



PRESS RELEASE

27 October 2011

MAJOR CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN CROSS-BORDER TRAINING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN CAVAN

Joe O'Reilly TD leader of the Irish Parliament Delegation to the Consul of Europe, opened a major two-day conference on 'Cross-border Training and Impact Assessment in Ireland and Europe' in Cavan on Thursday 27 October (10 am). The conference will bring together 130 people from border regions in 12 European countries to exchange good practice in cross-border cooperation; discuss the training of people engaged in cross-border cooperation; and examine ways of determining whether a cross-border approach to tackling a particular problem is the most appropriate one.

The conference is funded by the EU INTERREG programme (managed by the Special EU Programmes Body) and held in collaboration with the TEIN (Transfrontier Euro-Institut Network) group of cross-border research and training institutes and centres. It is organised by the Centre for Cross Border Studies in Armagh, a leading member of TEIN.

There will be presentations on the following cross-border topics in Ireland and Europe: the TEIN network, health training, business mentoring, raising the participation of women in public life, teacher training, intercultural training, local authority training, higher education and research cooperation, needs analysis and impact assessment.

On the morning of Friday 28 October Dr José Antonio Ruiz de Casas of the Regional Directorate (DG Regio) of the European Commission in Brussels will launch the new Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross Border Cooperation, which has been developed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies and the Euro-Institut in Kehl, Germany. This toolkit has been designed to help programme and project promoters applying for EU funding to determine whether a cross-border approach is the appropriate way to tackle a particular social, economic or environmental problem and, if so, to identify the 'added value' of such cross-border cooperation.



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Countries represented at the conference will include France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Spain, the French Caribbean, the UK and Ireland.

Speaking ahead of the event, Minister of State Creighton emphasised the Government's commitment to strengthening North-South cooperation and to working with Northern colleagues to develop greater economic collaboration to accelerate the process of economic recovery and job creation on this island. In the context of the economic challenges faced in both jurisdictions, re-skilling the unemployed is at the top of the training policy agendas both North and South.

The conference chair, Pat Colgan, Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body, will say in his opening remarks: "This a highly worthwhile event which has been designed to highlight the crucial role that strategic cross-border cooperation plays in helping to improve the lives of people living within border regions across Europe. To date the EU's INTERREG IVA Programme has allocated approximately €171.7 million worth of assistance to projects that are supporting successful cross-border interventions in Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

Collectively these projects have made a real and tangible impact in the development of a more prosperous and sustainable region. We are over half way through the current programming period however there is still much work to be done. I welcome the new 'impact assessment toolkit' which has the potential to enhance future funding applications and identify innovative approaches to solving common cross-border problems."

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Notes to the Editor

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 Finance in Ireland. It is responsible for managing two EU structural funds Programmes PEACE III and INTERREG IVA 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 IVA, Western Scotland.

The PEACE III Programme, funded through the European Regional Development Fund, is worth €333 million and is aimed primarily at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation. It focuses on helping Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland to reconcile communities and contribute towards a shared society.

For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu