

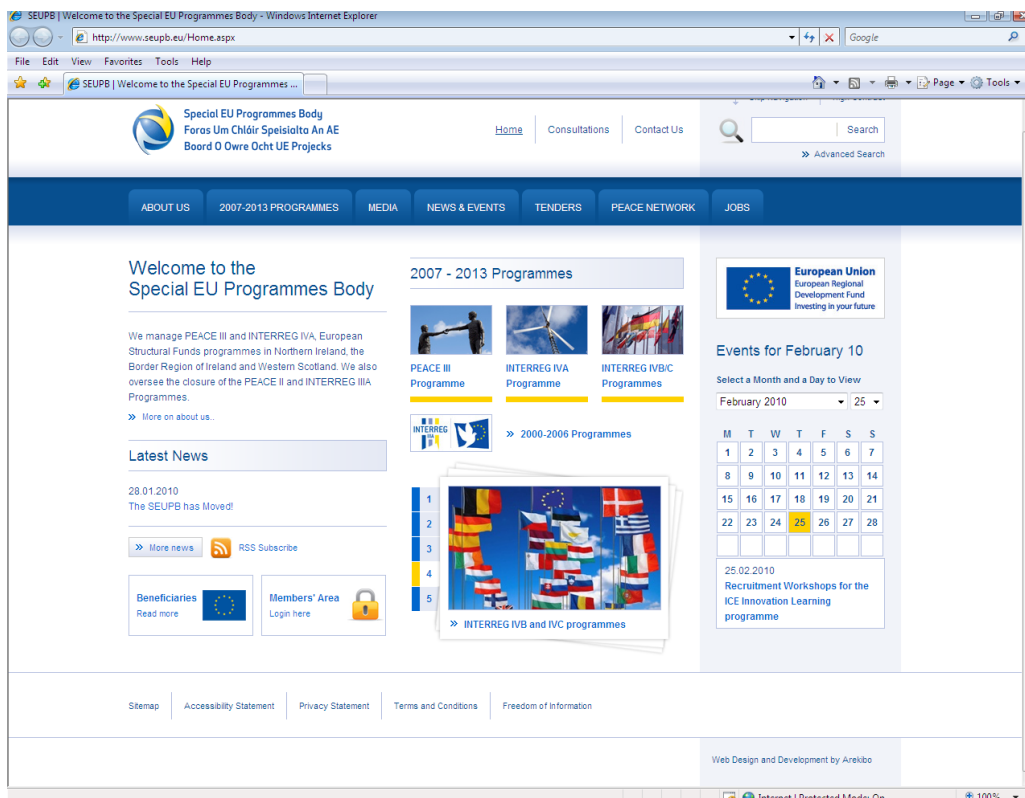
# PEACE III PROGRAMME (2007-2013) – REPORT ON COMMUNICATIONS

## 1.0 Overview

A joint communication plan for both PEACE III and INTERREG IVA was submitted to the Commission on 5 March 2008 and formally approved by the Commission on 17 July 2008. The following update on activities has been divided into ‘information’ and ‘publicity’ measures to reflect the structure contained within the SEUPB’s communication plan.

## 2.0 Information Measures

### 2.1 Measure: SEUPB website



The newly revised SEUPB website went live on the 17 August, 2009. Incorporating all of the recommendations contained within an independent review of its performance, the site now

offers enhanced levels of information and interactivity as well as access to a list of beneficiaries of the programme.

From Oct 2009 to Mar 2010 the site received **17,850** (non-bounce) visits, 40% of which were from new visitors. The average length of time spent on the site per visit is **4.32 minutes** with an average of **6.72 pages** visited. The visits came from a number of different cities mainly concentrated within Europe although visits were also recorded from countries as far afield as North America, Canada, Australia and the Middle East.

## **2.2 Two way communication**

To date over 180 publicity and information queries have been received. The Communications Team is committed to responding to these queries within 14 days and satisfaction levels remain steady at 100%.

## **2.3 Measure: Conferences and Annual Major Information Activity**

The SEUPB is currently planning a major one-day conference for the PEACE III Programme on the 20<sup>th</sup> May at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast. Marking the half-way point of the programme the event will feature a series of project testimonials on the impact that PEACE III is having in creating greater levels of peace and reconciliation across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Key-note speeches focussing on an assessment of peace building within the eligible area as well as other potential sources of EU funding will be given at the event. A special exhibition space will also be created for projects and operations to showcase their work and achievements to date. This will allow conference delegates to gain a more detailed appreciation and understanding of the various initiatives currently receiving EU assistance under the PEACE III Programme.

## **2.4 Measure: Journalist briefings**

The SEUPB Communications Team is continuing its series of one-on-one media briefings with local journalists. The following briefings have been co-ordinated since the last Monitoring Committee report:

- Martin Shannon, freelance journalist
- Susan Gillen, Newtownabbey Times
- Maurice Kennedy, Fermanagh Herald
- Declan Magee, Donegal Democrat

At these briefings the journalists are given background information on the PEACE III Programme, examples of projects/operations funded, as well as an overview of the programmes performance to date.

## 2.5 Measure: Political briefings

To help keep SEUPB's political stakeholders aware of the progress of the PEACE III Programme a special bi-annual public affairs bulletin, called 'euroPA', has been created.

**Special EU Programmes Body**  
Proiseas Uile Chéile Speisialta An Aite  
Beoird O'Ghaire Chéile UE Projects

# euroPA

**BULLETIN**

**FEBRUARY 2010** AN UPDATE ON EUROPEAN UNION PEACE AND INTERREG PROGRAMMES

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**Chief Executive's Foreword**

Welcome to this the first edition of our new public affairs newsletter, the 'euroPA' bulletin, which has been specifically designed to keep you informed as to the progress of the European Union funded PEACE III (2007-2013) and INTERREG IVA (2007-2013) Programmes.

2010 represents an exciting period in the history of the Special EU Programmes Body as we help to deliver support for new and iconic projects that will meet the core objectives of PEACE III and INTERREG IVA.

Both programmes are now fully established and the many diverse and innovative projects that they support are starting to have a real impact.

This bulletin will help to answer any questions that you, or your constituents, may have on how to access support under PEACE III and INTERREG IVA, as well as provide an update on their performance as we move into the second half of the programming period.

It will also highlight the opportunities that exist under the transnational (INTERREG IVB) and Inter-regional (INTERREG IVC) EU Structural Fund programmes.

I hope that you find this bulletin of use and would welcome any feedback as to future content.

*[Signature]*

**Our Role**

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Finance in Ireland.

Its core function is to manage both the EU's PEACE III and INTERREG IVA (2007-2013) Programmes. It also has a signposting and supporting role for projects wanting to engage with the INTERREG IVB Transnational and INTERREG IVC Inter-Regional Programmes.

The SEUPB has appointed the Consortium of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) and Pobal to implement part of the PEACE Programme relating to applications focusing on acknowledging and dealing with the past.

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Hi-tech help for the elderly

**PEACE III**

PEACE III (2007-2013) is a €333 million EU structural fund which builds upon the successes of previous programmes PEACE I and PEACE II. It aims to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promote reconciliation across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. This will be achieved by supporting projects and operations which help reconcile communities and contribute towards a shared society.

**INTERREG IVA**

INTERREG IVA (2007-2013) is a €256 million EU structural fund which seeks to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders. It provides financial assistance to projects and initiatives which support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region within Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.

The bulletin was issued in both pdf and in a limited hard copy format to a specially created database of approximately 1,000 recipients including:

- Northern Ireland MLA's/MP's and MEP's
- Relevant MSP's
- Irish TD's
- Political Advisors
- Key Committee Clerk's
- Local Councillors and Council Chief Executives.

Outlining the core objectives of the PEACE III Programme it features a number of project case studies as well as an update on the amount of financial assistance that has been awarded, as of January 2010.

## 2.6 Measure: Site Visits

In December 2009 Minister Sammy Wilson visited a PEACE III funded project delivering educational training for women, based in Lisburn.



Run by the Old Warren Community Association the project has been developed by the Training for Women Network (TWN) and 'Women into Politics' initiative. Speaking at the event the Minister said:

*"Training for Women Network has a history of successfully delivering European PEACE funds, and this project will bring together women from different communities to work towards common goals."*

*“The project’s outworking, through groups such as the Old Warren Community Association, will harness the existing skills, experience and relationships of groups across Northern Ireland.*

*“Neighbourhoods such as the Old Warren will benefit from this funding; providing educational opportunities that would otherwise not have been available to many women in their own community.”*

## **2.7 Measure: Training Publicity Workshops and Information Publicity Guide**

The SEUPB Communications Team gave two publicity information presentations during the Armagh Lead Partner Conference on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010 as well as to the CAN PEACE III Cluster on the 1<sup>st</sup> March. Four Communication Network seminars were also co-ordinated in March on the following dates and in the below locations:

- 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – Iontas Centre, Castleblaney
- 18<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – University of Ulster, Jordanstown
- 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – Fermanagh House, Enniskillen
- 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – Tullyarvan Mill, Buncrana

Attended by over 100 project/operation representatives the events were designed to outline the communication requirements that they must adhere to, share evidence of best practice as well as learn about new and innovative forms of communication i.e. effective use of social media networking and search engine optimisation.



Special E-marketing specialist Johnny Beirne presenting at the Jordanstown seminar.

## **2.8 Measure: SEUPB Intranet**

The SEUPB Communications Team is currently in the process of updating the staff intranet system to incorporate the 'Sharepoint' management software. The update will enhance the intranet's functionality as well as its overall design.

## **2.9 Measure: Publications / E-zine**

A number of corporate documents including the Annual Report 2008 and winter edition of Your EU were completed and distributed in the final months of 2009. Work is currently being completed on the spring 2010 edition of Your EU which will be distributed as an e-zine, with a limited print run.



## 2.10 Measure: Communications Network

The SEUPB is a member of the NI Managing Authority Communications Network and met with the group to discuss examples of best practice in February. The group will be co-ordinating a shared stand at this year's Balmoral Show, the logistics of which were discussed at the meeting. The SEUPB Communications Manager, John McCandless, also attended the fourth INFORM – 'Community Network of Regional Policy Communication Officers' meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010 in Brussels.

## 3.0 Publicity Measures

### 3.1 Measure: Press Releases

A number of press releases have been issued highlighting specific EU funded projects and the progress of the PEACE III Programme. Recent examples include:

Publication: Ballymena Guardian  
Date: Thursday, December 24, 2009  
Page: 6  
Extract: 1 of 1  
Circulation: 14,794  
Author:



Headline: Peace-programme provides £3.6m to Ballymena community projects

#### Peace programme provides £3.6m to Ballymena community projects

An innovative European peace programme has delivered nearly £4m of assistance to projects in the Ballymena area.

Now approaching its fourth year, the European Union funded PEACE III Programme continues to deliver on its core objective of promoting peace and reconciliation to local communities.

Under its 'Building Positive Relations' theme, the programme has approved over £3.6 million of financial support, on a cross-community basis, to people living within the Ballymena Borough Council area.

Delivered through a Local Peace Action Plan for the North East of Northern Ireland, the support is being used to help reduce levels of sectarianism, promote reconciliation and increased multi-cultural integration.

Provided to projects which can demonstrate cross-community reach, a significant amount of the funding has already been drawn down and is having a tangible impact at a local level.

A number of 'Good Relations Programmes' designed to tackle and reduce the levels of sectarianism, alongside ethnic minority employment programmes as well as reconciliation through sport initiatives are being supported. This assistance forms part of a larger allocation of 96-100 million for the theme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body, which will be available over the life-time of the PEACE III Programme, up to 2013.

It represents a sizeable percentage of the overall 333 million worth of assistance that makes up the total value of the programme.

Commenting on the success of PEACE III to date, Pat O'Shea, chief executive of the BMBPB said:

"PEACE III places a greater emphasis on supporting strategic and iconic projects with inherent longevity. The programme also seeks to enhance working relationships between local authorities and social partners.

"By making sure that the projects we fund fully utilise the support offered through the European Union we are ensuring that the programme will be able to create an enduring legacy long after its completion," he continued.

With a strong emphasis on local partnership, PEACE III encourages the formation of partnership structures that address shared issues and concerns.

Local Councils in Northern Ireland have formed eight clusters to develop and implement strategic multi-annual action plans aimed at addressing the needs of their local communities and building positive relations at a local level.

The North East Cluster includes Ballymena, Ballymooney, Larne, Limavady, Coleraine and Moyle.

Community and voluntary groups are encouraged to contact their local authority for information on their Cluster's Peace and Reconciliation Plan which may contain a small grants scheme and opportunities to tender for the delivery of projects in the New Year.

PEACE III Programme update, Ballymena Guardian.

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## €8.3m funding boost for Pettigo and Tullyhommon

Sue Doherty

[sdoherty@democrat.com](mailto:sdoherty@democrat.com)

The border villages of Pettigo and Tullyhommon are set to be transformed through an €8.3m EU Peace III project unveiled yesterday.

The Termon Project will encourage increased cross-community integration through the re-development of the community centre site in Pettigo and the Methodist Hall in Tullyhommon as well as the surrounding area.

The project involves the creation of the Termon Centre, a multi-purpose facility for drama, sport, conferences and local and regional events. It will also include a new playschool, an outdoor multi-use games area, a public playground and a community garden. It is anticipated that the Centre will become the central focus of the surrounding area, providing information on its history, the local facilities on offer and all key events taking place throughout the year.

The existing Methodist Hall in Tullyhommon will undergo extensive refurbishment as well and will be transformed into a local youth café. Both centres will act as social hubs, providing neutral shared spaces where communities within the local area can interact and enjoy all of the newly developed recreational opportunities on offer.

In addition, the project will also include the revitalisation of the Termon riverbank with the development of a riverside park stretching from a new village gateway at Tullyhommon to a riverfront picnic area on the Pettigo side at the site of the proposed new Termon centre. A newly constructed footbridge is proposed to span over the water and join both communities.

Pat Colgan, Chief Executive of the Special EU Programmes Body, said at yesterday's launch in Tullyhommon that the project "exemplifies some of the core objectives of the PEACE III Programme".

He added: "In creating a shared space for use by all communities, The Termon Project it will help to consolidate peace and stability within Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

"It's innovative design approach, including a new riverside walkway and footbridge, will create an iconic space with intrinsic longevity that will encourage increased cross-border interaction and greater levels of cross-community engagement."

Spearheaded by the Planning &

Economic Development Directorate of Donegal County Council, in partnership with Fermanagh District Council and the Association for the Development of Pettigo and Tullyhommon (ADoPT), the Termon project has been awarded 8.3 million of EU support through the PEACE III Programme.

Donegal Mayor Cllr Brendan Byrne, said he welcomed the project, adding "it will overcome the legacy of the past and enhance the quality of life, improve the standards of community and recreational life in Pettigo/Tullyhommon and will eventually lead to the provision of the necessary modern-day infrastructure towns need."

He noted that it was the biggest cross border grant ever allocated to a Donegal project by the SEUPB agency.

Mr Francis Coyle, Director of Planning & Economic Development, Donegal County Council, commented: "The project adopts a holistic, all-embracing and innovative approach to address the challenges facing this area and its community. The extensive redevelopment and enhancement of the physical environment and community infrastructure as proposed by this project will regenerate and transform the twin villages and promote a vibrant, active and integrated community."

Councillor Robert Irvine, Chairman of Fermanagh District Council, welcomed "this very significant investment in the villages of Tullyhommon and Pettigo". He added: "This is an exciting initiative which will revitalise the villages and promote an integrated community identity. The Council would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support of the European Union's PEACE III Programme and the input of the Special EU Programmes Body."

Commenting on the re-development Martin Eves, Chair of ADoPT said: "The infrastructure development will act as a physical symbol for the project as it unifies both communities and will encourage increased interaction amongst both sections of our society. The project has many different facets and upon completion will help to transform the local area, creating a shared space to be enjoyed by everyone."

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Launch of Termon project, Feb 2010, Donegal Democrat.

### 3.2 Measure: Viral Marketing

As part of the PEACE III Conference a number of short project testimonial videos will be produced and uploaded onto the SEUPB website. Projects to be filmed include the Peace Bridge, the Skainos project and RAFT amongst others. These video clips focus on the impact of the projects at a local level.

### **3.3 Measure: Launches of major projects**

Projects of high strategic importance likely to attract Ministerial attendance such as the 'Termon' project were given additional communications support to ensure that EU assistance was fully recognised in accordance with Article 2.2 (b) of implementing regulation (EC) No. 1828/2006.



An Tánaiste, Mary Coughlan attend the launch of the Termon project, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010.

### **3.4 Measure: Publicity and Promotional Materials**

A range of appropriately branded publicity materials were purchased through 2009 to help increase awareness of ERDF funding of the PEACE III Programme. These included USB sticks which were uploaded with all of the regulatory information needed for projects/operation in relation to their communications activity at the Communication Network seminars, held in March.

### **3.5 Measure: Attendance and participation at other events**

The SEUPB also exhibited at the annual 'Opportunity Europe' event held at St. George's Market, Belfast on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October.

Attracting thousands of school children from across Northern Ireland, SEUPB staff were able to teach young people about the impact that the PEACE III Programme is having in creating greater levels of peace and reconciliation across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.



SEUPB staff Louise Buckley and Nicola Crawford manning the stand at the Opportunity Europe 2009 event.

### 3.6 Stakeholder Survey

In Sept/Oct 2009 the SEUPB's Communication Team commissioned an independent research firm to undertake a survey into general public and other key stakeholder's perceptions/ awareness of both the PEACE III Programme.

The survey comprised of a total sample of 750 general public respondents across Northern Ireland, and the border counties of Ireland. The general population survey was complemented by a telephone survey conducted amongst 50 approved stakeholders.

Some key top-line figures from the Executive Summary of the Survey are as follows:-

**General Public:**

- Awareness of the PEACE III Programme is higher in the Border Counties.
- In Northern Ireland, males (40%) are more likely to be aware of PEACE III than females (36%). The C2DE's (working class) demographic are slightly more likely than ABC1s (middle class) to have heard of PEACE III (39% vs. 37%).
- Throughout the Border Counties, males are more likely to be aware of the PEACE III Programme than females (63% vs. 53%), while ABC1s are more likely than C2DEs to be aware (59% vs. 53%).
- In terms of perceived impact of PEACE III, more Border County than Northern Ireland respondents, who were aware of the programme, believe it is having a positive impact: almost 3 in 5 (58%) of those from Border Counties compared to over 2 in 5 (42%) NI respondents.
- The respondents were also asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that 'EU funding is making a positive difference to communities'. Overall agreement was higher among the Border Region respondents with over 8 in 10 (81%) either strongly agreeing or agreeing. Among Northern Ireland residents almost two thirds (64%) either strongly agreed or agreed.
- Almost everyone surveyed would like to find out more, particularly about the overall programme aims.

**Stakeholders:**

- Among all stakeholders interviewed, almost 3 in 5 (58%) are either very satisfied or satisfied with the level of information they receive from the SEUPB.
- Almost 7 in 10 (67%) of stakeholders involved with the PEACE III Programme either strongly agree or agree that they are kept well informed about its progress.
- 56% of all stakeholders are satisfied with the way funding calls are managed and communicated.
- Most information is received via email for the stakeholders and this is the preferred form of contact.

### **3.7 Media Monitoring**

All key printed media throughout the eligible area is monitored, with the Communications Team receiving relevant clippings from an on-line service provider. All clippings are reviewed on a daily basis to ascertain any potential negative reporting on the programmes and/or factual inaccuracies.

### **3.8 Review of the Communication Plans of Applicants**

Applicants for PEACE III funding are required to include a communications plan and budget in their application to demonstrate how they intend to comply with their obligations under EC Regulation 1828/2006.

The communication plans are reviewed and assessed to ensure that applicants are aware of all the relevant communication activities they need to undertake and that they have included an appropriate budget to carry out these activities. This process is conducted on an on-going basis as applications are received.

A new reporting grid, to be completed on a quarterly basis, was also created to help projects assess the effectiveness of their communications plans.

## **4.0 Recommendation**

The Monitoring Committee is requested to:

- **Note** the progress to date on Communications Activities.