

# GOVERNMENT TIMES

The award-winning newsletter of students and staff  
in UCC's Department of Government & Politics.



Issue 76 – Thursday 19 April 2018

**‘I know that local government isn’t the sexiest  
subject, but I hope to make it mainstream’  
- Minister John Paul Phelan**



**Read the exclusive interview with the Minister of State for Local  
Government by DANIELLE GAYSON (see pages 4 & 5).**



## GOOD LUCK TO ALL STUDENTS FOR THE END OF TERM AND THE FORTHCOMING EXAMS



**Dr Theresa Reidy of the Department of Government and Politics with the prize-winners from the BA Politics programme (picture courtesy of Tomás Tyner).**

Another academic year has come and virtually gone in the blink of an eye. The second semester has been an especially busy one in the Department of Government and Politics which is reflected in Issue 76 of *Government Times*. We have 20 pages for you covering activities of students and staff, with a feature interview with the Minister of State for Local Government, John Paul Phelan TD. Thanks to Minister Phelan for giving his time to appear in our own *Government Times*.

The 2017/2018 editorial team is bowing out with this issue and it is our wish that you have enjoyed reading *Government Times* in this academic year. Best of luck to all for the period ahead with assignments due and exams to be sat. Do your best – we can ask no more of you.

*Adh Quinlivan, Danielle Grayson, Bryan O'Shea, James Massi and Lee Nagle.*

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# Cover story: Interview with Minister John Paul Phelan by Danielle Gayson

## **Who is John Paul Phelan?**

John Paul Phelan joined Fine Gael in secondary school but like many he didn't become an active member until he went to Waterford Institute of Technology where he studied Economics and Finance. In 1999 whilst a 2<sup>nd</sup> year student, John Paul was elected as a councillor. He served until 2002, when he then became a senator until 2011. Since 2011 John Paul Phelan has been a TD for the Carlow/Kilkenny constituency representing Fine Gael and in 2017 was appointed the Minister of State for Local Government and Electoral Reform by An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar.

## **What has been the main stand out moment of your political career so far?**

For all elected representatives, it is always a standout moment to win an election says Deputy Phelan. Within his own political career, he has had five wins and only two electoral losses. However, his overall standout moment must be from June 2017 when he was appointed as Minister of State by An Taoiseach, this was a particularly proud moment for John Paul as the position he was appointed is the exact one he desired to have.

## **What are your opinions on the Local Government (Reform) Act 2014? Do you feel it was effective? Are there any aspects of it that you feel should not have been introduced?**

Deputy Phelan supported the Local Government (Reform) Act 2014 and still feels it was an appropriate act to be introduced at the time. He does however still feel that the reform will continue. Until 2014 the system of local government in place in Ireland had a Victorian format which was founded under British Rule. Now, we have our own system which prioritises the one person, one vote form of democracy. Mr. Phelan expressed in this interview his plans for a future bill with the aim of further creating and fostering a fully integrated system of local government that was started in the 2014 Act. He hopes that this bill will also address any shortfalls that appeared post 2014. "I know that local government isn't the sexiest subject, but I hope to make it mainstream".

## **On the topic of the highly discussed Waterford/Kilkenny boundary do you feel it should have been as controversial as it was?**

After 19 years of dealing with people you begin to learn what topics will anger the general population according to the Minister. With regards to the Waterford/Kilkenny boundary issue this was one of them. It was so close to home for many people that they were even writing handwritten letters to the minister. This region however has always been dominated by the boundary issue which is why Deputy Phelan was surprised by the level of controversy. Many local communities would have completely changed, in terms of addresses and general living.

## **On the power of dissolution do you feel it was necessary at the time it was introduced?**

### **Do you think it is important that this is still in the statute books today?**

Dissolution often comes up in conversation around budget time for local authorities if they are leaving everything until the last minute. This is an ultimate sanction and hasn't been used in 60 years according to Deputy Phelan. This act ensures that local government, governs locally. In this interview Mr. Phelan criticised many local government on discussing international and national topics above local issues, he says it isn't strange to see proposals regarding international topics on the agenda in local council meetings which pushes local issues to the back of the agenda and this isn't what they were elected for. He believes these discussions are suitable and often encouraged provided the local agenda has been completed.

## **Would you be in favour of the Cork City and County amalgamation? Why/Why not?**

When asked about the Cork City and County amalgamation, Deputy Phelan expressed his opposition to the matter. He feels that Cork as the second city of the country should have its own standalone council, many already argue that it is currently too big so amalgamating it would be inappropriate. Any change to the council won't affect funding as the city still wouldn't reach metropolitan standards, however it is a

city of international standards and the city council should be focused on furthering this according to Mr. Phelan.

### Would you be in favour of introducing directly elected mayors into Ireland? Why/Why not?

Currently, this topic is a cabinet discussion and there are plans to have a plebiscite Cork and Dublin in line with the upcoming referenda to have directly elected mayors for these cities. However, before this is introduced Deputy Phelan feels there must be discussion on what powers will be handed over to the directly elected mayors and how this will impact the powers and the decisions of local authorities.

### What powers do you feel could be further devolved to local authorities to follow the rule of subsidiarity? Such as justice for example.

Deputy Phelan believes we are living in a very centralised country and this is highly impacting the powers that are devolved to local government. Planning is one of few powers that have been passed down to local authorities and there is a high level of independence surrounding it. Education has a small amount of decentralisation with bodies such as the Education Training Boards however more and more are becoming skewed to officials and councillors aren't taking them on. Local democracy is not being enacted to its fullest in this country. Mr. Phelan believes that before more powers are handed to local authorities they need to learn to utilise the ones that they already hold.

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Congrats to our journalist Ciaran Dineen who has been appointed News Editor of the UCC Express.

Ciaran began work experience with us 5 years ago & has become a valued journalist.

Best of luck in the new role & we look forward to continuing to see your articles in The Carrighoun.



Ciaran Dineen is a journalist for The Carrighoun and also studies politics at UCC. This week, Ciaran gives his view on the future of our local Public Transport System.

### Lack of Cohesion over Future of our Public Transport System: An Issue for Local Government?

While the immediate headlines from the recent Ballinacorney-Carrigaline Municipal District (MD) Meeting at Cork County Council were positive, from the view of the outsider, a deeper interpretation sees a more cynical end result. As someone who studies politics, and has a particular 'grit' for local government and public management, the deliberation between councillors and Bus Éireann Regional Manager Martin Walsh earlier this month pointed out the elephant in the room. The proverbial being that as hard as local authorities try, they still fall short of having the sufficient autonomy that they should hold. Many reading this will be quite confused given the improvements which are to be made for our bus routes. You will say what are you complaining about? You got what you wanted and the hard work of councillors made this so. I am in no way writing this to batter our local councillors, in fact the opposite is true. Having seen the hard and relentless work that councillors have put in trying to reform our bus services, notably the 220s, 220s and 223, over the past six months, I am here to champion them and everything they do for their constituents. Unfortunately however the structure of local government in this country means that

councillors are often subjected to the 'jerk-hulk' mentality. What I mean by this is that sometimes a councillor's existence is considered purely for real run of the mill, bog standard complaints. Essentially our culture of local government pigeon-holes them and disregards any potential belief that they hold some sort of innovation in terms of policy-making capabilities. Now while fixing potholes etc. is of course an issue and some councillors feel proud to solve such problems, there are sometimes bigger fish to fry. While I am not here to write a diatribe about the state of local government in general, I am referring specifically to our local public transport services and the role, or lack of it in this case, that our local representatives get to play, with this being highlighted in the recent Municipal District Meeting. The National Transport Authority (NTA) simply had to make changes to our services and listen to our councillors before the people of Carrigaline, Crosshaven and Passage West began a revolution, but is the final outcome deemed sufficient? At a recent local government debate in UCC, Dr. Frank Crowley from the UCC School of Economics, showed his exasperation that politics doesn't follow economic fact and guidelines, specifically in this case in Cork. The response from various economists and councillors was simpler 'that's politics'.

At the recent meeting it also felt like this, as it soon became obvious that a lack of clarity and cohesion between the NTA and Cork County Council, and probably every other local authority, exists. While councillors received good news about reform, it was invariably the NTA's decision and the NTA's alone. While you can understand that the NTA has complete control over what routes are created, one would have to question their lack of communication with councillors over pressing matters. For example we heard that a route will form, hopefully by September, linking Passage West to Carrigaline. If this service begins in September it will be almost a year since the Primary Care Centre in Carrigaline opened. A major reason for the existence of such a route is that residents in Passage need to travel to the centre. Is a year later good enough? Certainly not for the people of Passage West. Should the local authority have been consulted prior to the closing of the health centre in Passage and the consequences of doing so? Of course they should. Should the councillors and residents be the ones that then have to lobby for a new bus service or should this have been in place prior to the closure? Of course it is the latter option.

The issue of bus shelters also annoys the councillors themselves weren't fully aware of who has control over bus shelters and sought advice from Martin Walsh. Walsh responded by saying that the NTA decided where bus shelters went, no one else, hence a County Council can't even decide such a policy task as this. Walsh himself even remarked how he has advocated, along with many other councillors, for a shelter at 'the bridge' in Carrigaline for years, but the NTA said no. So what does the local authority do, or is it a question of what can they do instead? It seems that despite being on the ground and confronting the same problems day in day out, Councils are to continue to be in the back seat while their appears to be no driver at the wheel. The future of public transport became a hot topic in the 'Ireland 2040' plan recently, and in regard to the Carrigaline area it has been pointed out by Dr. Crowley that mistakes look to be made once again. If he is right one would have to question the competence of Dublin and why they are going to continue to ignore the views and directives of local government. To copy Dr. Crowley's ending to his recent article, the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing over and over again, expecting different results.

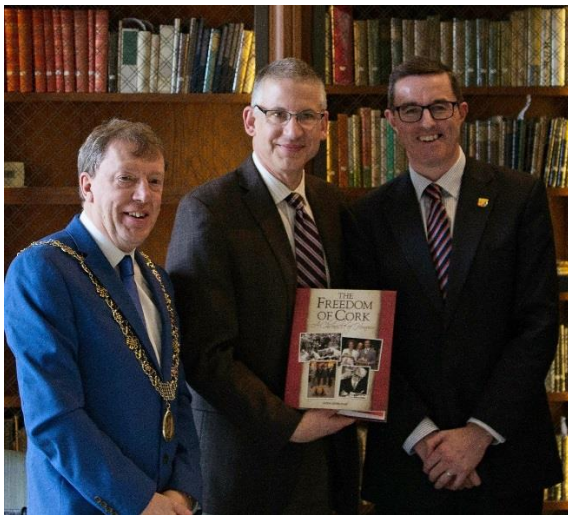
Congratulations to BSc Government graduate, Padraic Vallely, and BSc Government current second year student, Ciaran Dineen, both of whom have been in the news recently. Well done also to Ciaran on the publication of his excellent opinion piece on local government and public transportation in *The Carrighoun*.



The pros and cons of directly elected mayors was one of the topics discussed in UCC in February, as part of the third Annual Public Lecture Series of UCC's Centre for Local and Regional Governance (CLRG), organised by Dr Aodh Quinlivan. Sir Steve Bullock described his experiences as the four-time directly elected mayor of Lewisham in London. The evolving role of the councillor was explored by Councillor Toireasa Ferris of Kerry County Council. UCC's Dr Frank Crowley spoke about economic geography and regional development in the context of the Cork boundary extension debate and the National Planning Framework. The event was chaired by Dr Fiona Buckley of UCC's Department of Government and Politics. The Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Tony Fitzgerald, opened the event and the CLRG Annual Report for 2017 was officially launched by the new Registrar of UCC, Professor John O'Halloran. CLRG awards were presented to Dr Long Pham, Liam Ronayne and Diarmuid Hanley.



## **Tip O'Neill Annual Memorial Lecture Launched in Cork and Boston**



In a joint collaboration between Cork City Council and UCC, the university will host an annual public lecture series in honour of Tip O'Neill. Tip O'Neill dedicated his life to public service with a contribution of over 50 years in US politics. During this time, he built a reputation as an independent-minded legislator, known for his hard work and integrity. He was conferred with the Freedom of Cork in 1985, at which he stated, 'I am now a Corkman. I want to tell you I have been a Corkman all my life. I learned at my grandfather's knee that there are two classes of people, those from Cork and those who wished they were.' The annual lecture series – which will commence in February 2019 – was launched in Cork City Hall by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Tony Fitzgerald, the Deputy President and Registrar of UCC, Professor John O'Halloran and Dr Aodh Quinlivan of the Department of Government and Politics (top two pictures). The lecture series was also launched in Boston College and Aodh Quinlivan presented a copy of his book *The Freedom of Cork – A Chronicle of Honour* to the Burns Library (bottom two pictures).



New Sinn Féin leader, Mary Lou McDonald, was presented with copy of Aodh Quinlivan's book, *Dissolved*, by the Lord Mayor of Cork during a recent visit to City Hall.

## **Introducing directly elected mayors needs political bravery**

**RTÉ Brainstorm**

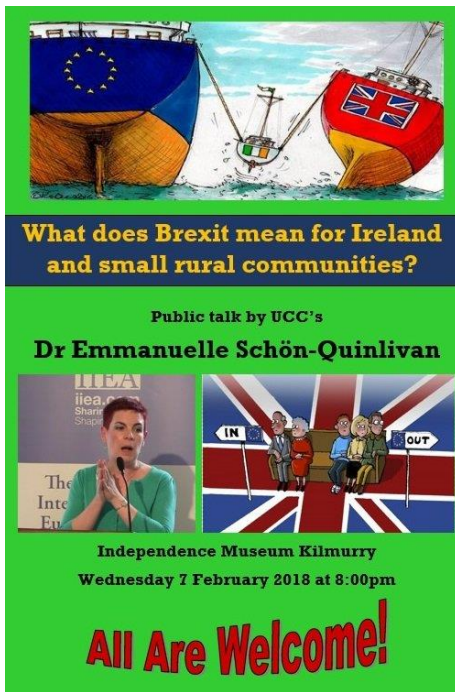
<https://www.rte.ie/eile/brainstorm/2018/0221/942326-introducing-directly-elected-mayors-needs-political-bravery/>

Dr Aodh Quinlivan, Director of the CLRG, wrote an opinion piece for the RTÉ Brainstorm series on the topic of whether Ireland should introduce a system of directly elected mayors (see link above). This has been an ongoing area of research for Aodh over the past 20 years. Ireland first legislated for directly elected mayors in 2001.



# 'Brexit', 'Irexit' and the Future of Europe

- A report and opinion piece by Bryan O'Shea



On Wednesday 7 February, three fellow students and I finally found our way from UCC to Kilmurry Independence Museum. It was a long, arduous drive to this charming little village which sits roughly half way between Ballincollig and Macroom where upon our arrival, I could not help but notice that this village is a sad reflection of the slow demise of rural Ireland. Three public houses, now closed, no post office in the village and a shop which provides the essentials. Once vibrant little communities were also small economies where everything was bought and sold locally. I have only heard stories of these days of a bygone era from my grandparents who often tell them with a forlorn look on their faces. Our world today is so impersonal, and void of the true community spirit described by my grandparents when they recounted tales of happier, simpler times. However, it is not all doom and gloom! Kilmurry strikes me as a place which is stubbornly refusing to accept the demise of the rural village community despite such obvious scars inflicted upon it.

The purpose of our trip to Kilmurry was to attend a public talk in its very own historical Independence Museum which was recently re-developed and opened by President Higgins in 2014. That talk was titled; *“What does Brexit mean for Ireland and small rural communities?”* and delivered by Dr. Emmanuelle Schon-Quinlivan of the Department of Government and Politics. At first, I was sceptical. I foolishly thought that the only people interested in Brexit or its possible effects on local communities were political nerds like myself. I was wrong. It is clear that this community is deeply concerned about Brexit and from the large turnout on the night, also keen to learn the details of it. I only needed to look around the museum, which was funded in part by the West Cork LEADER programmes largest ever grant, to realise that this community is one which has reaped the benefits of European money being invested in rural Ireland.

Dr. Schon-Quinlivan began by giving a brief history of the European Union, which was a welcome refresher course for us students in attendance, then went on to give an overview of the Irish and British memberships of the European Union and the relationships between them. The economic figures were particularly striking in that it showed the extent of our economic ties to the United Kingdom and how much really is at stake during the delicate Brexit negotiation process. The talk was informative throughout and I felt it bridged a divide between the complicated world of facts, figures, negotiations and rhetoric that is Brexit, and those who will undoubtedly feel the resulting effects of Brexit, the people of Kilmurry and wider society. It is fair to say that most of the people in the audience were probably blissfully unaware of the sheer scale and potential of the knock-on effects of Brexit and how something as large and so seemingly distant as Brexit could possibly influence local Irish communities. The reality is, nothing will be untouched by Brexit. If you're from inner city Dublin or the backside of Leitrim, the economic knock-on effects of Brexit will reach you. Our agricultural industry is intrinsically linked with the United Kingdom and it remains our biggest trading partner. However, since the bombshell Brexit vote in 2016, the Irish Government, along with economic partners and agencies alike, have sought to expand our trading routes. We now see new markets opening-up in South America and Asia as well as continuing to increase our trading among other EU member states. To minimise the negative effects of Brexit, we must diversify our trading markets and not be so reliant on our increasingly eccentric neighbours.

The talk concluded with a final segment on 'Irexit' and was followed by an engaging Q&A session. The Q&A session highlighted just how interested people are in Brexit, 'Irexit' and the future of Europe. I

believe it is a common misconception that Irish people, both young and old, are oblivious to the political issues of the day. At worst, they are misinformed by a media that is becoming increasingly unreliable as a source of news and information. Nevertheless, in a setting such as this, where regular people are in a classroom setting, as such, and receiving real, raw information about major topics from a lecturer in UCC, it strikes up an engaging discourse. This was on display in Kilmurry and it was clear to see that more events like this need to happen. The conversation cannot only take place in government buildings and academic institutions, or national think-tanks. It must take place in the forgotten, beaten down, yet resurgent rural Ireland. Dr. Schon-Quinlivan brought this conversation to where it matters, it must now be kept going.



The European Union has given Ireland a lot. Even the most anti-EU people cannot dispute that. What they will say however is, at what cost? In the final section of her talk, Dr. Schon-Quinlivan explored the notion of 'Irexit'. Until relatively recently, 'Irexit' was not something that was spoken about much. There is a generally positive feeling in Ireland towards the EU and this has been the way for some time. However, public opinion appears to be changing. At an event in February 2018 held in the RDS, Dublin, speakers such as Nigel Farage, writer John Waters and academics such as Karen Devine and Anthony Coughlan took to the stage to a crowd of around 500 people to seek the opening-up of the debate around Ireland's future within the European Union. Some of the people who attended the event spoke of their disillusionment with the undemocratic and supranational behemoth that the EU has become and want a conversation to take place around Ireland's membership. Others believe that the political climate here is ripe for an 'Irexit' party and believe we need to hear both sides of the argument. Others just simply want to follow the UK out of the Union and stand on our own two feet. The future of Europe is entwined with the future of Ireland and no matter what end of the EU spectrum you find yourself on, we need to have a more open platform of debate about this issue.

Much of the people in attendance at the event in RDS spoke of their unwillingness to speak up and state their views out of fear of being labelled as bigots or racists. This is wrong. Free speech is the mechanism by which our society functions and everyone should be able and willing to speak their mind. As someone

who is pro-EU but with a healthy amount of scepticism and indeed, criticisms of the EU, its institutions and the future of the union, I believe the EU is at a crossroads. The EU has long suffered from a perceived democratic deficit and a resulting illegitimacy among a growing number of the EU citizenry. The continuing rise of Euro-sceptic parties across Europe should be signal enough for the unelected bureaucrats in Brussels to look at the gravity of the current situation. The EU agenda, led by Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron is one of increased integration. Martin Schulz, Chancellor Merkel's coalition partner recently stated his wish for a United States of Europe by 2025 and went on to suggest that any nations opposed to this should simply leave sooner rather than later. Be careful what you wish for Martin.

Tax harmonisation and the further loss of economic sovereignty will signify an event further decline in the traditional nation state if the aforementioned Franco-German partnership manage to follow through with their vision for Europe. How far do we want this to go? The EU27 are standing behind Ireland at the Brexit table but there is the ever-present feeling that this support will come at a cost and that cost will be economic sovereignty, or more specifically, our corporation tax rate. Yes, some will argue that Ireland has more to offer than its corporate tax rate and yes, I agree, we do. However, when it comes to multinational companies, I believe we have nothing to offer, apart from this attractive tax rate and as a result, have an edge over other EU member states. Money talks and profit is the name of the game for these organisations. Multinational companies are directly responsible for 25% of private sector jobs in Ireland and if we cannot retain the ability to govern over our economic affairs, the result could be catastrophic.

The debate around the future of Europe is much more complex for a short article like this to adequately explore but it can be stated with certainty that we need to keep the conversation going. An 'Irexit' movement in Ireland, in my opinion, would ignite a much-needed debate around Ireland's membership of the EU and about the future of Europe. It may also serve as a further warning to the seemingly deaf Europhiles, that their ideas and visions will not all be accepted by the masses. We must force the EU, its leaders and institutions to listen, and once this strange new concept of listening has been achieved, to then proceed with transforming the EU into a more democratic, intergovernmental organisation which does not seek to eradicate the individual nations of Europe and their unique cultures, but rather, to benefit them. Europe is committing suicide, its leaders are hell bent on embracing further integration, multiculturalism and group identity at a time when it is being continuously proven that these ideas and actions will have adverse effects on our continent. Two million refugees, spiralling crime rates, terrorism, the rise of the far-right and a wave of euro-scepticism should be enough to snap our leaders out of their endless trance and enter into an open, frank and honest debate about the future. If it does not happen soon, they may very well be faced with disintegration, the antithesis of what they seek.



# Dr Mary C. Murphy and Brexit: Ongoing Engagement



**20 February:** Jean Monnet Lecture Series by Denis MacShane, former Labour Party MP and Minister for Europe (top right).

**22 February:** 'Future of Europe' dialogue in UCC with Minister Helen McEntee (top left).

**15 March:** 'Why should Brexit bother me?' – Sligo EDIC (Europe Direct Information Centre).

**22 March** – Jean Monnet Lecture Series by Dr Etain Tannam, Trinity College Dublin (bottom left), 'How Brexit is bruising British-Irish relations'.

**23 March** – Brexit Seminar organised by the UCC School of Law; as well as Dr Mary Murphy, other speakers included Judge Anthony Collins and Deirdre Clune MEP.

**12 April** – Jean Monnet Lecture Series by Tony Connelly, RTÉ Europe Editor, 'Brexit: Negotiating the Negotiations' (bottom right).

# Well done to the Government & Politics Society on a successful POLITICS WEEK 2018



Congratulations to the Government and Politics Society for a highly enjoyable Politics Week 2018.

As per tradition, two of the highlights of the week were the Government Cup (congratulations to the winning BSc Government IV team) and the Government Ball. The theme of the Ball this year was 'A Night of Political Scandal' and a great time was had by all!

Government & Politics Society  
presents


Tuesday, 27th February 2018 The Metropole Hotel

## A NIGHT OF POLITICAL SCANDAL!

University College Cork's Government and Politics Society is proud to present to you a night of political scandal, you've heard of WaterGate, Benghazi and Bill & Monica, we would like to invite you to a night of your own political scandal!

The 20th Annual Government Ball will be a night of ultimate exposé with all cards on the table.  
Ticket will be on sale starting Monday 5th February, outside the Boole.

Full 40eur



**Pictures from the Government Ball by Flukey Photography.**



# The Migrant Crisis: A Threat to Europe?

By **Conor O'Carroll, BSc Government I**

In the summer of 2015, Europe experienced the highest influx of refugees since the Second World War. It made headlines all around the world as over a million migrants arrived on the shores of Europe in 2015 alone. The question quickly became where had all these people come from and why were they here?

Following the Arab Spring, a revolutionary wave of protests and conflicts across the Middle East, the Syrian people revolted against the Al-Assad family, quasi-dictatorial rulers of Syria since the 1960s. The Assads, however, refused to step down and began a brutal civil war. ISIS, a militaristic jihadist group, used the opportunity and entered the conflict with the goal of building a totalitarian Islamic caliphate. They very quickly became the most violent extremist organisation on Earth. The Syrian people were now trapped between the Assad regime, various rebel groups and religious extremists. As a result of this dire situation, many fled to Europe in search of safety and a better life. In order to reach Europe, however, the Syrian people would have to cross the Mediterranean Sea.

Many sank, and many died, forcing the EU to launch Operation Triton. Operation Triton involved voluntary contribution from 15 European States, including Ireland. Under the Dublin Regulation, migrants that arrived on European shores were required to stay in the country they arrived in. This placed massive pressure on the already unstable countries of Greece and Italy. It was clear that Europe had to come together to try and solve the crisis. However, Europe was more divided than ever before. Hungary even closed its borders with Croatia in an effort to stem the flow of migrants coming through the country en route to Western Europe. In late 2015 Germany said 'enough is enough' and opened its borders to migrants and refugees from the world's most terrorist ridden regions.



In Germany, there has been a dramatic increase in crime since opening their borders. In December 2016 ISIS claimed responsibility for the deadly truck assault on an outdoor Christmas market in Berlin, which killed 12 people and injured nearly 50 others. This incident is, unfortunately, not alone. During the summer of 2016, there were four terrorist attacks within a week of each other. A Syrian asylum seeker blew himself up and injured 15 people outside a wine bar in the town of Ansbach. An Afghan refugee attacked train passengers with an axe and a knife in Wuerzburg. A machete-wielding Syrian asylum-seeker murdered a pregnant woman in the southwestern city of Reutlingen. Finally, the German-born son of Iranian immigrants shot nine people dead in a shopping mall in Munich. There are two things that link these attacks. Firstly, they all had affiliation to ISIS and secondly, they were all either first or second-generation immigrant from countries that are riddled with terrorism.

The situation in Sweden is just as bad, if not worse. In 2015, Sweden admitted over 300,000 refugees and asylum seekers. The roughly 162,000 asylum seekers admitted exceeded any other EU state by capita. The number admitted decreased slightly in 2016 with over 250,000 entering the country. Violent crime has shot up in the once peaceful Sweden. The violence has become so bad that the Swedish Prime Minister, Stefan Loven, has suggested bringing in the army to help deal with the increase in crime.



**Stefan Loven, Swedish Prime Minister**

Recently the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) held a 'Future of Europe' event at University College Cork. Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, David Stanton TD, and Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Linas Linkevičius, were in attendance. As both should have knowledge about the current migrant crisis I decided to ask them whether they felt the situation in Sweden presented a threat to the future of Europe. Their contrasting answers told an interesting story. Stanton answered first, and he decided to ignore the question by trying to insinuate that the facts I had provided were false and that the situation in Sweden wasn't as bad as I thought. Linkevičius, however, had a different view. He verified my facts and then continued to state that the migrants certainly can become a threat to Europe if mismanaged. He believed that background checks were necessary to ensure that those coming to Europe have both good intentions and are genuinely fleeing conflict.

So, what is the answer to this crisis? Well, as Sweden and Germany have shown we simply can't just open our borders to anyone. I also don't believe that closing Europe's borders will do any good either. In my opinion, the best solution is to find some middle ground. We should impose strict background checks on anyone attempting to enter Europe to ensure people are who they say they are and to protect ourselves from attacks. We should target the source of the people smugglers in Libya to prevent the needless deaths occurring in the Mediterranean. We should come together as a united union and implement an EU-wide integration programme to help ease the clashes of culture.

There is no easy fix and no solution will please everyone, but we cannot go like this. Sweden and Germany cannot go on like this. For better or for worse, something needs to change. Otherwise, there may not be a Europe left to change.

# Big Friendly Guide to the European Union Jean Monnet Project features on RTÉ's *Drivetime*



The BFG to EU Jean Monnet project by Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan has been successfully piloted in two Cork primary schools in Kilmurry and Fermoy. The project was featured on RTÉ *Drivetime* and featured interviews with participating children and Emmanuelle (Go on the RTÉ RADIO 1 player and click on the programme of 12 March 2018. The item starts at 1h55min until 2h02. <http://www.rte.ie/radiol/drivetime/>).

The first graduation ceremony from the project will take place in UCC on **Thursday 28 May** with the President of UCC and a surprise guest!





# Visiting Fellowship to the University of Sydney for Dr Fiona Buckley



Congratulations to **Dr Fiona Buckley** who has been awarded a Visiting Fellowship to the University of Sydney. Fiona is part of the prestigious Electoral Integrity Project – an independent research team based at the University of Sydney and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.


Fiona is working closely with the world renowned academic, Professor Pippa Norris (centre of front row on picture above).

As you can see on the picture on the left, Fiona also met up with Senator Ivana Bacik who attended an international law conference at the University of Sydney.

Good luck to Fiona for the remainder of her time in Oz!

# BSc Government I Class Visit City Hall



 **AODH QUINLIVAN**  
@AodhQuinlivan

Thanks to Lord Mayor @Tfitzgeraldcork for meeting with BSc Government first year students last night. Thanks also to the elected members who applauded the students who stayed at #corkcc meeting until nearly 10pm! @UCC @GovUCC @CLRGUCC @CACSSS1 @EoinBearla.

 **Eoin English** ✓  
@EoinBearla

Replying to @AodhQuinlivan @Tfitzgeraldcork and 4 others

I applaud them also. If they can cope with last night, they can cope with anything during their studies....

10:23 AM · 10 Apr 18

 **kayleigh walshe**  
@KayleighWalshe

You actually learn a lot at council meetings and Garda forums! What else would you be doing on a Monday sure 😂

# SNI PP ETS

Our five BSc Government students in New York enjoyed the St. Patrick's Day celebrations in Manhattan



**Nice suit,  
Brandon!**



Congratulations to all of our post-graduate students who were conferred in the spring from a variety of programmes. The picture on the left shows MSc Government graduate, Sandra Farrell, with her supervisor, Dr Aodh Quinlivan.

## Dr Theresa Reidy speaks at CHALLENGE AND CHANGE conference

In March, **Dr Theresa Reidy** addressed the 'Challenge and Change' conference in Castleknock. During a very well-received presentation, Theresa discussed women in Irish politics and she drew attention to some of the arguments that were used against giving women the vote 100 years ago.



Orla O'Connor @OrlaNWCI · 13 Mar

Dr Theresa Reidy gives a brilliant presentation on the importance of the discussion on extending the vote to young people and how we still have a long road to achieving equal representation for women.

[@fingallibraries](#) [@theresareidy](#)

## Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan delivers Brexit lecture in Lisbon



**Dr Emmanuelle Schön-Quinlivan** recently delivered a major public lecture about Brexit in Lisbon while there on the Erasmus+ Mobility Programme. The public lecture, which was attended by approximately 120 people, was entitled 'Variable geometry or stable configuration: What does Brexit tell us about the European Union and its future?' In addition, Emmanuelle also gave a lecture to a post-graduate class on the topic, 'Casual mechanisms and process-tracing.'