



PRESS RELEASE

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BOOSTING THE IMPACT OF PEACE – YOUTH PACT: LAUNCH OF YOUTH PACT

Co-operation Ireland and the Ulster University are to partner on an EU PEACE IV funded project to support to a cross-border programme aimed at helping disadvantaged young people.

The National Youth Council of Ireland and POBAL will also form part of the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB), which manages the PEACE IV Programme, funded consortium that will work with cross community youth projects to boost their impact, quality and success rate.

The consortium will operate under the name YouthPact whose role will be to provide training and signposting for staff from the delivery projects.

The purpose of the work is to maximise the impact of the programme by supporting a high-quality youth work approach, concentrating on methods which yield sustainable outcomes for children and young people.

The already launched youth programmes are targeted at 14-24 year olds living in the Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. These are young people who have lived the majority of their lives in 'peace', yet feel the visible and invisible ripple effects of the conflict in their everyday lives.

The programmes seek to enhance the capacity of young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society.

The projects are being delivered as part of the EU PEACE IV 'Peace4Youth' programme and will last for four years.



Speaking at the launch, Peter Sheridan, Chief Executive of Co-operation Ireland said: **“The best way to reach young people and help them acquire skills that they will use throughout their lives is by getting them involved with groups that provide fantastic programmes.**

"These programmes will light a spark that we are confident will set the young people off on their journey towards a bright and positive future.

"YouthPact is about helping our delivery partners come together to share strategies to better reach those young people most marginalised.

"I would like to thank SEUPB for the great opportunity to be involved in this innovative project and am confident that we as a partnership will be able to bring a wealth of knowledge to the strategic development of the PEACE IV Children and Young People’s Programme."

Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB said: **“YouthPact is an integral coordination aspect of the EU PEACE IV funded work that will benefit thousands of children and young people on a cross-border basis. This work, delivered on the ground by ten projects across the region, will help to foster the development of individuals’ confidence, motivation and self-respect as well as respect for others.**

“In doing so it will also help to break the cycle of distrust and division that still exists within our society and is passed from one generation to the next”.

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 for Editors

YouthPact is the Quality and Impact Body for the EU Peace IV Children & Young People’s Programme (Specific Action 2.1). YouthPact is a cross-border partnership of four regional



organisations: Co-operation Ireland as Lead Partner, Ulster University, the National Youth Council of Ireland and Pobal.

The PEACE IV Programme related to Specific Objective 2: Children & Young People is for €37.6m including ERDF + match funding.

YouthPact has been awarded €1.16mil by the European Union's Peace IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Co-operation Ireland defines its mission as working in partnership to:

- Facilitate understanding, positive relationships and co-operation across these islands.
- Create a supportive environment by building capacity, influencing policy, and developing collaboration at a strategic level
- Share learning and experience of peace building and practical co-operation internationally

The National Youth Council of Ireland has been the representative body for voluntary youth organisations for 50 years. NYCI's vision is of an Ireland where all young people are empowered to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to realise their potential and to actively participate in an inclusive society that values and respects them.

Pobal supports social and economic development in Ireland. It works across sectors including early childhood care, education, social inclusion, employment, cross border programmes and peace-building. Pobal focusses on supporting communities to achieve social inclusion, reconciliation and equality through integrated social/ economic development. It was a primary implementing agent in successive PEACE Programmes, and served as a hub for all-island programmes relating to local and community development on both sides of the border.

Ulster University has been involved in EU funded projects for many years as partner and coordinator from the earliest Framework programmes, EU Programmes for Peace and Reconciliation, and others such as ERASMUS. The University has a wealth of experience in successfully delivering collaborative research, innovation and impact



projects. UU's Community Youth Work team has a long-standing commitment and passion for young people to play an active role in peace-building.

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SEUPB

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance 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