

PEACEPLUS

Northern Ireland - Ireland

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PEACEPLUS AT A GLANCE



Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE
Special EU Skemes Boidie



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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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The cover photograph shows in the foreground the Waterside Shared Village community and sports complex which is a PEACE IV funded Shared Space project located in the interface area between Irish Street and the Top of the Hill ; the INTERREG VA funded Multi Modal Transport Hub located on the waterside links the iconic PEACE Bridge over the River Foyle in Londonderry/Derry a PEACE III funded, joining communities together.

seupb.eu/peaceplus

About SEUPB:

The Special EU Programmes Body is one of the cross-border Bodies set up under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. This agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was signed on Good Friday 8 March 1999 and led to the establishment of the North South Bodies.

The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes between Northern Ireland and the six border counties in Ireland.

We facilitate the positive impact that European Regional Development Funding can have on the lives of people living across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. We have managed many iterations of the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes, as well as involvement in Transnational Programmes. All of these have the over arching objective of taking opportunities from the cessation of violence/conflict in the region.

Cumulatively, the PEACE and INTERREG programmes have, to date, provided €3.39bn of direct funding for the communities of those living in Northern Ireland and the six border counties, with over 23,000 of wide-ranging transformative projects.

The PEACE Programme has supported over 2.2 million citizens, and INTERREG over 200,000 beneficiaries, and the impacts of the funding are widespread across many sectors.

Background to the Programmes:

The PEACE Programme is unique in Europe and was created from a desire on the part of the European Union to respond positively to the announcement of the ceasefires in 1994. The funding package represents a partnership between the European Union, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive.

It brought new structures and approaches, with the involvement of civil society and the partnership approach at all levels. The strategic aim of the PEACE Programmes was to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by taking the opportunities arising from the Peace. All funded activities had the ambition of building good relations, with an emphasis on social inclusion, which created a sense of local engagement and ownership of the transformational process.

The PEACE Programmes funded projects that helped build better community relationships, understanding and respect. There were economic interventions supported, which had the aim of providing opportunities for those most marginalised and vulnerable in society to access opportunities for development. However, these Programmes were not designed to deliver the economic developments or provide essential services across society for those communities considered the most disadvantaged, and who remain the most economically and socially disadvantaged today.

Cross-border Programmes are designed to reduce inequalities between countries. The INTERREG programmes designed to address issues arising from borders within Europe, have been instrumental in driving economic prosperity by assisting business development, addressing shared challenges in delivery of essential services in a border area, protection of the environment and creating transportation links and solutions.

Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland are experiencing a period of relative post-conflict stability. However, between some communities, it is still very evident that low levels of trust and high levels of residential and social segregation still exist. Issues around the expression of identity often result in community tensions and increased polarisation.

Within this context there remains a real need for the region to address a number of key issues in order to underpin the peace process on the ground. These include efforts to develop and deepen social cohesion between divided communities; increase tolerance and respect, to reduce the levels of sectarianism and racism; promote increased opportunities for prosperity, and address the legacy of the past.

PEACEPLUS Programme overview:

Building on this legacy, PEACEPLUS, a funding programme with a value of €1.14Bn, will encompass both INTERREG AND PEACE elements and continue to provide investment for the social, economic and environmental development of Northern Ireland and the six border counties of Ireland to support peace, stability, and sustainable prosperity into the future.

The Programme represents a partnership in all respects, from the financial contributions to the policy guidance. This partnership has endured throughout the past 25 years of EU funding programmes and comprises of the European Union, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive, demonstrating the continuing commitment of all parties to supporting the peace process in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland.

The Programme has two core objectives. The first involves taking opportunities to address the needs arising from the peace process to boost economic growth and stimulate social and economic

regeneration. The second centres on promoting social inclusion, particularly for those at the margins of economic and social life.

The Programme will help to address longstanding social and economic challenges which continue to impact on communities, particularly those in rural border areas, whilst recognising the ongoing challenges that exist in urban settings throughout the region, and the devastating impact of Covid 19 on society. It will also respond to the European Green Deal objectives by ensuring that sustainable development is at the core of the interventions across the Programme.

The design of the Programme reflects the importance of peace-building activity, but also the importance of actions that will contribute positively to the economy, building prosperity and adjusting to the new environment and challenges we face.

PEACEPLUS consists of six key priorities or themes, encompassing 22 investment areas.

Funding will be delivered across six themes, including: building peaceful, thriving, and inclusive communities, investing in young people, supporting a sustainable and better-connected future, building partnership and collaboration, and crucially delivering socio-economic regeneration and transformation.

How to Access Funding:

SEUPB expects meaningful community engagement throughout the design of projects applying for funding, and new innovative approaches to address societal and community challenges.

Cross-border collaboration is not strictly limited to the administrative borders of the Programme but has a flexible geography, depending on the topic concerned. What matters is that the benefits of the project are significant for the Programme area. The location of the project or the location of the partners is not a defining matter. Therefore, we encourage existing networks from across Ireland, Great Britain, Europe and globally, to get involved.

There are 22 distinct investment areas across the six themes – each standalone and addressing specific needs identified within the sectors supported.

Given this breadth of opportunity offered by the PEACEPLUS Programme, applicants are advised to consult the Navigation Papers at page 34. This useful resource sets out the scope of opportunity for a variety of sectors across multiple themes and investment areas. It should not be viewed as restrictive and is intended as a helpful guide of areas under which your organisation could be applicable for funding.

Subject to eligibility checks, applications can be submitted by a wide range of organisations, including: Local Authorities; Public Sector Bodies; Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations. The classification of partners and their roles can be found on the website.

Funding information may be found on SEUPB's website. You can also visit the PEACEPLUS support portal at <https://peaceplussupport.seupb.eu/>



Support Available:

The Peace enjoyed for so long across the Island must be protected, and preserved as we face into difficult years ahead. PEACEPLUS will support projects in the following areas:

- Building new and maintaining existing relationships on the ground between communities.
- Government administrations working together in collaboration.
- Statutory bodies collaborating on themes including environment, health, water, air, skills.
- Local Authorities in consultation with local communities supporting regeneration, and celebrating diversity, cultures and identity.
- Opportunities for young people – confidence, basic skills.
- Shared education – bringing children, their parents and teachers together.
- Addressing those most marginalised in society and integrating new communities.
- Supporting victims and survivors.
- Support for SMEs and new technologies (Smart cities/ towns and villages).
- Skills development and reskilling.
- Support for research and innovation.
- Cross-border health care investments.
- Cross-border tourism support and other sectors badly affected by the economic environment.
- Role of community innovation – addressing social challenges.
- Social Economy support including ecosystems, encouraging social entrepreneurship.
- Support for environment and biodiversity challenges.
- Mental health and wellbeing (children) interventions.

PEACEPLUS Programme Thematic Areas



Investment Areas



Theme 1



Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities

Peace and reconciliation are essential for ongoing socio-economic development and prosperity.

Sustained investment in proven pathways to social cohesion and reconciliation is needed to build peaceful and thriving communities. These investments should result in a legacy of change through physical and social improvements, prompting increased social inclusion and improved cross-community and cross-border relations.

By contributing to Building Peaceful and Thriving communities, the Programme will continue to empower communities to work together, cementing relationships through initiatives which sustain peace and leave a legacy of friendship and understanding. Engaging those most marginalised in society to become involved in improving their physical and social environment, through activities that will regenerate local areas.

The delivery of iconic spaces through the Programme by revitalizing existing space and by creating new and vibrant public realms in our cities, towns and villages will leave a lasting and shared legacy.

There has been an increase in 'new communities' and the number of minority ethnic groups in the last two decades. It is therefore important that these new communities are impacted by the work of the Programme and that thought should be given by projects funded under the Programme on how they can involve all citizens within the community in activities which lead to improved good relations.

The four investment areas include:

- Co-designed local community PEACE action plans (€110m)
- Empowering communities (€30m)
- Building positive relations (€35m)
- Re-imagining communities (€75m)

1.1 Co-designed local community PEACE action plans (€110m)

PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plans will facilitate widespread participation at local level. Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland have become increasingly culturally diverse in recent years. The introduction of community planning practices across the region holds significant potential for peace and reconciliation.

The objective of the community planning process is to improve the connections between all tiers of government and wider society to work in partnership to jointly deliver better outcomes. It encourages groups

and individuals to see themselves as part of a wider community and to consider what can be achieved through cross-community collaboration.

The PEACEPLUS Programme will resource each local authority (17 in total) to co-design local community action plans for all areas within their districts. This will result in 110,000 people from different and diverse backgrounds collaborating to identify and deliver priority projects within their communities. Thus it will make a significant contribution to building positive relations and the creation of a more cohesive society.

1.2 Empowering communities (€30m)

This will enable participation by 960 smaller organisations who can effect real change and embed peace at local community level by engaging 24,000 people through the provision of a Cross Community Change Maker Fund.

The Programme will also support 16 organisations jointly engaged in institutional capacity peacebuilding projects, trust and leadership in a broad range of organisations, including those responsible for delivering key regional services, such as transport, health, education and housing. The Programme will also support community-based safety interventions at a local level.

1.3 Building positive relations (€35m)

The Building Positive Relations Programme will support projects which transcend local boundaries and have the potential to achieve significant peace and reconciliation at the regional level. The aim of these projects will be to build and sustain relationships between 116 organisations, resulting in 58,000 citizens from all communities, across a wide range of sectors. The focus will be on minority groups and organisations which have traditionally been marginalised in society.

Reconciliation interventions between communities are designed to foster discussion between actors and develop understanding, building mutual respect and trust. These interventions are to help break down some of the social segregations that have been built as a result of physical segregation and help ease some of the previous tensions and hurt from the years of conflict.

These interventions have the objective of providing an opportunity to promote community cohesion.

1.4 Re-imagining communities (€75m)

The Re-imagining Communities Programme will invest in the transformation of the appearance and perception of 10 community spaces and assets across the region, which can potentially increase levels of cross community and cross-border contact for 50,000 participants.

The PEACE Programme has invested in many iconic shared spaces, which have become visual beacons of a changing society. It has also supported community level shared spaces, which have resulted in seismic attitudinal and behavioural changes within interface areas. There is significant opportunity to build upon this investment, to create not only new shared space facilities but also re-image existing spaces to facilitate increased and shared usage, in urban and rural areas.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 1, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)



The PEACE Programme has invested in many iconic shared spaces, which have become visual beacons of a changing society.

Theme 2



Delivering Socio-Economic Regeneration and Transformation

Economic development in post-conflict regions is necessary to underpin peace. The Programme area experiences low levels of entrepreneurship and innovation, which contributes to a high ratio of low to high paid jobs and comparatively higher levels of unemployment.

Investment in the economy, providing support for SMEs, research, and innovation in specific areas of need are among key focus areas. Support for the skills programmes, life-long learning and diversification will be available. Investment through the Programme in the social economy also has the potential to make a significant contribution to the economy and community within the region and therefore support will be offered to provide an ecosystem to underpin and grow this sector.

There is an opportunity to encourage SMEs to achieve scaling through clustering and facilitating innovation, while increasing competitiveness, productivity and export levels. The creation of Smart Towns and Villages will build upon a proven social innovation led approach, to maximise the potential of Information Communications Technology (ICT) to deliver improved social and economic outcomes, particularly in rural areas.

PEACEPLUS has been developed to create space for the social economy and entrepreneurship to play a key role in the development of communities and lead to a more peaceful and prosperous society. This could be through the smart towns and villages initiative; through activities supported by local community action plans; through small-scale projects building community capacity; in skills and wider economic development or indeed, the rural regeneration and development investment area under theme 4.

**Support for the
skills programmes,
life-long learning and
diversification will be
available.**

The four investment areas include:

- SME development and transition (€25m)
- Innovation Challenge Fund (€65m)
- Programme areas skills development (€50m)
- Smart Towns and Villages (€30m)

2.1 SME development and transition (€25m)

The SME Development and Transition Programme will build upon existing investment to support SMEs to operate at scale through cross-border collaboration; engage in commercially led innovation; effectively transition to engage in the low carbon, circular economy; support SMEs to deliver productivity improvements or transition to the latest digital tools; and strengthen the Programme area SME base for maximum engagement in a post COVID-19 economic landscape.

Support is available for 1970 SMEs (including, where appropriate, micro-businesses and start-ups) to operate at scale through the development and management of collaborative networks operating on a local, national and international basis, including industry clusters. This includes:

- SME capability assessment and mentoring programming to increase capacity in target areas, including: sustainable development practices; new product and or process development; digitisation; and post COVID-19 recovery;
- Support for SMEs to engage in commercially led innovation, which will result in the development of new products and or more efficient processes for 1,430 SMEs;
- Support for SMEs to transition to a low carbon and circular economy through the development and introduction of sustainable manufacturing practices through education awareness and incentive programmes;
- Support to help SMEs deliver LEAN / productivity improvements or transition to / utilise the latest digitisation and Industry 4.0 tools to enable increased levels of productivity and competitiveness, while driving continuous economic improvement and performance, and access to global markets.

2.2 Innovation Challenge Fund (€65m)

Sustainable growth and increased productivity are essential. This fund will provide support for consortium-led major change projects designed to create new products and processes on a cross-border basis, which will boost productivity and competitiveness.

Investment in collaborative innovation is key to the economic development of the Programme area and beyond. Innovation leads to increased levels of productivity, which in turn delivers higher export volumes and sustainable employment. It is important to support innovation at all levels but with a particular emphasis on major change projects, which will deliver significant benefit to the Programme area.

The Innovation Challenge Programme will invest in 96 enterprises, resulting in 82 SMEs introducing product or process innovation and 36 research organisations participating in joint research projects comprising stakeholders who wish to collaborate on high level innovation projects, which will deliver local and national benefits.

Investment will result in the development of strong and entrepreneurial, innovation-led eco-systems, which encompass partnerships within specific sectors, in which there is the potential for competitive advantage. The Programme will provide key complementary support for R&I elements of locally led development plans and area-based strategies, such as activities included within the Programme area investment plans including the City and Growth Deals, and the National Planning Framework, which can deliver cross-border economic co-operation.

2.3 Programme areas skills development (€50m)

Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training.

The Area Based Regional Skills Development Programme will be designed to develop and upskill 10,000 people to engage on key growth sectors, which will boost economic growth and create a more balanced regional economy. This will support five area-based approaches, designed to address evidenced skills gaps, which will result in increased productivity and employment and higher levels of cross-border labour mobility.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 2, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)

The programme will enable cross-community and cross-border collaboration between education and training based collaborations that reduce duplication and maximise the capacity of the Programme area to address existing and emerging skills gaps, and opportunities for reskilling. It will also encompass the opportunity for overseas training and job placement opportunities.

2.4 Smart Towns and Villages (€30m)

Promoting the socioeconomic inclusion of marginalised communities, low-income households and disadvantaged groups, including people with special needs, through integrated actions, including housing and social service.

The PEACEPLUS Programme will support the creation of nine jointly developed solutions for Smart Cities, Towns and Villages, to incorporate digital hubs, which will enable remote working and information communications technology (ICT) themed social innovation approaches to developing new models of delivery for key services, including health and education. This will provide greater access to and awareness of telecommunications.

An area-based approach will be adopted to the creation of Smart Towns and Villages. This proven model utilises a social innovation-led approach to maximise the potential of ICT to deliver improved social and economic outcomes in target areas; particularly those of a rural nature. The programme will also incorporate measures for the transformation of vacant spaces and facilities within town centres for communal recreational and social usage.

Theme 3



Empowering and Investing in Our Young People

Investing in young people is essential for long-term peace and prosperity.

Further Investment in our young people through the Programme will provide opportunities for young people to improve their life chances, skills, education, confidence building, creative and sporting activities, encouraging social entrepreneurship. The Programme will also focus on enhancing community leadership and ensuring that a new generation of leaders are appropriately skilled to deal with the challenges of sustaining peace and good relations.

Although the current generation of young people has not experienced direct conflict to the extent that their parents and grandparents did, they live with its legacy. Many have grown up in single identity and socio-disadvantaged areas, which have experienced under-investment. In many cases, this has contributed to lower levels of educational attainment and an inability to participate in the diverse labour market.

The Programme will address skills needs and innovative approaches to engage with these young people. The programme will build on the current models of mental health support which provide accessible, age appropriate, early prevention and recovery activities and are delivered on a cross community and cross-border basis. The aim is to progress peace and reconciliation work across pre-school, primary, post-primary and youth settings.

3.1 Shared learning together education programme (€51.3m)

The Shared Learning Together Education Programme will include supports designed to increase the level of virtual contact between young people from diverse communities – including those experiencing socio-economic deprivation,

Informed by experience and evaluation, funding will be directed towards collaborative (including cross-border) education approaches within the formal and non-formal education sectors. This will include supporting digital teacher training for 2,080 participants and increased delivery of blended and remote shared learning in the post Covid-19 teaching and learning environment.

The three investment areas include:

- Shared learning together education programme (€51.3m)
- PEACEPLUS youth programme (€47m)
- Youth mental health and wellbeing (€25m)

142,628 pupils and young people in youth settings will benefit from Shared Learning Together programmes in a range of settings, including early years settings – incorporating principles of the ‘Sharing from the Start’ model and a focus on the wider family; and in the formal education sectors – seeking to increase the number of schools participating in shared education. Programmes aimed at ending the cycle of educational disadvantage will support initiatives which address the additional learning needs of pupils at risk of underachievement, including upskilling parents to take a more active role in their children’s education. Delivery by youth organisations of cross-community and/or cross-border youth to youth programmes in the non-formal education sector will incorporate cultural awareness activities and the opportunity for significant and sustained contact, including the development of cross-border exchange programmes. Programmes to develop youth work capacity on a cross-border basis and enhance relationships between youth workers across the Programme area will also be supported.



3.2 PEACEPLUS youth programme (€47m)

Evidence suggests that many young people who are not in education, employment or training and do not have a route to any of these, particularly those from areas most impacted by the legacy of conflict/violence in the programme area, require targeted support.

The Youth Capacity and Skills Programme is a targeted capacity building programme for young people aged 14 to 21 years, who are disadvantaged, excluded or marginalised, have deep social and emotional needs, and are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, violence or paramilitary activity.

The Programme is outcomes focused across a number of key areas, including good relations, personal development, citizenship and employability. It will incorporate support to youth-focused mental health support services, including addiction counselling; access to counselling and other support services for

front line youth workers; interventions designed to address barriers to participation including childcare, transport, language and disability; and earlier intervention (14-16 years) in instances where this could prevent early disengagement from education and is complementary to mainstream provision.

9,750 participants will benefit from joint training schemes across a range of mediums – all aimed at enhancing the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationship with others of a different background, develop their confidence and future potential and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society.

Throughout the PEACE Programmes, the impact on young people who became involved in these targeted programmes has been widely accepted as being instrumental in improving their life opportunities.



3.3 Youth mental health and wellbeing (€25m)

The legacy of the conflict has left an impact on many communities in Northern Ireland and Ireland, which is still evident across generations of adults and young people. Evidence indicates that children growing up in areas of conflict demonstrate higher levels of mental ill health and anti-social behaviours, with the legacy of conflict through intergenerational transmission of trauma continuing to impact on young people's mental health and wellbeing, their ability to engage with education and their opportunities for employment.

The Youth Mental Health Programme will support additional, non-formal provision activity involving cross-community and cross-border multi-partner collaborative approaches, which will lead to improved understanding of youth mental health and wellbeing issues and the sharing of best practice across the Programme area to improve service delivery. The Programme will make a considerable contribution to peace and reconciliation through the development of enhanced emotional resilience in our young people.

75,000 participants will benefit from joint training schemes, to include training for key youth workers which builds their capacity to better support children and young people's emotional resilience and good relations. Mental health and wellbeing and youth leadership programmes will include the expansion of cross-community and cross-border youth mental health and wellbeing models; peace and reconciliation focused youth leadership programmes; and programmes which instil confidence in young people to act as agents of change, building peace for future generations.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 3, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)



Theme 4



Healthy and Inclusive Communities

The provision of adequate levels of inclusive health and social care, within economic constraints, is a challenge for all governments. Research has shown that social, economic and environmental factors can influence an individual's health outcomes.

The global pandemic shone a spotlight on the negative impact of health inequalities. Considerable developments have been made in the provision of collaborative cross-border healthcare provision in recent years, much of it funded by the INTERREG programme.

PEACEPLUS will build and expand on this work in other areas which are suitable for cross community and cross-border collaboration. There will be a renewed focus on rural and border communities in particular through initiatives which will support regeneration and reimagining of rural areas which have been most affected from a lack of investment for decades, and suffer in relation to

geographic isolation and a lack of opportunity and access to services. Rural communities have significant strengths but also face considerable challenges, which can result in inequalities, including access to healthcare provision.

Victims and survivors of the conflict must continue to be supported. The PEACE Programmes have previously invested in providing an evidence base for the most appropriate interventions and support. The PEACEPLUS Programme will build upon the provision of health and wellbeing supports and resilience-based capacity building programmes.

The three investment areas include:

- Collaborative health and social care (€97m)
- Rural regeneration and social inclusion (€50m)
- Victims and survivors (€25m)

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- Collaborative health and social care (€97m)
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4.1 Collaborative Health and Social Care (€97m);

Based upon the population profile of the Programme area, reports in recent years have indicated that communities along the border, both north and south, are lagging behind economically in stark contrast to strong economic growth and employment in other parts of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The continued existence of high levels of poverty and deprivation in border counties is linked with poor health outcomes.

Health and social care is an area in which collaborative cross-border approaches are proven to deliver considerable benefits to the citizen in the Programme area. Continued cross-border co-operation will contribute towards the more efficient delivery of health and social care services.

The extent of health inequalities across the region has been further highlighted by the impact of the pandemic. However, the pandemic also illustrated the potential for ICT to transform healthcare

services. This learning will be incorporated within the Collaborative Health and Social Care Programme, to ensure a more resilient regional health and social care sector, which contributes to improved population health and wellbeing and reduced health inequalities.

The Programme will support 82,000 beneficiaries of jointly developed and delivered health and social care solutions focusing on areas that include obesity management; renal services; addiction and suicide prevention; medicine management; coronary care / heart failure; geriatric medicine; mental health (resilience); children's mental health; and social inclusion for those with disabilities and cares.

Aiming to ensure equal access to healthcare and fostering resilience in health systems, this will be achieved through a range of collaborative, cross-border health and social care initiatives, together with community-based initiatives that address the legacy of the conflict/violence.

4.2 Rural Regeneration and Social Inclusion (€50m);

The lack of dedicated co-ordination capacity within the rural community sector was highlighted in the global pandemic, when, in contrast to urban areas, there was a severe lack of resources to co-ordinate crisis response and recovery initiatives.

The Rural Development and Regeneration Programme supports social, economic and environmental projects which contribute to the creation of healthy communities in rural areas. A strengths-based approach will result in investment in key areas including family support hubs, social enterprise, green infrastructure and social farming resulting in 25,000 participants accessing new rural facilities, enterprises and community services.

The Programme will support collaborative community development initiatives and services, including those related to health and wellbeing. This will include the deployment of human resources to coordinate collaborative approaches and delivery of core community services across designated rural boundaries; development of centralised facilities to support the provision of key family support services in settings which facilitate increased cross-community contact; and the development of green infrastructure to promote active lifestyles and support enterprise and tourism within rural areas.

The Programme will also enable the deployment of resources to support agricultural diversification programmes and development of social farms for social and economic benefit; alongside the development and delivery of rural specific programmes to support 65 social enterprises – including those focused on increasing health and wellbeing.

4.3 Victims and Survivors (€25m)

In recognition of the needs of those who have suffered from the trauma of the past, the Victims and Survivors Programme will develop the capacity for services to meet the needs of victims and survivors.

This investment area of the PEACEPLUS Programme provides an opportunity to build upon the work of the PEACE IV Programme, which supported an integrated, outcomes-based and community-led support programme for victims and survivors, improving the lives of many in the Programme area.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 4, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)

The Victims and Survivors' Programme will invest in a regional campaign to improve societal understanding of the effects of the past conflict upon the present, in a manner which improves the lives of victims and survivors and contributes to peace and reconciliation.

20,000 participants will benefit from support and services for victims and survivors, including access to trauma-informed integrated support and services including a resilience programme to address the long term and changing needs of victims and survivors. Further development of the Health and Wellbeing Casework Network will improve support and services for victims and survivors at an individual, family and community level, with improved equity of services at a geographical level.

Continuation and further development of the Advocacy Network will see increased recognition and acknowledgment of the experiences of victims and survivors.

1,000 participants will benefit from bespoke training programmes to address current and emerging needs, with continued development of a trauma-based education and training programme including online modules to extend geographical reach. Current trauma education qualifications will be extended to include a Masters level trauma specific programme. The Programme will also see investment in the development and implementation of strategies to address barriers to engagement in support and services and victims and survivors, alongside a co-designed research programme to improve support and services and provide evidence for further understanding and investment in this area.

Theme 5



Supporting a Sustainable and Better Connected Future

Our natural environment is one of our most important assets and continued enhancement and protection is critical to future economic and social development. A clean, green and accessible environment makes a major contribution to people having long, active, healthy lives as well as creating a place where people want to live, visit and invest. Strategic cross-border investment will enhance and protect the environment while strengthening the economy.

Community awareness and education are essential to ensure that everyone can play their part in protecting our environment. Community and citizen participation initiatives and education and awareness training programmes will therefore be a feature of activity across this Theme.

The consequences of the destruction of wild habitats by human activity can lead to the rapid evolutionary processes which contribute to animal-human disease transmission. The Biodiversity Programme will invest in the recovery of selected protected habitats and priority species across the region.

Environmental protection is more important than ever in the context of the substantial increase in public

expenditure. Therefore, the PEACEPLUS Programme will make a significant contribution to Sustainable Transport in the region. This will increase mobility and connectivity, while decreasing carbon emission levels.

Transport is a crucial economic driver as it connects businesses with markets and facilitates employee mobility, as well as providing access to education, health and leisure services. From a peace and reconciliation perspective, investment in transport is important to build on cross-border mobility in a sustainable manner. This investment will upgrade the Belfast to Dublin train, providing an hourly timetable and reducing the journey time.

5.1 Biodiversity, Nature Recovery and Resilience (€40m);

Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland as a single biogeographic area hosts a wide range of habitats and species of international significance. Such biodiversity assets have high potential to deliver ecosystem services such as carbon storage and water regulation. However, due to the poor or fragmented condition of many of these habitats, they are no longer contributing ecosystem services to their full potential.

The Biodiversity, Nature Recovery and Resilience Programme will promote cross-border co-operation to facilitate the recovery of selected habitats and species across the Programme area, by continuing to promote cross-border co-operation and facilitating the recovery of additional protected habitats and priority species. Investment will be directed towards further delivery of conservation actions proven to redress biodiversity loss and preserve these important environmental, social and economic assets.

The Programme will support cross-border protected site restoration that will see the delivery of further

The six investment areas include:

- Biodiversity, nature recovery and resilience (€40m);
- Marine and coastal management (€24.8m);
- Water quality and catchment management (€21m);
- Water quality water bodies (€32m);
- Geothermal energy (€20m);
- Enhanced sustainable travel connectivity (€165m)

necessary conservation measures in areas supporting the selected habitats and species to improve conservation condition and increase ecological and climate resilience.

It will also enable the cross-border development and management of nature recovery networks and nature-based projects. This will include the identification of key areas for nature recovery and the development and implementation of ecological recovery networks.

Cross-border initiatives to address invasive alien species (IAS) will also be supported. This will include the development of an all-island strategy on IAS, together with the establishment of an all-island biodiversity group; commissioning of baseline awareness surveys; and development of systems to capture and centralise all-island invasive species data.

As a result, 11,184 hectares of surface of Natura 2000 sites will be covered by protection and restoration measures and 5,300 hectares of green infrastructure supported for other purposes than adaptation of climate change, resulting in 50 management units demonstrating a positive change in conditions.

5.2 Marine and Coastal Management (€24.8m)

The marine and coastal environment in the Programme area is under pressure from both human activities and climate change, which pose a threat to Ireland and Northern Ireland's cultural and natural resources, coastal infrastructure, and public assets. This must be addressed and, given the transboundary nature of the marine environment, presents an opportunity for cross-border collaboration.

The Marine and Coastal Management Programme will enable a cross-border approach to the protection of the marine and coastal environment from potentially damaging human activities and support the development of climate change adaptation plans which will increase the resilience of ecosystems, coastal communities, infrastructure and the marine economy.

The Programme will enable the development of 17 cross-border marine protection and coastal change action plans; cross-border climate and pelagic and system studies; and cross-border natural capital, habitats and human behaviour management plans. These actions will be complemented by a range of activities, including local-level stewardship arrangements; Marine Protection Area climate change action plans; community and citizen participation initiatives; and education and awareness training programmes.

5.3 Water Quality and Catchment Management (€21m)

The Water Quality Improvement Programme will enable a cross-border collaborative approach to the management and improvement of water quality to address the requirements of the Water Framework Directive in selected cross-border catchments (freshwater bodies in cross-border river basins) located within the Programme area.

It will result in the development and management of cross-border water quality and catchment management programmes, designed to enable freshwater bodies in cross-border river basins to achieve good or high quality, and an increased percentage of shared waters in the Programme area with good or high-quality status.

The transboundary nature of water bodies across the Programme area presents an opportunity for strategic collaboration. The proposed investment will facilitate the development and implementation of cross-border best practice and technical expertise to improve water quality across the Programme area, resulting in a wide range of quantifiable benefits.

The Programme will enable a pilot or pilots for nature-based solutions or innovative nature-based solutions to restore catchments, including implementation of necessary conservation measures, water management measures to reduce runoff, nutrient loss and co-benefits relating to pesticide losses to waterways and to reduce impacts from flooding.

This will result in a project legacy initiative which develops or enhances community-focused environmental learning resources to improve understanding of cross-border catchment from environmental, cultural, social or economic views; and/or improve amenity value through nature recovery networks.

5.4 Water Quality Water Bodies (€32m)

Secondly, the Water Quality Improvement Programme will enable a cross-border collaborative approach to the management and improvement of water quality to address the requirements of the Water Framework Directive in selected water bodies.

The Programme will enable the development of water quality improvement strategies – including a comprehensive cross-border catchment plan focused on the cross-border catchments of Loughs Melvin, Erne and Donegal Bay; and projects which encourage improved pesticide practices and develop sustainable farm practices across catchments to minimise impact upon quality.

The Programme will also focus on technologies and solutions for water quality and wastewater – including research and development in wastewater treatment technologies; and the development and delivery of innovative solutions for sewage-related pressures in rural areas in the priority catchment(s), to be adopted by the local utility. This will see 5,000 (affected population) benefit from new or upgraded capacity for wastewater treatment, resulting in 1,000 members of the population connected to at least secondary public wastewater treatment.

5.5 Geothermal Energy (€20m)

Heat production is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Decarbonisation of heat is central to the EU, UK and Irish strategies to meet the 2050 net zero GHG targets. Research indicates this will require renovation and retrofit of energy efficiency measures and renewable heating in buildings, and increased use of energy from renewable sources.

The Geothermal Energy Demonstration Programme will build the knowledge, skills and capacity required to develop a policy framework and encourage Programme area investment in the geothermal technology sector. Increased usage of this renewable energy source will result in many environmental, social and economic benefits for the Programme area.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 5, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)

The Programme will include demonstration projects which build awareness regarding the benefits of, and support for, increased uptake of geothermal technologies in the residential, industrial and public sectors. This will see two pilot actions and two jointly developed solutions taken up or up-scaled by organisations.

5.6 Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity (€165m)

Increasing the level of cross-border mobility is essential for the economic and social territorial cohesion across the Programme area. Investment in transport will be a catalyst for regeneration and economic growth, in particular on the economic corridor between Belfast and Dublin, including the border counties in both Northern Ireland and Ireland.

The Enhanced Sustainable Travel Connectivity Programme will increase connectivity across the Programme area in the form of sustainable rail stock, increasing cross-border mobility through an increased and faster rail service. An investment in new sustainable rail rolling stock will facilitate the introduction of an hourly service between Dublin and Belfast.

The investment will work towards the achievement of an increase in service levels and passenger numbers, with 25,000 (days/year) time saving and 230,000,000 passenger kilometres per year resulting from upgraded intercity rail public transport. Forecasts indicate that the average daily passenger numbers benefitting from the investment are likely to be in the range of 16,000 – 18,000 by 2030, and 19,000 – 21,000 by 2040. This will make a significant contribution to improved cross-community and cross-border relations, and thus the creation of a more cohesive society across the Programme area.

Theme 6



Building and Embedding Partnership and Collaboration

Although INTERREG and PEACE have made a significant contribution towards cross-border collaboration, challenges persist. Most of the remaining obstacles arise from diverging national legislations on either side of the border, namely incompatible administrative processes or a lack of common territorial planning. Further initiatives are therefore required to minimize obstacles.

This investment area will focus on enabling joint development and management of strategies; co-operation capacity building; and identification of solutions to reduce obstacles to cross-border co-operation.

Strategic cross-border co-operation will be vital as the region seeks to recover and rebuild from recent economic turbulence. The PEACEPLUS Programme will invest in Strategic Planning and Engagement as well as

Forging Relationships between Citizens. This approach will realise essential co-operation in key areas, such as environmental protection, healthcare, energy efficiency and the economy (including tourism).

Two investment areas within this theme will focus both on institutional cross-border links and networks and also at a local level, fostering and creating borer links between communities.

The two investment areas are as follows:

- Strategic planning and engagement (€32m)
- Maintaining and forging relationships between citizens (€20m)

6.1 Strategic Planning and Engagement (€32m)

The Strategic Planning and Engagement Programme will support the engagement of strategic stakeholders targeting legal and administrative obstacles to co-operation in relevant sectors.

Investment will be directed towards enhancing cross-border co-operation to address obstacles that impact cross-border socio-economic fluidity and, more generally, the reconciliation process across the island of Ireland and the East West connection between the two islands.

The Programme will support cross-border collaboration and dialogue between 48 organisations to establish the challenges and possible solutions to facilitate increased cross-border collaboration in key sectors, including business, health care, tourism, environment (including air quality) and energy. Cross-border feasibility studies and data collection activities may be undertaken to develop solutions that address current obstacles to cross-border collaboration in key areas.

The Programme will see the joint development of two cross-border strategies (e.g. a joint tourism marketing and branding initiative and cross-border council strategies), with 12 pilot projects and demonstration initiatives developed jointly. Capacity building activity will also be supported, alongside the establishment of an all-island skills research hub to commission and foster cross-border research and innovation.

6.2 Maintaining and Forging relationships between Citizens (€20m) - The Cross-border Change Maker Funds

The Trust Building Measures between Citizens Programme will put in place mechanisms to finance small scale projects or people to people projects that make a strong contribution to the social and civic cohesion of cross-border region. There will be a focus on joint actions to promote citizens' co-operation and trust-building, linking up small organisations cross-border that work directly with citizens, including community groups (for example, sports clubs, cultural organisations), schools, regional SMEs and organisations in the social economy sector.

The objective will strengthen trust-building activities among citizens as a founding pillar for cross-border co-operation, with 10,000 individuals participating in small scale projects to promote citizens' co-operation around specific shared challenge, such as climate change. This will also see 400 organisations participate in North-South joint events and activities that develop mutual understanding and cement partnership, and trust building activities such as linking up sports clubs, cultural organisations and community groups.

(For all Output Indicators and Result Indicators for Theme 6, see: https://www.seupb.eu/sites/default/files/202305/PEACEPLUS_Overview_24052023.pdf)

Local Authorities and the Co-design Process

Whilst engagement with local authorities in the region has always been a key focus in PEACE Programmes, PEACEPLUS has an emphasis on the concept of co-design.

The development of a PEACEPLUS Local Authority Action Plan ensured that local authorities established a PEACEPLUS Partnership – an entity that provides oversight of the co-design process, development, submission of the PEACEPLUS Action Plan and its subsequent implementation. The partnership, bringing together locally elected representatives, community representatives and staff of the councils, is instrumental in ensuring the plan addresses local need.

The proposed PEACEPLUS Local Authority Action Plan model will result in the management of PEACEPLUS co-design sessions specific to agreed areas / themes. These sessions will facilitate local people to co-design a schedule of priority projects which will feed into one overall PEACEPLUS Action Plan, developed for each of the 17 local councils in the Programme area. Co-design is a participatory approach in which community representatives/beneficiaries are treated as equal collaborators in the design process.

The Cross-border Change Maker Funds (6.2) and Cross Community Change Maker Funds (1.2)

An important element of the PEACEPLUS Programme will be funds available for communities and organisations to avail of directly in a more simplified form, but still resulting in a significant impact.

Change Maker Funds will be programmes to deliver awards of up to €100,000 directly into communities. These will be provided under themes 1 (Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities) and 6 (Building and Embedding Partnerships and Collaboration).

They will focus on activities which enhance community cohesion and also bring communities and groups together on a cross-border basis, embedding and enhancing existing relationships, and establishing new relationships and networks. These Funds will be

available to all groups – statutory or community – and flexible in the activity that they deliver, but with a strong focus on improving cross community and cross-border relationships.

The application and implementation process for projects will be delivered in a streamlined manner reflecting the lower amounts of grants when compared to other investment areas of the programme.

These will be distributed in tranches across several years, with no restriction on the number of times organisations wish to apply, and will be delivered on behalf of SEUPB by Pobal and a Northern Ireland partner.

How does the Programme apply the Horizontal Principles?

The Horizontal Principles are issues that touch on four general principles relating to democracy, equality, sustainability and good governance. These are the ideas and values which should be considered across every project, and throughout the whole life of projects. Many of the four principles are connected and so they are measured together.

Projects can identify with which category they align, and we have provided guidance on what projects are likely to align with based on the content of

each call. This guidance will outline how SEUPB will measure contribution to the Horizontal Principles in the project selection process, and what you can do to both enhance these values in your own project and communicate how you will do that through the application process.

Further information about the Horizontal Principles can be found here:
https://static.gluons.ai/com_Qnwc2EZmEg/support/Horizontal_Principles_Applicant_Guidance.pdf

The Horizontal Principles

Respect for Fundamental Rights



Equality Between Man and Women



Taking Steps to Prevent Discrimination



Promoting Sustainable Development



Sustainable Development:

The Programme has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment to ensure that it supports activity that will promote sustainable development. Projects must demonstrate how they will minimise any adverse impact they may have on the environment. All projects in all themes must comply with the Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted by the European Council in June 2006.

Equal Opportunities:

The Programme and its projects shall comply with Northern Ireland Equality Legislation and Disability Discrimination Legislation in its preparation and implementation, as well as its monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

Navigation Papers

Businesses, community groups and other interested parties can apply for PEACEPLUS funding via the six different themes and their respective investment areas. Given the vast areas of support available in the Programme, the SEUPB has created a range of useful sectoral-based Navigation Papers, which set out the wide range of opportunities for potential applications by sector. These are summarised in the table below, and more information can be found on the PEACEPLUS portal:

SECTOR	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6
Under-Represented Groups	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	2.3	4.1 4.2 4.3	4.1 4.2 4.3		6.2
Health Sector	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	2.3	3.3	4.1 4.2 4.3		6.2
Environment Sector	1.1 1.2 1.4	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4	3.2	4.2		6.1 6.2
Community and Voluntary Sector	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	2.3 2.4	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1 4.2	5.1	6.2
SME Involvement		2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4				
Business Sector	1.1	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4	3.2	4.2	5.5 5.6	6.1
Youth Sector	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	2.3	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1 4.2	5.1	6.2
Tourism Sector	1.1 1.4	2.1 2.3		4.2	5.6	
Skills Development	1.1	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4	3.1 3.2	4.1 4.2		
Rural Communities	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	2.3 2.4	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1	5.1	6.2

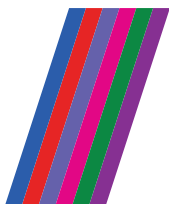
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