

Complaints Procedure

Special EU Programmes Body



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund
Investing in your future



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

WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

In undertaking its responsibilities, the SEUPB provides a broad range of services and works with many external organisations and stakeholders. There are therefore two areas about which you may wish to submit a complaint.

- 1) Complaints relating to the administrative services provided by the SEUPB. (See page 3)
- 2) Complaints relating to a project funded with monies from any of the European Programmes for which the SEUPB is responsible. (See page 4)

The following pages provide further information on how a complaint can be submitted to the SEUPB.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

In some instances, it may be more appropriate for you to contact an organisation other than the SEUPB as a first step in dealing with your complaint.

- 1) **Contact the Project Directly** – If you have concerns relating to a specific project funded under a Programme for which the SEUPB is responsible, you should contact the organisation directly using the complaints process of that organisation.

- 2) **The Consortium of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) and Pobal** is responsible for implementing Priority 1.2 of the PEACE III Programme – Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past. If you have a complaint relating to The Consortium or any project funded under Priority 1.2 you should contact:
CRC – 0044 28 9022 7500
or Pobal – 00353 4771340

- 3) **Projects funded through Local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans** – Local councils in Northern Ireland have formed themselves into eight ‘peace clusters’ to develop and implement Local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans. Each of the six County Councils in the Border Region also take on this role. If you have a complaint about a project funded under a Local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan, you should contact the appropriate lead council with your concerns.

- 4) **For all other concerns or if you have been unable to resolve your complaint through the lines of complaint outlined above, you should contact the SEUPB Complaints Officer** by completing and submitting the relevant Complaints Form.

If you are unsure as to who is the most appropriate organisation to contact, please contact the SEUPB Complaints Officer for further advice.

SUSPECTED FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY

If you have concerns that PEACE or INTERREG funding has been or is being used fraudulently, you should contact:

Chief Executive

Special EU Programmes Body
7th Floor, The Clarence West Building
2 Clarence Street West
BELFAST BT2 7GP

DEDICATED FRAUD TELEPHONE LINE
0808 100 2716

Email: feedback@seupb.eu

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT THE SEUPB CANNOT DEAL WITH?

There are some issues that you are unable to complain about using this complaints procedure.

1) Complaints from organisations who have been rejected for funding or who feel that they have not received sufficient funding – Separate Guidance Notes for projects who have applied for PEACE III and INTERREG IVA funding are available on this issue. Please see the SEUPB website or contact us for further information.

2) Project concerns falling outside of the remit of SEUPB – The SEUPB does not have the remit to consider all actions undertaken by an organisation in receipt of European funding.

Complaints must relate directly to a project for which funding was provided from one of the European Programmes for which the SEUPB is responsible, that is: PEACE III or INTERREG IVA from the current funding period or PEACE II or INTERREG IIIA from the 2000-2006 funding period.

3) You make a complaint more than 12 months after you first became aware of the problem.

If you are unsure as to whether the SEUPB can consider your complaint, please contact the Complaints Officer to discuss your concerns further.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE SEUPB

The SEUPB delivers a wide range of services and works very hard to ensure that these are delivered to the highest standards. We understand that sometimes things may go wrong or that you may not be satisfied with what we do. No matter what your complaint is about the administrative services provided SEUPB, you have the right to discuss it.

You should take the following steps:

- 1) If you have been dealing with someone or a business area directly, it is best to **telephone the relevant individual and discuss the issue**. Often a problem can be resolved by a simple telephone call. If you are unsure of the number you can call: **028 9026 6660** and you will either be put through to that person or we will give you their contact details.
- 2) If you feel you are unable to discuss or resolve the issue with the relevant contact, you should **refer your complaint to the Complaints Officer at the SEUPB**. It is useful for us to get as much information as possible on the matter. We therefore ask that you complete **FORM 1 – Complaints relating to services provided by the SEUPB** which is enclosed and forward it to the Complaints Officer.

- 3) If you are unable to submit this form, you can also contact the **Complaints Officer by writing or by telephone to discuss your concerns**.

The SEUPB will:

- 1) Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
- 2) Take your complaint seriously and consider the issues you raise in a thorough and impartial manner.
- 3) All complaints are different and the process of gathering the necessary information can vary. If further investigation is required to resolve your complaint, we will commit to provide you with a response within 8 weeks of receipt of your complaint.
- 4) We will treat you respectfully, sympathetically and courteously at all times.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT ABOUT A PROJECT IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING

The SEUPB works with many projects and organisations who receive funding under the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes. As the Managing Authority for these Programmes, the SEUPB has a duty to ensure the proper and effective use of these funds.

The SEUPB or the relevant Implementing Body will issue a contract (Letter of Offer) to an organisation which has been approved for funding. In order to receive this funding, the project must comply with the conditions outlined within its Letter of Offer. The SEUPB will assess any complaints received about an organisation within the context of the conditions set out within its Letter of Offer.

You should take the following steps:

- 1) As a first step you should put your complaint to the organisation concerned using the complaints procedure of that organisation or that of its Lead Partner.
- 2) If you are unable to address or resolve the complaint with the organisation, you should then contact either the **Complaints Officer at the SEUPB or The Consortium** if your complaint relates to Priority 1.2 – Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past of the PEACE

III Programme. If you are unsure as to who is the most appropriate contact, you can forward your complaint to the SEUPB and we will direct it to the relevant organisation.

- 3) It is important that you provide as much information as possible. We therefore request that you **complete FORM 2 – Complaints relating to projects in receipt of funding.**
- 4) If you are unable to submit this form, you can also contact the **Complaints Officer by writing or by telephone to discuss your concerns.**

The SEUPB will:

- 1) Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
- 2) Take your complaint seriously and consider your complaint in a thorough and impartial manner.
- 3) All complaints are different and the process of gathering the necessary information can vary. If further investigation is required, the SEUPB will commit to provide you with a response within 8 weeks of receipt of your complaint.
- 4) We will treat you respectfully, sympathetically and courteously at all times.

IF YOUR COMPLAINT IS STILL NOT RESOLVED

After reviewing the SEUPB's response to your complaint, you believe that the issue is still not resolved, you should write to our Chief Executive at the address below. You must do this within 14 working days of receiving the initial SEUPB response.

Chief Executive
Special EU Programmes Body
7th Floor, The Clarence West Building
2 Clarence Street West
BELFAST
BT2 7GP

The SEUPB will take the following steps:

- 1) The Chief Executive will acknowledge your request within 5 working days.
- 2) The Chief Executive will consider your request and identify if any further actions are required to resolve your complaint.
- 3) You will be issued with a response within 8 weeks of receipt of the complaint.

HOW TO CONTACT THE OMBUDSMAN

If following these actions, you feel that your complaint has still not been resolved, you may contact the relevant Ombudsman. Contact details are outlined below.

Both will expect you to have exhausted the SEUPB complaints procedure first and in Northern Ireland, you will have to ask a MLA to contact them on your behalf. Please be assured that the SEUPB will cooperate fully with the Ombudsman should it be required.

Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Phone: 0800 34 34 24 (Freephone)
028 9023 3821

Post: The Ombudsman
FREEPOST BEL 1478
BELFAST
BT1 6BR

Email: ombudsman@
ni-ombudsman.org.uk

Website: www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk

Ombudsman for Ireland

Phone: 1890 223030 (Lo-call)
+353 1 639 5600

Fax: +353 1 639 5674

Post: 18 Lr. Leeson Street
Dublin 2

Email: ombudsman@
ombudsman.gov.ie

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.ie

YOUR RIGHTS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

Your rights to confidentiality will be respected throughout the complaints process. Please be aware however that there may be some instances where it will be necessary to share information with other external organisations in order to resolve the complaint.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Information can also be provided in alternative formats upon request. This includes but is not limited to: Irish, Ulster Scots, Braille, Large Print and Audio.

What is the Special EU Programmes Body?

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is a North South Implementation Body responsible for the management and implementation of cross-border European Union Structural Funds Programmes in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and parts of Western Scotland. The Programmes from the current funding period are the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes.

The SEUPB is also responsible for closing the PEACE II and INTERREG IIIA Programmes from the 2000-2006 funding period. In addition, the SEUPB provides a signposting and support role for projects wishing to engage in the INTERREG IV Transnational and Inter-regional Programmes (IVB and IVC). Further information on the work of the SEUPB can be found on the SEUPB website.

The SEUPB is sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Finance in Ireland. It reports to the North South Ministerial Council.

This leaflet explains how to submit a complaint to the SEUPB.

CONTACT THE SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

Post:

COMPLAINTS OFFICER
Special EU Programmes Body
7th Floor, The Clarence West Building
2 Clarence Street West
BELFAST
BT2 7GP

Telephone: 028 9026 6660

Email: feedback@seupb.eu

Website: www.seupb.eu/feedback

Special EU Programmes Body

feedback@seupb.eu

www.seupb.eu

— Belfast

7th Floor, The Clarence West Building

2 Clarence Street West

Belfast BT2 7GP

Northern Ireland

T: +44 (0) 28 9026 6660

— Monaghan

M:Tek II Building

Armagh Road

Monaghan

Ireland

T: +353 (0) 477 7003

— Omagh

EU House

11 Kevlin Road

Omagh BT78 1LB

Northern Ireland

T: +44 (0) 28 8226 5750



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

Investing in your future



Special EU Programmes Body

Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE

Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projecks