



PRESS RELEASE

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**NEW RED CROSS PROJECT PROMOTES GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN
TRADITIONAL AND NEWLY ESTABLISHED NORTHERN IRELAND COMMUNITIES**

A new British Red Cross project will develop better integration and good relations between PUL (Protestant, Unionist and Loyalist) and CNR (Catholic, Nationalist and Republican) communities with refugees and other migrants in Northern Ireland.

The 3 year project entitled PRISM (Promoting Reconciliation and Integration through Safe Mediation) has received £750,000 funding from the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The British Red Cross will lead a team of experts in the fields of peace building, multi-cultural promotion and support to bring people from all communities together through creative activities. The aim is to increase participants' familiarity with and understanding of cultures different from their own, by helping them find what they have in common.

The project acknowledges the challenges that go with a growing population of refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants within an already segregated community. It will facilitate activities in seven locations; including Belfast, Antrim, Craigavon, Derry/Londonderry, Dungannon and Newry. The project also has a research element, gathering information that can be used afterwards to build upon the lessons learned and share successful community contact approaches with other parts of Northern Ireland.

Speaking at the launch, British Red Cross Director Sharon Sinclair said: **"This is an exciting and important project which aims to provide a better understanding of how a divided society so deeply committed to reinforcing peace and stability can find common ground, and work towards breaking down the barriers caused by racism and sectarianism. The research results will give a better understanding of what needs to happen to make a real and positive difference within and between local communities to include refugees and other migrants in Northern Ireland."**

Underlining the importance of the PRISM project Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB said: **“This project reflects the core ethos of the PEACE IV Programme which is to build positive relations in this region, between all communities. This cross border project has been designed to specifically support minority groups that have been marginalised within our society, by encouraging sustained contact between all the participants.”** she continued.

Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development in Ireland.

ENDS

Notes to editors

The British Red Cross helps people in crisis, whoever and wherever they are. We are part of a global voluntary network, responding to conflicts, natural disasters and individual emergencies. We enable vulnerable people in the UK and abroad to prepare for and withstand emergencies in their own communities. And when the crisis is over, we help them to recover and move on with their lives.

www.redcross.org.uk

About the partners

SEUPB

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland.
- It is responsible for managing two EU Structural Funds Programmes, PEACE IV and INTERREG VA which are designed to enhance cross-border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society.



- The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and in the case of INTERREG VA, Western Scotland.
- The PEACE IV Programme has a value of €270 million and aims to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders.
- For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu

ArtsEkta

ArtsEkta (Ekta means 'uniting' in the Indian language) is a multi-award winning cultural organisation that works to develop intercultural relationships at the heart of the community and is home to the Belfast Mela - the largest celebration of cultural diversity on the island of Ireland. Bringing together communities of Belfast and beyond, the charity creates projects that inspire audiences to engage with the diversity, tastes, rhythms and sights that make up the multicultural life of Northern Ireland. Over the last decade the organisation has grown dramatically in size and scope and is now recognised as one of the region's leading arts charities and a pioneer in the development of intercultural arts for Northern Ireland.

Corrymeela

Corrymeela has over 50 years' experience in working across the Community divide in N.I. They have extensive experience in the design and delivery of programmes that work directly in creating "safe spaces" where conflict resolution and community dialogue can take place. They have been directly involved in exploring the developing issue of diversity as the demographic landscape of N.I. changes. They have supported a range of diversity training initiatives building networks across N.I.

Irish Red Cross

The Irish Red Cross' mission is to identify and deliver impartial humanitarian assistance to those who are most in need, offering hope to vulnerable communities both at home and abroad. Irish Red Cross work at home includes first aid and ambulance cover by Irish Red Cross volunteers nationwide, rescue services and a suite of different programmes which help people in local communities across the country. The Irish Red Cross is playing a key role in resettling Syrian refugees in Ireland while it also runs a restoring family links programme. Irish Red Cross international work sees the charity fundraise for various



Northern Ireland - Ireland

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appeals and provide hands-on practical support on the ground to vulnerable communities overseas.

International Committee of the Red Cross

The ICRC is a world renowned humanitarian organisation that specialises in conflict resolution and promoting International Humanitarian Law. The ICRC tackles humanitarian problems in N.I. arising from violence and the legacy of conflict. The ICRC has a number of projects and initiatives that deal with the impact of violence or the legacy of conflict. It works with community-based organisations across N.I. seeking to ease sectarian tension and to limit violence within or between communities.