



YOUR EU!

An update on the European Union's PEACE and INTERREG Programmes
WINTER 2016/17



RNIB - 'Need to Talk' project



Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020

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Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

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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. The Body was established on 2 December 1999, under the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland (8 March 1999), which created the implementing bodies.

The Special EU Programmes Body's principal function is to provide the Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat functions for the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Territorial Co-operation Programmes (2014-2020). It also has a signposting and supporting role for projects wanting to engage with the INTERREG VB Transnational and INTERREG VC Inter-regional Programmes.

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Welcome to the winter edition of Your EU!

It is with the greatest delight that we are bringing you such a positive update on the progress of the European Union's PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Programmes.

Following the outcome of the UK Referendum on EU membership, there was a period of great uncertainty regarding the continued availability of funding for the EU programmes, and much work was undertaken to bring security to the current programming period, culminating in a joint announcement by Minister Ó Muilleoir and Minister Donohoe at the end of October 2016.

Following that announcement confirming the funding arrangements, SEUPB issued offers of assistance for a number of projects across many sectors, supported by both Programmes.

The INTERREG VA Programme is almost entirely committed, and significant work is underway in the PEACE IV Programme assessing a high volume of applications within a number of multi-million euro funding calls such as the 'Regional Level' and 'Shared Spaces' objectives of the Programme.

We have provided £13.4 million of support from the PEACE IV Programme to the health and well-being of victims and survivors of

the conflict, on a cross-border basis, which will be delivered through the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS). Approximately €81 million has also been allocated to local authorities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. This funding will be used to support a new wave of localised peace and reconciliation projects across the entire region.

Within the INTERREG VA Programme €23 million has been awarded to three separate greenway projects, and these initiatives will open up new eco-friendly travel routes for cyclists and pedestrians on both sides of the border. In excess of €47.5 million has been offered to eight highly innovative health and social care projects, including €1.8 million for the 'Need to Talk' project, which will be delivered by RNIB. This funding will be used for counselling and other support services for people who are suffering from sight loss.

A project supporting SMEs has been awarded €16.6 million. The 'Co-Innovate' project will be delivered by Intertradelreland and partners to develop the innovation capacity of thousands of SMEs and microbusinesses across the region. A further €23m has also been offered to Ulster University to deliver three highly innovative projects within the fields of Health & Life Science and Renewable Energy.



As always, the SEUPB will continue to play an active signposting and facilitation role in the new transnational (INTERREG VB) and interregional (INTERREG VC) Programmes for 2014-2020, encouraging organisations in Northern Ireland to avail of those Programmes.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy this edition of Your EU, and I would welcome your feedback or comments on the content, as we strive to ensure that the hard work of all our funded projects gets due recognition.

Gina McIntyre
Chief Executive, SEUPB

EU funding set to help transform health and social care

Approximately €47.5m worth of EU funding has been offered to eight cross-border health and social care projects that will transform the quality of life of tens of thousands of people.

The funding will be used to help reduce health inequalities that exist across the region. It will move essential healthcare services from a hospital-based setting directly into the community.

The funding will also increase efficiencies and reduce healthcare costs through increased use of new and innovative e-health technologies.

A number of the projects funded will be led by the Health Service Executive on behalf of the CAWT Partnership, alongside Health and Social Care NI (made up of the Health and Social Care Board, the Public Health Agency, Southern and Western Health and Social Care Trust) and NHS 24 (based in Scotland).

Match-funding for the projects has been provided by the Departments of Health in Northern Ireland and Ireland, alongside the Scottish Government.

One of the projects, in receipt of €1.8m worth of funding will be delivered on a cross-border basis by



Pictured celebrating the €1.8 million EU INTERREG VA funding offer for the cross-border RNIB 'Need to talk' project are (l-r) Gina McIntyre CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), RNIB service user Ken Carson and Director of RNIB NI David Galloway.

the RNIB. Called 'Need to Talk' it will provide counselling services and confidence building programmes for people affected by sight loss.

The project aims to address the social isolation and emotional distress which is often experienced by people with sight loss; specifically for people living in more rural areas where access to public transport is limited.

€7.6m has also been offered for the 'Cross-Border Recovery Network' project to help develop a more collaborative approach to working with people suffering from mental

illness, where they become partners in their own recovery process.

It represents a radical shift from a medical model of treatment of people who have experienced mental health issues towards a more social model and has a target of supporting up to 8,000 people on both sides of the border.

E-health solutions will also be used in the delivery of the project to enable continuation of the mental health recovery process.

Support announced for Victims and Survivors

£13.4m has been awarded, under the PEACE IV Programme, to support the health and well-being of victims and survivors of the troubles/conflict, on a cross-border basis.

The funding will be delivered through the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) and will benefit up to 17,650 victims and survivors and members of their families across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Building upon the valuable work supported through previous PEACE Programmes, this new allocation of funding will include the provision of health and wellbeing support to address the complex needs of victims and survivors.

The VSS will be responsible for distributing funding to community and voluntary organisations to support staff as advocate and health

VSS

VICTIMS & SURVIVORS SERVICE

& wellbeing caseworkers that will facilitate improved access for individuals to engage in resilience building activities.

It will also support victims and survivors engaging with new and existing bodies involved in historical investigations and narrative associated with the conflict.

Recognising the importance of the funding Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB said: "This funding will add real value by investing in cross-border health and well-being services that will increase the capacity and quality of care for

Victims and Survivors and their families.

"It will build upon the valuable work that has been undertaken by previous PEACE Programmes for Victims and Survivors by building capacity for professionally delivered, cross-border support services," she continued.

Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in Ireland.

VSS

EU supports the fight against lung disease

Approximately €7.7m has been offered under the European Union's INTERREG VA Programme for a pioneering cross-border research project, designed to better understand and ultimately alleviate the impact of lung disease.

Called BREATH (Border and Regions Airways Training Hub) the project will be delivered by a unique partnership led by the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), alongside Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and the University of the West of Scotland.

It will establish a world-class cluster of researchers, involving collaborations between scientists and clinicians, that will help address the causes, treatment and potential prevention of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

COPD is an incurable respiratory condition characterised by progressive airflow reduction, breathing difficulties and irreversible lung damage (emphysema). The condition significantly impairs quality of life and has a high cost to health services and the wider economy.

In 2011 the annual economic burden of COPD across the EU was estimated at approximately €141.4 billion.



Pictured (l-r) welcoming the project are Gina McIntyre CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), (seated) Dr Keith Thornbury Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dr Lorcan McGarvey QUB and Dr Lorraine Martin QUB.

COPD-related hospital admission is higher in Ireland than any other developed country and the condition is also prevalent across Scotland and Northern Ireland.

In Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway COPD-related hospital admission is amongst the highest in the UK and hotspots also occur throughout Northern Ireland, particularly in major urban areas and in the Border Region of Ireland.

Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in Ireland, the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland and the University of the West of Scotland.

Recognising the importance of the project Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB, said: "This EU-funded project will establish a world-class cluster of researchers who, by working in partnership, will make a positive difference to the fight against a debilitating health issue which effects many people living across the UK and Ireland.

"It will also provide excellent development opportunities for a number of PhD students and has strong potential to create spin-off benefits for all of those involved," she continued.

Local authorities offered €81m to help action PEACE IV

Approximately €81.2m worth of funding under the EU's PEACE IV Programme has been allocated to local authorities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

The funding will be used in the delivery of a large number of localised projects that will promote positive relations between people from a diverse range of communities and backgrounds.

Local authorities were a key player in ensuring that EU funding was provided at a grass roots level under the previous PEACE Programme and this will continue until the end of PEACE IV.

Each local authority in receipt of funding will be responsible for the delivery of a 'PEACE Action Plan' focused on three distinct areas including support for 'Children & Young People', 'Shared Spaces and Services' and 'Building Positive Relations'.

The funding will be used in the delivery of local community initiatives for children and young people involving sports, arts, culture and language.

It will help make public spaces in cities, towns and villages more inclusive, on both sides of the border.



Children from Ballymena Polish Saturday School perform at a celebration event for the North East Peace Partnership under the previous PEACE III Programme.

The funding will also be used to help assist conflict resolution activities in local communities to encourage greater levels of positive interaction between residents from divided neighbourhoods.

The funding represents one of the key pillars of the PEACE IV Programme in terms of supporting the continuation of the peace process through understanding and reconciliation.

Match-funding has been provided by the Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and

Local Government in Ireland.

Highlighting the importance of the funding Gina McIntyre CEO of the SEUPB, said: "Building on the successful experience in previous PEACE Programmes, the local authority-led partnership mechanism, representing the public, private and community sectors, is again being utilised to distribute funds at the local level.

"The partnership is the ideal vehicle to ensure that EU funding is invested within community-based projects that will make real and lasting change," she continued.

Main Feature – Ministers visit Derry-Londonderry

Towards the end of last year the Executive Minister of Finance Máirtín Ó Muilleoir and the Irish Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe visited a number of PEACE and INTERREG funded projects across the city of Derry-Londonderry.

Under the last programming period (2007-2013) the city received approximately €89 million worth of funding under both Programmes. Just over the border Donegal also received a high level of funding amounting to €42 million in the same period.

During the visit the Ministers were given a brief tour of the Peace bridge which was officially launched back in 2011. This tour was quickly followed by a visit to the Nerve Centre, which was responsible for the delivery of two youth focused PEACE III-funded projects, 'Teaching Divided Histories' and 'Fab Lab'.

The 'Teaching Divided Histories' project brought together post-primary teachers, from both sides of the border, in the use of digital media, film imagery, animation and webcasting to explore common experiences of peace building.

The 'Fab Lab' project was designed to support peace and stability

through the provision of a community and enterprise training programme for young jobseekers on a cross-community basis.

Highlighting the importance of the visit the Executive's Finance Minister Máirtín Ó Muilleoir, said: "This visit was an excellent opportunity to see first-hand the benefits EU funding has brought to the North West. The region received approximately €130 million from the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes and this is testament to the vision and the hard work of those involved in developing and implementing projects. The North West is at the forefront of cross-border working

and I, along with those I have met, are ardent supporters of the positive impacts these interventions bring to the local communities and the region."

"I look forward to the implementation of PEACE IV and INTERREG VA projects in the region. I am committed to working with Executive colleagues and the Irish government to ensure we continue to deliver projects on a cross-border basis that make a positive impact on the ground," he continued.

Visiting PEACE funded projects for the first time Ireland's Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform,



Pictured (l-r) at the Nerve Centre are Anne-Marie Donnelly, a Project Manager from 'Playtrails', Minister Paschal Donohoe, CEO of the SEUPB Gina McIntyre, John Peto (back, centre), and Minister Máirtín Ó Muilleoir alongside children from Ardnashee School and College.

Donohoe and Ó Muilleoir

Paschal Donohoe TD, said: "I am pleased to be in Derry where the Peace bridge is a very visible demonstration of the support that the European Union has given to the process of peace building and reconciliation over almost a quarter of a century. It is important that such funding continues.

"The Irish Government is committed to the successful implementation of the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes to 2020 and beyond. We are proud that we were able to secure EU funding for the current PEACE Programme and are determined to reach agreement with the EU and UK on successor programmes so that the valuable work I have seen today can continue," he continued.

Whilst in the city of Derry Minister Donohoe met with representatives of CAWT, an organisation dedicated to facilitating cross-border health and social care initiatives. Under the last programming period they were the lead partner in a number of health initiatives which improved the quality of life for tens of thousands of people living on both sides of the border.

CAWT will also be a lead partner in a number of new healthcare projects under the current INTERREG VA Programme.



Pictured (l-r) on the Peace bridge are Minister Máirtín Ó Muilleoir, CEO of the SEUPB Gina McIntyre, Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council Alderman Hilary McClintock and Minister Paschal Donohoe.

For the final part of the visit the Ministers were given a tour of the Catalyst Innovation Centre. The INTERREG IVA funded project involved the construction of a 50,000 sq ft science park facility at Fort George and a 20,000 sq ft extension to the CoLab facility at Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

Now completed, both facilities act as a satellite park of the internationally acclaimed Catalyst Inc, thereby extending the reach of the organisation into the whole of the North West Business Technology Zone.



Pictured (l-r) at the Innovation Centre (Catalyst Inc) are Minister Paschal Donohoe and Minister Máirtín Ó Muilleoir.

Colombian visit to Girdwood Community Hub

Towards the end of last year the President of the The Republic of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos Calderon visited the award winning PEACE III-funded Girdwood Community Hub during a one day visit to Belfast.

President Santos was welcomed to Girdwood by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Alderman Brian Kingston. During his visit President Santos took time to meet with local politicians, community representatives, school

groups and members of the Colombian community now living in Belfast.

Following this visit another delegation from the Republic of Colombia came back to Belfast to learn more about the peace process.

The delegation included representatives from Educapaz, the National Programme for Peace Education in Colombia, the Unit for the Attention and Reparation of

Victims as well as the Colombian Reintegration Agency, responsible for the reintegration of organized illegal armed groups back into society.

As part of their itinerary the delegation were given a walking tour of a Belfast peace line, which was facilitated by two beneficiaries of the PEACE III Programme, Coiste and EPIC.

As soon as the tour was completed the delegation was invited by Belfast Metropolitan College to see at first-hand their new premises within Girdwood Community Hub, funded through the PEACE III Programme and officially opened last year.

Gina McIntyre, the CEO of the SEUPB was invited by the delegation to deliver a presentation on the history and impact of the PEACE Programme, which was followed by a detailed Q&A session.

This gave the delegation an opportunity to learn more about the peace and reconciliation approaches delivered via the PEACE Programme and consider what lessons could be brought back to their own country.



Colombian delegates attending a presentation from the SEUPB at the Girdwood Community Hub in North Belfast.

UK Deputy Perm Rep to the EU witnesses benefits of PEACE & INTERREG

The SEUPB was recently asked to host a short visit to Northern Ireland by the Deputy UK Permanent Representative to the EU, Shan Morgan.

Shan Morgan represented the UK on the Committee of the Deputy Representatives of the Member States in the Council from 2012 to 2016.

Before starting at UKRep in July 2012, Shan was British Ambassador to Argentina and Paraguay (2008-2012). During this period she was appointed to the Foreign Office's Board of Management.

Shan transferred to the Diplomatic Service in 2006 as Director European Union in the Foreign Office, responsible for negotiations on the Lisbon Treaty and management of the UK parliamentary process of ratification.

On the morning of her visit, Shan was given a presentation and quick tour of the PEACE III-funded Girdwood Community Hub, located in an interface area of North Belfast.

Supported with approximately £11.7m worth of assistance Girdwood Community hub is situated at Girdwood Park, a site formerly used by the British Army.

The Hub was officially opened last



Pictured (l-r) are Gina McIntyre CEO of the SEUPB, Shan Morgan UK Deputy Perm Representative to the EU and Betty Carlisle OBE, along with two local children who use the facility.

year following a decade of discussion on what should be done with the space. The surrounding area had long been the focus of sectarian-based violent clashes between young people from nearby Protestant and Catholic communities.

The project was led by Belfast City Council, the Department for Social Development, Belfast Metropolitan College and the Girdwood Community Hub Forum.

Caroline Wilson from Belfast City Council alongside Mary Conor from the Thorndale, Kinnaird & Duncairn (TDK) Community Group gave Shan a detailed presentation on the history of the project and outlined the

benefits that it is bringing to the local community.

In the afternoon Shan was introduced to Betty Carlisle OBE, responsible for the management of the Shankill Women's Centre.

The centre received over £700,000 worth of funding under the PEACE III Programme to completely transform a derelict church into a modern cross-community focused childcare facility with the capacity to accommodate 31 daytime and 32 afterschool placements. Called 'Small Wonders II' classrooms were also created at the top of the facility to help women develop new skills and access employment.

Regional Funding Call update



A total of 31 stage one applications were received under this funding call within the PEACE IV Programme which closed in September of last year.

With a value of €16.4 million the call aims to promote positive relations where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

Whilst there has been a significant and sustained reduction in the overall level of violence directly related to the conflict, there is still evidence of continued sectarianism and racism.

Higher levels of ethnic diversity alongside large areas of socio-

economic deprivation presents new challenges for the achievement of greater integration and citizenship within society.

Due to the history of the division in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland, some parts of society have not yet developed the capacity to deal positively with diversity and difference.

Projects to be supported under this part of the PEACE IV Programme will provide meaningful and purposeful contact between individuals and groups of different backgrounds on a cross-border basis.

Successfully funded projects will play particular attention to minority groups

and groups who traditionally have been marginalised in society so that they are given a voice and are better able to integrate.

Projects funded under the call will support young and older people, women, the faith community, as well as those suffering from physical or mental disability arising from the legacy of the conflict.

The projects must be able to have an impact on a regional basis across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Funding announcements under the call are anticipated later in the year.

Shared Spaces Funding call update

A total of 33 applications were received under this funding call which closed at the end of January. With a total value of €52.9 million the call will result in the creation of eight capital developments that will create new shared spaces across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Successful applicants must be able to demonstrate that their project will have a transformative effect on the surrounding area, as well as having significance at a regional level.

Applications must also incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, inclusive of minimal carbon emissions.

Examples of projects funded under the previous PEACE Programme include the iconic Peace bridge in Derry-Londonderry, the Skainos Centre in East Belfast and the Girdwood Community Hub in North Belfast.

The creation of new shared spaces, within areas of contested space, was a strong feature of the previous PEACE Programme and will play an integral part in the implementation of PEACE IV.

It does however require a great deal of work with local communities.



Termon Complex project facility in the twin villages of Pettigo (Donegal) and Tullyhommon (Enniskillen).

A great example of this, under the PEACE III Programme, was the creation of the Termon Complex which has helped to transform the twin villages of Pettigo (in Donegal) and Tullyhommon (in Enniskillen).

The project was led by Donegal County Council, in partnership with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and the Association for the Development of Pettigo and Tullyhommon (ADoPT).

The funding has enabled development of the Termon Complex, a multi-purpose community facility comprising a black box theatre, sporting facilities, pre-school childcare facility, play-park and a Welcome Centre as well as the

refurbishment of the local Methodist Hall.

Through the funding significant regeneration was facilitated in both villages, including the development of a riverside park and construction of a pedestrian footbridge linking the villages across the River Termon.

Match-funding for successful projects will be provided by Ireland's Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government and the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland.

Further updates on this core objective of the PEACE IV Programme will be available in future editions of Your EU.

EU helps to protect life beneath the waves

Approximately €6.3 million worth of INTERREG VA funding has been offered for a ground-breaking environmental project that will both protect and increase our understanding of oceanic life.

The funding award has been offered to the Agri-Food Biosciences Institute (AFBI) for the 'COMPASS' project, which will create a state-of-the-art network of buoys to effectively track, model and monitor aquatic life and oceanographic processes, on a cross-border basis.

The network will produce new marine monitoring data for emerging areas of environmental concern including ocean acidification and the long-term impact of ambient noise on sea-life. It will also help some of the region's International, European and national biodiversity obligations.

Distinctly cross-border in nature 'COMPASS' will deliver a clearer understanding of what changes in the oceanographic climate have on underwater habitats, fauna and flora across the region. It will also develop hi-tech acoustic tag programmes to understand the migration patterns, behaviour and mortality of salmon and sea trout in the North Western part of the Irish Sea.

The interregional perspective will allow data to be captured and shared



Pictured in front of the research vessel that will be used by the project are Dr Sinclair Mayne AFBI Chief Executive and CEO of the SEUPB, Gina McIntyre.

across Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland. The coordination of monitoring activities will help to prepare the data for outputs into regional and international monitoring programmes.

The project integrates the knowledge and expertise of five key regional organisations including AFBI, the Marine Institute in Galway, Inland Fisheries Ireland, Marine Scotland

Science and the Scottish Association of Marine Science. Collectively they represent the main marine science organisations in the eligible region.

Match-funding for the project has been provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in Ireland, along with the Scottish Government.

Three new R&I projects secure millions in funding

Ulster University has successfully applied for over €23 million worth of EU funding for three truly innovative projects within the fields of Health & Life Sciences and Renewable Energy.

Awarded under the Research and Innovation objective of the INTERREG VA Programme the funding will help build effective cross-border collaboration partnerships across the region.

Under the collective funding award €6.4 million has been offered for the 'SPIRE 2' project which will help develop a range of wide-scale mass renewable energy storage devices to meet current and future electricity market needs.

Upon its completion the project will contribute to the region meeting targets set under the EU's 2020 Renewable Energy Directive that will increase the use of renewable energy sources across all member states.

€8.1 million has been offered for the 'Eastern Corridor Medical Engineering Centre' (ECME) project which will help collate invaluable research data and knowledge in the fight against certain diseases.

The project will collect cross-border data on cardiovascular and respiratory disease for use in the creation of early 'point-of-care'

detection systems. It will also investigate the usage of wearable technologies that will record and monitor patient vital signs outside of a hospital setting.

€8.6 million has also been offered for the 'Centre for Personalised Medicine, Clinical Decision Making & Patient Safety' (CPM) project. CPM has been designed to improve clinical decision-making, personalised to the individual patient through collaborative academic, clinical and industry-based research. This will contribute to improved, safer and more cost effective healthcare for people living on both sides of the border.

The project will focus on five common disease areas including primary coronary intervention in myocardial infarction; emergency surgery; acute kidney injury; diabetes care and dementia.

Through close collaboration working between the academic, clinical and commercial sector the project has the potential to improve the health of thousands of people, on a cross-border basis.

Match-funding for the projects has been provided by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in Ireland and the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland.



A green way forward for cross-border travel

The INTERREG VA Programme has offered approximately €23.7 million in funding for three new cross-border greenway projects that will open up new sustainable travel routes for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Greenways are corridors of land that are recognised for their ability to connect people and places together. They exist throughout the UK and Ireland and can be used equally by cyclists, walkers and joggers.

Supported by the EU's INTERREG VA Programme the projects aim to increase the number of cross-border journeys made by cycling or walking by up to 10% across the region by 2023.

€14.86 million has been offered to the 'North West Greenways Network' that will create a network of 46.5km of new greenways through three distinct routes connecting: Derry-Londonderry via Pennyburn to Bunrana; Muff Village to Derry via Culmore; and Strabane to Lifford via Lifford Bridge. These routes have been carefully selected to achieve the greatest impact on carbon emission reduction.

Derry City and Strabane District Council will act as lead partner for the project alongside partners Donegal County Council, Transport NI and Sustrans.



€3.46 million worth of EU funding has been offered for the development of the 'Carlingford Lough Greenway' which will create 10.1km of new cross-border greenway, linking Newry City in Northern Ireland to Carlingford in Ireland. It will also create and implement a promotional marketing campaign to help raise awareness of the benefits of walking and cycling for regular cross-border commuters.

Louth County Council is lead partner for the project alongside Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and East Border Region Ltd.

€4.95 million worth of funding has also been offered for the development of the 'Ulster Canal

Greenway (Phase 2)' enabling the creation of 22km of new greenway between Co. Monaghan and Co. Armagh. The new greenway will follow the route of the disused Ulster Canal from Smithborough through to Monaghan Town, across the Armagh border to Ardognonell and extend onwards to Middletown.

Waterways Ireland will act as lead partner for the project alongside Monaghan County Council, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council and East Border Region Ltd.

Match-funding for the projects has been provided by the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in Ireland.

EU funding to help businesses 'Co-Innovate'

A significant amount of funding, approximately €16.6 million, has been offered under the EU's INTERREG VA Programme to help develop the Research and Innovation (R&I) capacity of over 1,400 SMEs on a cross-border basis.

The funding offer aims to increase the proportion of SMEs and micro-businesses involved in cross-border R&I collaboration within Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland by 11%.

InterTradelreland will act as the lead partner for the project, alongside Scottish Enterprise, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and delivery agents Enterprise Northern Ireland and the Local Enterprise office's based within the Border Region of Northern Ireland.

An InterTradelreland survey of SMEs in the manufacturing and tradable services sector across the region has shown that nearly 50% were not innovation-active and nearly 80% were not involved in cross-border research or innovation collaboration.

The Co-Innovate project will help to address this issue. It has five distinct strands and will provide education and capability support tailored to the needs of all participating SMEs and micro-businesses.

It will deliver 469 separate innovation audits to support new product and process development and will give SMEs and micro-businesses access to up to 70 'innovation interns' to help implement enhanced R&I activity.

The project will also increase the number of businesses actively participating in cross-border transnational or interregional research projects.

Research conducted by InterTradelreland highlights that SMEs across the region have a tendency to draw upon their own resources when innovating, and when they adopt a more open approach, it is in a more narrow fashion, engaging mainly with customers and suppliers, rather than with research institutions or other actors.

The Co-Innovate project will be designed to facilitate and support cross-border connectivity between enterprises and research institutes. Thereby enriching the level of innovation carried out by SMEs and helping them to be more competitive.

While all enterprises can benefit from a strategic approach to innovation, the Co-Innovate project will focus on SMEs from manufacturing and tradable services, with specific priority afforded to enterprises from the Renewables, Life and Health sciences and Agrifood sectors.

Match-funding for 'Co-Innovate' has been provided by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation in Ireland, the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland and Scottish Enterprise alongside Highlands & Islands Enterprise.



Understanding our geological heritage by ‘Drifting Apart’



A ‘Drifting Apart’ project site of interest: (photograph taken on Rathlin Island looking back to Fairhead just outside Ballycastle).

Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust is the lead partner in a Northern Peripheries and Arctic Programme project called ‘Drifting Apart’.

Over a period of three years ‘Drifting Apart’ will unearth and strengthen our understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the fascinating and interconnected geological heritage of the Northern Periphery and Arctic region, and its many links to natural, built and cultural heritage.

The project will support the development of new and aspiring Global Geoparks, the promotion of

innovative products and services for social and economic prosperity and continue to build a strong network of geoheritage destinations in the Northern Periphery and Arctic Region.

The project brings together a series of partners from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Norway, Iceland, Canada and Russia.

The total value of the project is €1.6 million with €1.03 million provided through the Northern Peripheries and Arctic Area Programme under the European Regional Development Fund.

The various aspects of the project tie together to deliver a suite of practical outputs including tailored teaching resources, upskilling of local communities and business, development of outdoor access and information as well as using innovative filming to create a geological virtual reality experience.

For more information go to <http://driftingapart.ccght.org/>

Transnational and Interregional Programme Update

A total of 25 projects, representing 48% of available funding have been approved to date through three calls for applications. In total 13 of the projects include either a Northern Ireland Lead Partner or Partner. The 4th call for applications resulted in 35 eligible applications (six Northern Ireland Lead Partners) which have been assessed by the Northern Ireland Regional Advisory Group and will be presented to the Programme Monitoring Committee for a final decision during March 2017.

A further call for applications is anticipated during 2017.

<http://www.interreg-npa.eu/>

Atlantic Area Programme (2014-2020)

The Atlantic Area Programme continues to enjoy a high level of interest with 425 expressions of interest submitted under the 1st call for applications with 102 approved to submit a full application.

The Programme Monitoring Committee is due to meet in April to make decisions on all 102 applications and to consider a 2nd call for applications.

<http://www.atlanticarea.eu/>

North West Europe Programme (2014-2020)

A Programme Monitoring Committee meeting will take place in March 2017 to consider 66 step 1 and 10 step 2 applications received



in previous calls. A 5th call for applications opens from 18 April – 24 May 2017. A 6th call for applications is also expected in Autumn 2017. The SEUPB hosted a Joint Northern Ireland/Ireland Information and Networking Seminar on 7 March 2017 in Enniskillen. This event gave potential applicants the opportunity to learn more about applying into the programmes and importantly to network and share ideas with potential project partners.

The Programme focuses on projects which demonstrate measurable positive change in the North West of Europe in any of the following themes: Innovation, Low Carbon and Resource and Materials Efficiency.
<http://www.nweurope.eu/>

Interreg Europe Programme

The 3rd call for applications into the programme opened on 1 March

2017 and closes on 30 June 2017. The Programme is holding a large networking event 'Europe, Let's Cooperate!' in Malta from 22-23 March 2017, details of the event can be found on their website (link below).

The Programme focuses on improving the effectiveness of regional development approaches and instruments through policy learning transfer of knowledge and best practice and seeks to approve projects which demonstrate measurable positive change in any of the following priority areas; Strengthening Research, technological development and innovation; Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs; Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors; and Environment and Resource.
<http://www.interregeurope.eu/>

Programme Summaries and SEUPB Contacts

PEACE IV

The €270m PEACE Programme 2014-2020 is a unique Structural Funds programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

The Programme's key objectives are:

- Shared Education
- Children & Young People
- Shared Spaces & Services
- Building Positive Relations

The eligible area for the Programme is Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo).

For further information on the PEACE IV Programme contact:

Joint Secretariat Omagh,
Tel: +44 (0) 28 8225 5750
E: omagh@seupb.eu or Belfast,
Tel: +44 (0) 28 9026 6660
E: info@seupb.eu

INTERREG VA

The €283m INTERREG Programme 2014-2020 has been designed to address many of the developmental problems which are exacerbated by the existence of borders, in order to build upon opportunities for enhanced economic and social development across the region.

The Programme's key priorities are:

- Research & Innovation
- Environment
- Sustainable Transport
- Health

The targeted eligible area is Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan, and Sligo) and western Scotland (Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire mainland, and South Ayrshire).

For further information on the INTERREG VA Programme contact:

Joint Secretariat,
Monaghan.
Tel: + 353 (0)47 77003
E: monaghan@seupb.eu or

Caroline Coleman, National Contact Point for Scotland, Scotland
Europa, 150 Broomielaw,
Atlantic Quay, Glasgow G2 8LU.
Tel: +44 (0) 141 228 2202
E: Caroline.Coleman@scotland.co.uk

INTERREG VB Transnational Programmes

The SEUPB has a role in promoting North/South participation in the relevant INTERREG VB Transnational Programmes.

These programmes are:

The Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Programme

This €56million ERDF programme aims to help peripheral and remote communities in the northern regions of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential. The programme area involves parts of Finland, Ireland, Sweden, Scotland, Northern Ireland – in cooperation with the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Norway. SEUPB is the Regional Contact Point for Northern Ireland

The North West Europe Programme

This €396 million ERDF programme aims to help make this new region more competitive, environmentally friendly and cohesive by improving access to more and better jobs, enhancing the environmental qualities of the region, improving accessibility and ensuring that cities and rural areas are attractive and sustainable. The programme area is France, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland Luxembourg, Belgium, and Switzerland. The SEUPB works in an advisory and signposting role.

The Atlantic Area Programme

The programme aims to achieve progress on transnational co-operation that is geared towards cohesive, sustainable and balanced territorial development of the Atlantic Area and its maritime heritage. The programme region covers all of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and those regions within Portugal, Spain, France and the UK that border the Atlantic Ocean. The SEUPB works in an advisory and signposting role.

INTERREG EUROPE Programme

The €359 million ERDF INTERREG VC Inter-regional Programme is aimed at local and regional authorities. It focuses on the identification, analysis and dissemination of good practices by public authorities in order to improve the effectiveness of regional and local policies. Co-operation projects are eligible across all 28 EU states, plus Norway and Switzerland.

For further information on VB and VC Programmes, contact:

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