two countries. Approximately a quarter of Ireland-based respondents were actively engaged with academic and research links, while around one fifth of the Scotland-based respondents did so. Nearly a third of Ireland-based respondents said they would like to be more engaged with Scottish academia (32%). This category also scored highest among Scotland-based respondents in what they would like to do more of, with 19% reporting they wanted to be more engaged with Irish academia.

Respondents providing answers to the open questions pointed out most often the wide range of existing collaborations and exchanges. Under this theme the majority of responses expressed concern about any possibility for alteration in participation in EU-based funding once the transition period ends, and the potential impact on Scotland and on bilateral academic engagement between both countries.

Institutions and universities

Contributions to the theme ‘academic, educational and research links’ focused largely on the role of institutions and universities and often stressed the role of EU-funded networks. Responses from individuals highlighted specific projects or mentioned institutional expertise that could be shared (examples included use of technology and inclusion policy). A joint submission by the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh highlighted that Scotland and Ireland rank in the top 20 global countries in the 2018 Incites Essential Science indicators, and that both countries share a focus on research, development and innovation as an enabler and key driver of economic growth and prosperity as well as social and cultural ambitions.

Many links and collaborations were mentioned, and offered as examples of good practice in the responses received through the questionnaire and via email, albeit alongside comments expressing concern about the risks to EU-based collaborative funding in the future. Examples included:

- UK-Ireland Collaboration in the Digital Humanities
- The Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies (RIISS) at the University of Aberdeen
- Collaborations which include Northern Ireland such as the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the Science Foundation Ireland Centres for Doctoral Training (EPSRC-SFI CDT)
- The EU-funded Bryden Centre

- The SPIRE 2 project involving Ulster University, Queen's University Belfast and University of Strathclyde
- The cross-border research and innovation project Renewable Engine for knowledge transfer and technology development
- The European programme Climate KIC that includes Ireland and Scotland
- Links between Glasgow University and the University College Dublin for example through the Universitas 21 network
- links between Tyndall institute (UCC) and Glasgow universities (Strathclyde)

A number of responses pointed to the existing cross-institutional arrangements already in place that would be ready to support further and deeper collaboration across the jurisdictions – these included the recently formed Celtic Academies Alliance (made up of the RSE, RIA and the Learned Society of Wales) and the Irish Universities Association.

Across responses, a wide variety of ideas were offered on how to connect universities and institutions further, especially post-Brexit. There were a number of suggestions focused at institutional level, supporting events to bring together a range of potential collaborators (such as institution leaders, academics and delivery professionals) to plan bilateral bids and initiatives. Many of these responses focused on ways to develop innovative collaborative funding mechanisms (for example to address diversity, travel costs or seed corn funding), and a number included collaboration examples from other countries that Ireland and Scotland could explore.

Many respondents, including the University of Edinburgh and University College Dublin in their joint submission, expressed concern at the security of future funding for Erasmus and other EU-funded exchange initiatives such as KA203 the Network for Intercultural Competence to facilitate Entrepreneurship (NICE). Contributions from both countries emphasised the value of such exchanges and also the potential to learn from each other through the number of students enrolled in each other's universities and institutions.

A number of respondents referred to the potential for increased engagement between government and academia on policy matters. A range of policy areas that were considered particularly appropriate for this type of collaboration were proposed. Specific examples included the Scottish Imaging Network: A Platform for Scientific Excellence (SINAPSE) and the Dementia Research Network Ireland (DRNI). The general policy areas mentioned most frequently across the responses to open questions related to health and social care, and aspects of the criminal justice systems.

Research

Generally, responses that focused on research were the most detailed across the entire engagement exercise, and wholly enthusiastic about the practice and potential of research endeavours across and between both countries. A number of research disciplines were referred to, ranging from arts and humanities, to social sciences, medicine, engineering and the natural sciences. Often, the shared research is funded by EU programmes such as Horizon 2020, the Fraunhofer network and others.

In terms of existing research offered as exemplars, responses focused on areas of common challenge where Scottish and Irish scholars are already collaborating on topics such as genealogy. Other 'common ground' was identified in the arts and humanities, where topics related to history, archaeology, literature, Gaelic, post-colonialism and decolonising spaces. Respondents referred to research based on shared natural assets, and mentioned projects on oceanography aquaculture, rural development and social farming, alongside industry-supported specialist research underway in the biotech and pharmaceutical fields.

The joint submissions received from the RSE and RIA, and from the University College Dublin (UCD) and the University of Edinburgh highlighted a range of collaborative funding arrangements across institutions and funders on a spectrum of cross-disciplinary research, tackling topics ranging from diaspora and migration experience to climate change mitigation. As an illustration of the extent of existing and fruitful collaboration, UCD and the University of Edinburgh cite that their institutions have co-authored 431 publications since 2016.

Such examples and responses tether their evidence of existing collaboration to a strong appetite for further bilateral engagement across institutions and jurisdictions. While a range of topics were suggested for further research investment (for example in areas as varied as hemochromatosis, linguistics and renewable energy), responses also pointed to the establishment of underpinning systems and approaches that would support bilateral collaboration. Therefore, alongside calls for better funding of collaborative research, support was expressed for the establishment of wider networks to include non-academic think tanks with academics, and also for mechanisms and symposiums to better connect researchers. In particular, RSE/RIA and UCD and University of Edinburgh support future initiatives that may spring from cross-government and cross-departmental projects with a policy focus. It was felt that this kind support and infrastructure could enable the development of a range of specific research areas and strengthen the knowledge base for both countries.

Learning

A number of responses within this theme focused their contributions on opportunities for better collaborative learning activity between and among learners in both countries, across the secondary and tertiary sectors in particular. These responses often connected to the 'community and diaspora links' and 'culture experience and exchange' themes, and ideas relating to language learning were common. References to existing connections tended to be general, although the links established by the Sabhal Mór Ostaig (main campus on Skye, Scotland) were specifically highlighted in one response. In terms of illustrating expertise that could be shared between Ireland and Scotland, the various programmes run in Ireland's Gaeltacht were mentioned most often, and in particular how the summer schemes have evolved over time, and continue to engage young people in a love of language and culture. A number of responses were keen to see exchange initiatives developed between educational establishments in both countries, arguing that these would benefit the teaching staff, as well as students and pupils. One proponent of exchange schemes highlighted that attention should be paid to access for such opportunities, especially for pupils from lower-income backgrounds. The responses that mentioned curriculum collaboration tended to focus on language, history and literature as topics where both countries' rich heritage and shared interest could be better shared.

5. Beyond the themes

The online questionnaire also provided the opportunity for respondents to identify 'other areas where Ireland and Scotland should collaborate, or could usefully increase their collaboration' outwith the five main policy themes which are the focus of the review, and 533 comments were submitted. A wide range of topics were identified. Where these aligned with the five review themes, contributions have been included in the previous sections. It needs to be highlighted that responses to the questionnaire are not representative of the Irish or Scottish public, and reflect the opinions and views of individual or organisational contributors.

Comments and views offered to this section of the online questionnaire were most often outwith the scope of the review, and related to international matters (such as peace building or international development endeavours). In certain cases, these suggestions fell outwith the jurisdiction or authority of either government, or beyond the remit of the Ireland-Scotland bilateral relationship. Many of the comments related to the UK's departure from the EU and the likely effects on Ireland, Scotland and the bilateral relationship. The vast majority of respondents who mentioned Brexit were concerned about the likely consequences for both countries, and expressed the hope that Scotland and Ireland would seek to work together to mitigate any negative effects of Brexit.

Many comments were also received on the constitutional arrangements in both Scotland and Ireland – these were also sometimes framed with reference to membership of the European Union. Such views spanned a broad spectrum of opinions, and while many of these focused on the prospect of change, a number stressed that on-going bilateral engagement and collaboration between both countries was essential for any constitutional scenario.

Annex A – Questionnaire

Strategic Review of Ireland - Scotland Relations

The questionnaire below is extracted from the Scottish Government Consultation Hub Citizen Space. The questionnaire is optimised for online usage. The presentation and design of the questionnaire below therefore does not reflect the user experience Citizen Space offers. It does however follow the same structure.

Question in sections 3 are exclusively posed to respondents based in Scotland wishing to express their views on Scotland, whereas section 4 only applies to respondents based in Ireland.

All other sections of the questionnaire will be posed to respondents regardless of whether they are based in Scotland, Ireland or somewhere else.

Overview

As part of the joint review of the Scotland – Ireland relationship—a collaborative first for both our Governments—this questionnaire is intended to gather the views of all those interested in how Ireland and Scotland associate, cooperate, and collaborate as close neighbours. Whatever your interest in Ireland – Scotland relations, we are keen to hear your views on how we work well together, what we might improve on, and how key aspects of the relationship might be suitably developed over the next 5 years.

The questionnaire is one strand of a broader engagement exercise being conducted by Scottish Government and the Government of Ireland to draw in a rich variety of experiences, views and ideas. Capturing the different views among the diversity of our peoples and residents will be a crucial step in guiding our conclusions. The results of this questionnaire will inform the ongoing joint review of Ireland - Scotland relations and will be incorporated into the joint report in due course. We anticipate that this review will be the beginning of an on-going dialogue between our countries, and in the first instance we are focusing on 5 main areas of activity:

- Business and economic interests
- community and diaspora links
- culture experience and exchange
- rural, coastal and island communities

- Academic, educational and research links

The questionnaire begins with some basic information about you, as a respondent, and then directs you through a range of questions focusing on our review themes and your experience of Ireland – Scotland relations. We invite both selected and open responses to hopefully allow you to contribute as much as you wish to share.

1. Respondent Information

What is your name or your organisation's name?
Name/organisation name

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?
Individual OR Organisation

2. Ireland-Scotland relations

The questions that follow begin with matters that relate jointly to the Scotland – Ireland relationship, followed by more detailed, country-specific inquiries, and open questions related to our review themes. Please contribute to the questions most relevant to you/your organisation.

How would you characterise relations between the two countries?				
Very positive	Fairly positive	Neutral	Not great	Poor

How important is the Scotland-Ireland relationship in terms of:			
	Very ⁵	Quite ⁶	Not really ⁷
Shared business and economic interests - including tourism			
Shared community and diaspora and			

⁵ Very – we need to collaborate on this with specific focus, for both our benefit

⁶ Quite – we need to maintain neighbourly connections

⁷ Not really – this connection isn't any more important than with other neighbouring countries

links – including sport			
Shared cultural experience and exchange			
Shared interest in sustaining rural, coastal and island communities			
Shared academic, educational and research links			
Shared government, official and policy links			

Thinking of the next 5 years – the agreed timeline for this review - do you see the relevance of the Ireland-Scotland relationship:

Increasing	Remaining about the same	Decreasing
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Looking ahead, where would you expect to see the Irish-Scottish economic relationship expand?

Energy
Tourism
Services and expertise
Tech and ICT
Finance
Agri-food
Other (please specify)

From what perspective do you wish to contribute your views for the rest of the questionnaire:

Based in Ireland
Based in Scotland
Based elsewhere but with an interest in the Ireland-Scotland relationship

All respondents based in Ireland will be taken forward to section 4, whereas respondents based in Scotland will be taken forward to section 3. If respondents are based somewhere else, they will be directed to section 5.

3. Scotland (for all respondents based in Scotland)

Thinking of Ireland's image in Scotland over the past few years would you say it has:

Improved	Remained stable	Deteriorated
----------	-----------------	--------------

What in your view has led to that change:

(open response)

Generally, what makes Ireland most visible in Scotland (tick all that apply)

Irish business and economic activity

Irish cultural events and organisations

Irish community and diaspora

Sporting activity and events

Media coverage

Irish government/official activity

Other (please specify)

Personally, how do you engage with Ireland?

	Aware of, but not active	Already active/involved	Would like to do more	Not interested/relevant
Watch or read film/literature/media				
Attend live performance of Irish music/theatre/dance/comedy				
Participate in Irish arts/culture/sport				
Attending St Patrick's Day events				
Attending or playing sport				
Gather socially with Irish diaspora				
Gather with Irish relatives				
Other				

As an individual or an organisation, how do you engage with Ireland?				
	Aware of, but not active	Already active/involved	Would like to do more	Not interested/relevant
Consumer – choose Irish products and goods				
Academic – through education/academic / research links				
Business – through Business with Irish firms				
Business – through connections with Irish colleagues and counterparts				
Business – through investment/property in Ireland				
Official – through dealings with local or national government/agencies in Ireland				
Other				

Would you consider yourself as a member of Ireland's diaspora in Scotland?		
Yes	No	Not relevant (responding as an organisation)

Where are you/your organisation mainly based?
(drop down menu)

Have you had recent contact with the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh?
--

Yes	No
-----	----

If so, what was the nature of this contact?					
Passport	Citizenship	Consular assistance	Attendance at an event	Organisation of an event	Other (please specify)

Have you had recent contact with the Scottish Innovation and Investment Hub in Dublin?	
Yes	No

If so, what was the nature of this contact?

4. Ireland (for all respondents based in Ireland)

Thinking of Scotland's image in Ireland over the past few years would you say it has:		
Improved	Remained stable	Deteriorated

What in your view has led to that change:
(open response)

Generally, what makes Scotland most visible in Ireland? (tick all that apply)
Scottish business and economic activity
Scottish cultural events and organisations
Scottish community and diaspora
Sporting activity and events
Media coverage
Scottish government/official activity
Other (please specify)

Personally, how do you engage with Scotland?

	Aware of, but not active	Already active/involved	Would like to do more	Not interested/relevant
Watch or read film/literature/media				
Attend live performance of Scottish music/theatre/dance/comedy				
Participate in Scottish arts/culture/sport				
Attending St Andrew's Day/ Hogmanay/Burns events				
Attending or playing sport				
Gather socially with Scottish diaspora				
Gather with Scottish relatives				
Other				

As an individual or an organisation, how do you engage with Scotland?

	Aware of, but not active	Already active/involved	Would like to do more	Not interested/relevant
Consumer – choose Scottish products and goods				
Academic – through education/academic/research links				
Business – through business with Scottish firms				
Business – through connections with Scottish colleagues and counterparts				
Business – through investment/property in Scotland				

Official – through dealings with local or national government/agencies in Scotland				
Other				

Would you consider yourself as a member of Scotland’s diaspora in Ireland?		
Yes	No	Not relevant (responding as an organisation)

Where are you/your organisation mainly based?
(drop down menu)

5. Shared themes (for all respondents) The online design and experience of this section aims to allow respondents answer the three main questions on the themes most relevant to them. The themes are questions are captured in the table below but the online experience is sequential, rather than presented as a table.

Please provide comments on the themes below. You can comment some or all.					
	Business and economic interests	Community and diaspora links	Culture experience and exchange	Rural, coastal and island communities	Academic, educational and research links
From your experience, what connections and associations currently exist					

between the two countries with reference to this theme? What influences these connections today?					
From your experience, what connections and associations currently exist between the two countries with reference to this theme? What influences these connections today?					
From your experience, what expertise can the two countries share with regard to this theme? Are there exemplars or best practice collaborations you can identify?					

6. Ireland and Scotland (for all respondents)

Are there other areas where Ireland and Scotland should collaborate, or could usefully increase their collaboration?

(open response)

7. Almost Done... (for all respondents)

You are about to submit your response. By clicking 'Submit Response' you give us permission to analyse and include your response in our results. To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our [privacy policy](#). After you click Submit, you will no longer be able to go back and change any of your answers.

If you provide an email address you will be sent a receipt and a link to a PDF copy of your response. (for all respondents)

8. Your response has been submitted (for all respondents)

Your response ID is XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-X. Please have this ID available if you need to contact us about your response.

Thank you for completing the consultation.

Annex B List of organisational respondents

Responses submitted by organisations:

1. 1916 Rising Centenary Committee (Scotland)
2. Angus Macdonald
3. Bòrd na Gàidhlig
4. Camera Crane Scotland
5. Causeway: Ireland Scotland Business Exchange
6. Celtic Countries Magazine
7. Centre for Cross Border Studies
8. Cláíomh
9. Creative Scotland
10. Culture Ireland
11. Digital Health and Care Institute
12. Edinburgh's Festival of Ireland
13. Eneropp Ltd
14. Envision
15. Fraunhofer Project Centre for Embedded Bioanalytical Systems
16. Fraunhofer UK Research Ltd
17. GAA in Scotland
18. Glasgow North West Unionist Council
19. GMACPHARMA Ltd
20. Historic Environment Scotland
21. Historic Environment Scotland
22. Irish in Europe Association
23. JCR Network Services
24. Leargorm
25. Live Music Now Scotland
26. Local Government Information Unit
27. Marine Renewables Industry Association
28. National Trust for Scotland
29. Nicholas Lynch Ltd
30. Red River Archaeology Ltd
31. Scotland in the Union
32. Scottish Irish Finance Initiative
33. Scottish Business Network
34. Scottish Funding Council
35. Scottish Poetry Library
36. Scottish Policy & Research Exchange
37. Scottish Republican Socialist Movement
38. Táin Bó Fliodhaise Norse Gaelic Cultural Association
39. The Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI)
40. Theatre Gu Leòr
41. Think32
42. Údarás na Gaeltachta
43. University College Cork
44. University of the Highlands and Islands

Joint organisational submissions:

- 45. Joint submission: Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh
- 46. Joint submission: University College Dublin and University of Edinburgh
- 47. Joint Submission: University of Glasgow and University College Dublin



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