



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

PEACE PROGRAMME 2014-2020

COOPERATION PROGRAMME OF EU PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION 2014-2020, NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE BORDER REGION OF IRELAND

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SECTION 1: STRATEGY FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNION STRATEGY FOR SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION – ARTICLE 27 (1) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 8 (2) (A) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013

Introduction

(70,000 characters allowed / 34,596 in text)

- 1.1 The PEACE Programme is a distinctive initiative that has been named within the Regulations¹: “In the case of the PEACE cross-border programme and within the thematic objective of promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination, the ERDF shall also contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the programme area concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.”
- 1.2 As part of the preparation of this Cooperation Programme (CP), the SEUPB conducted an extensive public consultation across the eligible region in 2012 and again in 2014. The purpose of the first consultation held in 2012 was to identify and establish requirements for the new PEACE CP. As a result a draft CP was prepared which was subjected to a further round of extensive consultation in 2014.
- 1.3 During the 2012 consultation a total of 20 events were held which over 1000 participants attended. Direct consultation was also held in the eligible jurisdictions with government departments and representatives of sectors including business, rural communities, agricultural representatives, community and voluntary sectors, trade unions and public sector organisations. The results of the consultation confirmed the relevance of Thematic Objective 9, Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination as the focus of the CP².
- 1.4 A comprehensive summary of the public consultation held in 2012 and in 2014 is provided in section 5.58.

¹ ETC Regulation, Article 7, para. 2

² Preparing a new Programme for Cross-border Cooperation (INTERREG) and a new Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE) 2014 – 2020 – Summary of Consultation Responses, SEUPB, February 2013.

- 1.5 To inform the process of selecting themes for the PEACE CP, the consultees were asked for their opinions. Strong support was expressed for the continuation of the legacy created by PEACE III funded capital projects, which created shared spaces and removed physical barriers between communities. Higher value employment and increased economic activity, especially for young people was also advocated by those consulted. The areas of enhanced social inclusion and shared education also received strong support.
- 1.6 The development of the CP is also informed by the European Union's key policy instruments, namely the Europe 2020 Strategy (EU2020), the Social Investment package, the Common strategic framework and the European Commission's position papers on the UK and Ireland.
- 1.7 EU2020 outlines a ten year growth strategy centred on five measurable targets to be achieved by 2020. The achievement of these five targets will be based on plans for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This CP recognises that peace and community cohesion are essential prerequisites for building a competitive economy. In particular the programme will impact on the most socially and economically excluded people through interventions in training and education.
- 1.8 Based on the results of this public consultation exercise and informed by the lessons of the Peace III Programme and additional research of the needs of programme area³, the following strategic areas of investment have been prioritised for the period 2014-2020 :

- Shared Education

- The creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds across the Programme area.

- Early Years & Young People

- The creation of a more cohesive community by equipping young people (through education, employment, training and initiatives that build respect) with a particular emphasis on NEETS from disadvantaged areas, with the tools to access opportunities in society.

³ The development of a new EU Programme for Cross-border Co-Operation (INTERREG) and a new EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE) 2014 -2020 - Socio-Economic Profile

- Shared Spaces & Services
 - The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.
- Civil Society
 - The creation of a society characterised by good relations and respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

Background

- 1.9 Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland have a combined population of 2,319,814. The population of Northern Ireland is 1,811,000 and the population of the Border Region is 508,814. This represents an increase of 7.5% in Northern Ireland and 9% in the Border Region since 2006⁴.
- 1.10 Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom with a land boundary with another EU Member State. The history of the region and of the relationship between the two parts of the island has resulted in the border becoming a barrier to economic and social development. Traditionally, the population of Northern Ireland has been regarded as consisting of two distinct and often separate communal and national identities of Catholics/Nationalists and Protestants/Unionists. A prolonged period of civil unrest and violence from 1969 to the cessation of violence by the main paramilitary organisations in 1994 resulted in over 3,600 deaths and over 50,000 people injured. According to the Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency (NISRA)⁵ it is estimated that over 500,000 people in the region suffered directly from the conflict through personal experience or the loss of someone in their lives. The effects of the troubles on the border region of Ireland have been pronounced, the border towns in particular saw widespread division and disturbance which has continued to leave their mark. There were over one hundred death and hundreds injured south of the border.
- 1.11 In response to the opportunities presented by the ceasefires in 1994, the European Union funded the first PEACE Programme 1995 – 1999 (PEACE I). This programme

⁴ Statistical Bulletin, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, December 2012; and All Ireland Research Observatory, Census Mapping Module: Border <http://www.airo.ie>

⁵ Cunningham, Simon. "Troubles created 500 000 victims says official body". *The Irish News*, 27 September 2011

was implemented as a Community Initiative. Its stated aim was *“to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by increasing economic development and employment, promoting urban and rural regeneration, developing cross-border co-operation and extending social inclusion.”* PEACE I provided a fund of €500 million from the European Commission and a further €167 million from the British and Irish Governments.

- 1.12 While the PEACE I Programme was being implemented, multi-party talks led to the signing of the Good Friday / Belfast Agreement in April 1998. This agreement provided for devolved powers to Northern Ireland and introduced new institutional arrangements for the governance and structure of the Northern Ireland Executive, the development of North-South cooperation and the development of East-West relationships between Ireland and the United Kingdom. The first elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly were held on the 25th June 1998 and the first Northern Ireland Executive took office on the 2nd December 1999. The Assembly and the Executive were suspended from October 2002 through to May 2007. During this period, multi-party talks culminated in the St Andrews Agreement, which provided a framework for progress based on the principles of power-sharing and support for the policing and criminal justice systems.
- 1.13 Throughout this challenging period in the region’s history as it emerged from a prolonged period of conflict, the European Union provided extensive support to address the economic and social development challenges through three further Programmes - PEACE II (2000-2004), PEACE II Extension (2004-2006) and PEACE III (2007-2013). The combined value of these Programmes (PEACE I, PEACE II and PEACE III) amounts to €1995 million (€1334 million from the European Commission and €661 million from the British and Irish Governments).

Political, Social and Economic Developments – 2007 to 2013

- 1.14 Much progress has been made in the normalisation of politics in Northern Ireland during this period. Following the re-instatement of the Northern Ireland Executive and the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2007, a new Department of Justice was created in 2010 as part of the devolution of justice and policing powers agreed in the Hillsborough Agreement (5 February 2010). Elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly were held in 2007 and again in 2011. The restored Northern Ireland Executive is now into its second period of Government. New elections are due to be held in 2016.

- 1.15 The current programme for Government, finalised in April 2012, set out 82 commitments within 5 key priorities for government. One key commitment relating to establishing the Delivery of Social Change framework which set out a new approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion. The Delivering of Social Change framework established 5 priorities for the current mandate including, critically, early years and early interventions.
- 1.16 The development of an agreed policy on community relations has continued to present a challenge to the Northern Ireland administration. The first attempt to do this was *A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland, (2005)*. This policy document failed to gain all party support in the re-convened Assembly in 2007. This was followed in 2010 by a draft policy *Cohesion, Sharing & Integration (2010)* which also failed to gain public and cross party political support. Considerable progress in this area was made in 2013 with the publication by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy first Minister (OFMDFM) of the strategy *Together: Building a United Community (2013)*. The foreword to the document states that the strategy reflects the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. The strategy addresses issues such as education, housing, sport, youth, volunteering and interface barriers and is focused on four priority areas of action, namely: Children & Young People; Shared Community; Safe Community and Cultural Expression. This strategy provides a strong Northern Ireland policy context for the development of the PEACE Programme.
- 1.17 The Irish Government's Reconciliation and Anti-Sectarianisms Funds have been administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs since 1982 and the level of resources were substantially increased following the Good Friday Agreement as part of the Irish Government's commitment to "positively consider the case for enhanced financial assistance for the work of reconciliation". In 2014 , the budget for Reconciliation and Anti-Sectarianism Funds stands at €2.7million from which approximately 150 grants are made each year, mainly to community and voluntary groups. A new strategy for the fund will be published in summer 2014. Priority areas for funding are projects which specifically target sectarianism, innovative pilot projects which have the potential to be replicated on a wider scale and with broader impact; north- south links which build sustainable relationships and connections; projects targeted at hard to reach and marginalised communities and at those not normally involved in peace-building process; projects to engage young people and

children, to promote intercommunity and inter generational links and reduce segregation; projects which contribute to the aims of the UN security council resolution 1325 and which develop and deepen the role of women in peace-building and civic and political life; and projects which develop and deepen Anglo-Irish relationship.

- 1.18 The reform of local government in Northern Ireland has also presented challenges for the Northern Ireland Executive. The intention of this reform, which began in 2002, was to replace the 26 districts created in 1973 with a smaller number of larger councils. The Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government, published in 2012, contains a commitment to implement this reform. The first elections to these eleven new councils are due to take place on 22 May 2014. The reform also includes enhanced roles for the new councils in a number of areas, including community planning and community well-being. These are important developments that will impact on the delivery mechanisms for the PEACE programme.
- 1.19 From 2007 to 2013 in Ireland, significant attention for policy makers, officials and citizens has been the economic crisis. On 28 November 2010, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank (the Troika) agreed with the Irish Government an €85 billion rescue deal. The programme that accompanied this rescue deal involved a series of budgets containing austerity measures aimed at restoring stability to the economy. A new government took office in Ireland in 2011. Ireland emerged from this programme on the 15 December 2013 having achieved all of the targets agreed with the Troika.
- 1.20 The economic crisis in Ireland has led to significant levels of unemployment and economic hardship. The Border Region has been disproportionately affected by the downturn, particularly amongst young people (up to the age of 25), where the region has 31.9% youth unemployment compared to a national average of 27.6%. In addition, the reductions in public expenditure brought about as a result of the implementation of the programme agreed with the Troika, has resulted in pressure on the budgets of local authorities and central government departments. This has presented challenges for the implementation of the PEACE III Programme in the Border Region. The cooperation of both government departments and local authorities has ensured that these challenges have been met with positive outcomes to date.

- 1.21 At local government level in Ireland, in 2012 the Irish Government published a policy document entitled *Putting People First – Action Programme for Effective Local Government*, aimed at introducing a programme of reforms that takes account of the prevailing economic climate and addresses the need for improved efficiency. Of relevance to the PEACE Cooperation Programme, local government will have a stronger role in oversight and planning of local and community development programmes.
- 1.22 Despite the economic challenges in the region, during this period a number of significant capital investment initiatives have taken place that reflect confidence in the future growth prospects of the region. The opening in 2011 of the PEACE Bridge in Derry/Londonderry, funded by the PEACE III Programme, has signalled a transformation of the city and represents a strong commitment to addressing the legacy of division. Similarly, the development of the Titanic Quarter in Belfast is a strong statement of confidence in the emerging tourism market for foreign and domestic visitors. The positive images of Northern Ireland as a growing and vibrant economy were further reinforced through the successful hosting of the summit of G8 leaders in Fermanagh in 2013, the designation of Derry/Londonderry as the “2013 UK City of Culture” and by the successful hosting of the World Police and Fire Games in Northern Ireland in the same year.
- 1.23 One of the most significant symbols of positive change in the region was the visit by Queen Elizabeth II to Ireland in 2011 which incorporated visits to sites of national significance in Dublin, such as the Garden of Remembrance and Croke Park. Queen Elizabeth II also visited the National War Memorial Gardens, dedicated to the memory of the 49,000 Irish citizens who died fighting with the British Army during the First World War and delivered a widely praised speech on the history of relations between the two countries.
- 1.24 In 2014 Queen Elizabeth II hosted a four day state visit of the Irish President Higgins to the United Kingdom mainland. The itinerary included a Northern Ireland themed reception in recognition of the shared interests of both States in peace and reconciliation in the region. President Higgins addressed Members of the Houses of Parliament and met a wide range of dignitaries and representatives for the Irish Community in Britain. A particular theme of the visit was acknowledging the many close bonds between the States and how Northern Ireland remains at the heart of that relationship.

- 1.25 The British and Irish Governments are working with common purpose to ensure that there is a stable, inclusive and lasting peace. It is also acknowledged with gratitude, that in this regard a significant and positive role is played by the EU member States and the United States.
- 1.26 Alongside these positive developments, account must also be taken of the evidence of continued division within and between the communities in the region. The killing of police constables in 2009 and 2011 and the killing of a prison officer in 2012, together with the killing of two British soldiers in 2009 provide stark evidence of the continued threat posed by dissident republican groups opposed to the peace process. Incidents in Belfast city centre in December 2013 involving explosive and incendiary devices provide evidence of the threat that exists to the lives of citizens in the region and to the normalisation of economic and social activity.
- 1.27 During 2012, statistics show⁶ that loyalist violence was at its lowest level for 8 years. Despite this however, there continues to be a high degree of unrest and discontent as evidenced by the civic disturbances and demonstrations during 2012 and 2013 related to the issues of flags, emblems and parades. These instances of civic unrest followed on from the decision by Belfast City Council in December 2012 to restrict the flying of the Union Flag to designated days. The depth and extent of support for these disruptive and economically costly street protests is an indication of the sense of political, social and economic exclusion felt in some sections of the Protestant community.
- 1.28 Acknowledging and dealing with the legacy of the past continues to be a major challenge within the region. There are many voices calling for various forms of truth recovery, justice, acknowledgment, reconciliation, and a focus on the future. The Consultative Group on the Past (Eames / Bradley Report) reported in 2009⁷. The recommendations contained in this report failed to gain the support of all sections of the community. In the absence of any agreed policy in this area, approaches to dealing with the past continue to be highly contentious. There is currently no agreement on the proposal to build a Centre for Peace Building and Conflict Resolution on the site of the Maze Long Kesh Prison. Failure to achieve a consensus of opinion within and between the communities on these difficult and sensitive issues is clear evidence of the complexity of the challenges that still remain in the region in

⁶ Nolan, Paul, (2013) *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report – Number Two*, page 62. Community Relations Council, Belfast.

⁷ House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (2009), *The Report of the Consultative Group on the Past in Northern Ireland, Second Report of Session 2009-2010*, House of Commons, London.

the areas of reconciliation and community cohesion. In an attempt to address these complex challenges, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister announced the setting up of an all-party group to deal with some of the most divisive issues in society in Northern Ireland. They also announced that Dr Richard Haass, the former United States Envoy to Northern Ireland from 2001-2003 and President of the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States, had accepted an invitation to be the independent chair of the group. The talks concluded in December 2013 without agreement.

Theories of Change Underpinning the PEACE Programmes

- 1.29 A theory of change is a set of beliefs about how change happens. According to academic research, there are ten relevant conflict or post conflict theories of change⁸ some of which are directly relevant to peace-building⁹ initiatives. A literature review carried out as part of the preparation of the PEACE III Programme indicated that two of the ten theories were relevant to the problems related to the post-conflict society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region¹⁰. These were: *the individual change theory* which suggests that peace comes through transformative change of a critical mass of individuals, their consciousness, attitudes, behaviours and skills; and *the healthy relationships and connections theory* which suggests that peace emerges out of a process of breaking down isolation, polarisation, division, prejudice and stereotypes between / amongst groups.

Understanding Reconciliation and the PEACE Programme

- 1.30 In addition to consideration of the theories of change, the PEACE III Operational Programme (CP) reflected the experience that had been gained in PEACE II on developing an understanding of the concept of reconciliation and applying those concepts to the development, implementation and monitoring of the PEACE III Programme¹¹. This analysis was based on work carried out by Hamber and Kelly in

⁸ Peter Woodrow, *Strategic Analysis for Peace-building Programmes*, cited by Church, C and Rogers, M. (2005) *Designing for Results: Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs, Search for Common Ground*, Washington.

⁹ JP Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, US Institute of Peace Press, 1997.

¹⁰ PEACE III – EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007-2013 – Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland – Operational Programme, para. 3.18. SEUPB, Belfast.

¹¹ SEUPB (2007). PEACE III – EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation 2007-2013 – Operational Programme, para. 2.63 and para. 3.1 to 3.26.

2004¹² who developed a five strand description of what reconciliation could mean in a region emerging from conflict. The elements of this definition are: building positive relationships; working towards substantial social, political and economic change; acknowledging and dealing with the past; developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society; and achieving significant cultural and attitudinal change within society.

- 1.31 The strategy of the PEACE III Programme chose to concentrate on building positive relationships and contributing to a shared future as the cornerstones of the Programme Strategy and the priorities most likely to contribute to acknowledging and dealing with the past and achieving a fundamental change in attitudes and behaviour that will lead to achieving substantial social, political and economic change.
- 1.32 The strategy for the PEACE Programme is predicated on the acceptance that the PEACE III strategy is a valid assessment of the contribution that the Programme can make. While PEACE will not be a direct continuation of previous PEACE Programmes, it will build on their experiences and address the challenges of building relationships and contributing to a shared society in a way that assists in moving toward a shared acknowledgement of the past and a fundamental change in attitudes and behaviour. Investment in the chosen themes of, shared education, children and young people, shared spaces and services, and civil society, and the associated interventions are critical to facilitate these desired behavioural changes.
- 1.33 As was the case with PEACE III, PEACE will embed the concept of reconciliation into the objectives and desired results of the Programme. All funded operations and all eligible groups or organisations that apply for funding, will be required to identify how they will contribute towards the achievement of the results that the Programme sets out to achieve in order to promote a greater level of reconciliation and understanding in society.
- 1.34 The PEACE programme will be open to all applicants and organisations who can make significant contributions to the achievement of the results as defined in the Programme to build a more cohesive society for current and future generations.

¹² Hamber, B. and Kelly, G. (2004) A Working Definition of Reconciliation. Occasional paper published by Democratic Dialogue, Belfast.

Justification of Proposed Objectives

Demographics of the Region

A Society of Minority National Identities

- 1.35 Traditionally within Northern Ireland and the Border Region, religion has provided a powerful marker for national identity. The recent outcome of the 2011 Census in Northern Ireland however, provides statistical evidence that the concept of national identity is very complex. For the first time the Census asked a question on national identity that gave the respondent the option of selecting multiple identities, including Irish, British and Northern Irish. Only 9% of the population regarded themselves as being of dual identity; 21% of the population classify themselves as Northern Irish; 25% regard themselves as Irish compared to a 45% Catholic share of the population; and 40% regard themselves as British compared to a 48% Protestant share of the population. It is clear therefore that a diverse perception of national identity is held across the region. Of relevance to the PEACE Programme is the emerging fact that religious background and national identity is not as strongly fixed as it would have been in the past.

A Society with a Declining Tendency for Residential Segregation

- 1.36 Census 2011 provides evidence that there has been a significant shift in patterns of housing choice. When compared to the 2001 Census, there has been a move towards more sharing of residential areas. The proportion of electoral wards with a single identity (as defined by having 80% or more of the same religion) has fallen from 55.5% in 2001 to 37% in 2011. Furthermore, there has been an increase in the number of wards where no community has a majority of over 50%. This has gone up from 13 (2.2%) to 18 (4.8%) between 2001 and 2011. However, despite an overall positive shift in residential segregation housing patterns, there has been little change in the most segregated areas in East and West Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

A Geographically Differentiated Society

- 1.37 Despite progress made in relation to shared living, the deprivations indices report stark geographical trends in relation to the two communities (based on religion). For example, Catholic majority areas experience a higher level of socio economic disadvantage, accounting for 80% of the top 20 most deprived wards and only 30% of the least deprived wards. This differential is less marked when the most severely

disadvantaged areas are considered. Deprivation indices show that 22% of Catholic households experience poverty, compared to 17% of Protestant households¹³. Overall unemployment in the two communities tends to be similar on a pro rata basis. However, this does not hold in the demographic group of 18 to 24 year olds, where 20% of Catholics are unemployed, compared to 15% of Protestants in the same age group. From a health perspective, the life expectancy of a man in the predominantly Catholic area of West Belfast is three years less (72.5) than his counterpart in the predominantly Protestant area of East Belfast (75.5). In terms of education, seven out of ten areas of lowest achievement are in Protestant working class areas. When educational achievement is considered by gender, class and religion, there is evidence that Protestant disadvantaged communities fare less well than their Catholic counterparts¹⁴.

A Society More at Ease with Differences

- 1.38 Whilst the statistics substantiate that overall rates for hate crime in Northern Ireland have been diminishing over recent years, there are indications that the occurrence of hate crimes may be rising in 2014. The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) statistics¹⁵ show overall hate crime have reduced by approximately 10% between the years 2010/11 and 2012/13. The most common hate crime in the region in 2012/13 is sectarianism, which accounts for over 57% of all hate crime, the second most common category is racist crime which accounts for 30.1% of all hate crime. The third most common category of hate crime recorded in 2012/13 is homophobic crime which accounts for 9.5% of all hate crimes. There have been reductions in most of the principle categories of hate crimes, relative to 2010/11: sectarian crimes in 2012/13 are down by 10.7%; racist crimes in 2012/13 are down by 11.5%. The overall figure for hate crime in Northern Ireland is higher than that for England and Wales (1.4% vs. 1.1%). When sectarianism is excluded from these statistics, the percentage in Northern Ireland is much lower than in England and Wales (0.6%). This provides evidence of the idiosyncratic nature of sectarian based hate crime in Northern Ireland and the need for PEACE to target this phenomenon.

¹³ Annual Family Resources Survey (February 2013)

¹⁴ Nolan, P. (2013), page 105.

¹⁵ Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/5 to 2012/13. Annual bulleting 5th July 2013. Page 9.

Education

- 1.39 The education system in Northern Ireland consists of different types of schools under the control of management committees who are also the employers of teachers¹⁶. There are over 322,000 students in pre-school, primary and secondary education in Northern Ireland. Overall, 92.6% of children attend schools that are predominantly associated with one community. In Ireland, over 90% of schools are owned and maintained by the Catholic Church¹⁷ with only 2% of schools being described as multi-denominational¹⁸. There are no specific statistics available for the Border Region.
- 1.40 The Education Reform (N) Order 1989 places a duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. This was reiterated within the Belfast Agreement, placing an obligation on government to encourage and facilitate integrated education. This has proven to be a challenging commitment to deliver in the short to medium term, with only 6.8% of NI pupils enrolled in integrated primary or post primary schools¹⁹. The corresponding figure for Ireland is 2%. Despite this low representation, support for the ethos of integrated schooling is strong across the region. A February 2013 opinion poll²⁰ reported that 69% of polled persons considered integrated schooling to represent the best preparation for living in a diverse society.
- 1.41 There is also evidence of public support for the related concept of shared education. A poll published in the Belfast Telegraph in June 2012 asked: 'Should the Education Minister encourage state and Catholic schools to share facilities and / or teachers in view of falling pupil numbers and cuts in funding?' Three out of four who expressed an opinion said yes. When the undecided are included in the results, support was lower but still significant, at 54%²¹. Recognising the complexities of implementing integrated education, the Programme for Government in Northern Ireland supports shared education, which is predicated on a model of good relations and improved educational outcomes²². It identifies targets to provide children with the opportunity to

¹⁶ Department of Education Northern Ireland website http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/10-types_of_school-nischools_pg.htm

¹⁷ <http://www.citizensinformation.ie>

¹⁸ <http://www.educatetogether.ie>

¹⁹ Nolan, P. (2013) Number of Protestant and Catholic pupils by School Type 2011-12.

²⁰ Integrated Education Fund Lucid Talk Poll, February 2013, Integrated Education Fund, Belfast. <http://www.ief.org.uk>

²¹ Nolan, P. (2013) page 128.

²² Northern Ireland Executive (2012)

participate in shared education programmes and to increase the number of schools sharing facilities.

- 1.42 In recent years, the Department of Education in Northern Ireland has undertaken much work in this area in partnership with the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and Atlantic Philanthropies. Throughout the school process, increased social mixing can contribute to greater tolerance and through raised expectations, improve educational performance for the most deprived pupils²³. There is an opportunity in PEACE to build upon and further develop the work that has been undertaken in this area to bring about a more inclusive society within Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Celebration of Identity in a Nation of Minorities

- 1.43 The stability of the NI economy is vulnerable to the shocks and impacts of public displays of civic unrest related to the manner in which communities express their national and cultural identity. Achieving community consensus on sensitive issues such as flags, emblems, parades and other expressions of national and cultural identity is a high priority. It also presents a significant challenge for leadership within civil society.
- 1.44 The number of marches held in a year in Northern Ireland has increased significantly over the past three decades – from 1,897 in 1985 to 4,320 in 2012. The 2012 figure represents a sizeable year-on-year increase on 2011 with an increase of 9%.
- 1.45 The period for implementation of the PEACE Programme coincides with a number of commemorations of key historical dates and events. The decade from 2012 to 2022 is referred to in Ireland and Northern Ireland as the *Decade of Centenaries* or the *Decade of Commemorations*. Among the events that will be commemorated are: the Government of Ireland Act (1920), the Anglo Irish Treaty (1921), the beginning of the First World War (1914); the Easter Rising (1916); and the First Battle of the Somme (1916).
- 1.46 All of these commemorations are of great importance to both communities on the island of Ireland and in the United Kingdom. A joint statement issued by the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister on the decade of commemorations (12th March

²³ A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme 2013, The Education and Training Inspectorate

2012)²⁴ said that both Governments were committed to working with the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that these commemorations would contribute to greater reconciliation rather than division. The decade of commemorations could serve to invoke a renewed sense of individual and group identity or reinforce a sense of 'otherness' or difference. It could also serve to highlight or emphasise a sense of commonality and collective experience, not previously articulated.

- 1.47 The *Northern Ireland 2010 Life and Times Survey* indicates that there is widespread acknowledgement (62%) that Northern Ireland is still not a place free from displays of sectarian aggression; with 87% of respondents agreeing with the assertion that better relations will come about through more integration. The Mid-Term Evaluation of PEACE III identified the need for future funding to address issues surrounding the sense of identity within communities and tackling the challenges presented by symbols, flags and related issues. The evaluation also recommended that there should be increased emphasis in PEACE on cross community work as opposed to single identity interventions in order to reduce the risk of entrenching divisions. This will require investment in development civil leadership within local communities and across society.
- 1.48 PEACE has the potential to leave a lasting legacy in Northern Ireland and the Border Region by addressing these challenges. Communities must be encouraged to take pride in their culture, customs and heritage in a manner that does not alienate or antagonise other sections of the wider community. The upcoming period of anniversaries should be viewed as an opportunity to create new fora for dialogue and debate, education and information-sharing, cross community collaboration and partnership building, leadership within civil society.

Early Years and Young People

- 1.49 Over one third of the population in Northern Ireland is under the age of 25 years and therefore has had no direct experience of the major civil unrest and violent conflict of the recent past. Despite this, the underlying issues of segregation and exclusion are still prevalent in this generation. This was very apparent from the involvement of this age group in the flag protests of December 2012 and the riots surrounding the July parades in the Ardoyne area of Belfast in 2013. The *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report* (Nolan, 2013) states that "During the flags dispute that ran through the winter of 2012-13, much attention was focused on east Belfast and it was

²⁴ Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht website <http://www.decadeofcentenaries.com/statement/>

frequently asserted that the unrest was not just about the removal of the Union Flag from the City Hall but underlying social and economic disadvantage.”²⁵

- 1.50 Research shows that children in Northern Ireland learn the cultural and political preferences of their own community by the age of three, and by the age of six one third of children recognise that they are a member of either the Protestant or Catholic communities, with 1 in 6 making sectarian statements²⁶. Research carried out by the Young National Children’s Bureau in January 2013²⁷ indicates that parents have the biggest influence in shaping young people’s attitudes towards other religions and cultures. This situation demonstrates that the attitudes of many young people need to be challenged to become more inclusive and accepting of diversity. This is particularly relevant given the continuing prevalence (albeit reduced in its extent) of segregated housing and schooling. Moreover, and in a more general sense, many of the behaviours that children carry through life begin to develop during these early years. In this regard, policy approaches should be pursued to positively address the impact of adversity on children by intervening both earlier and more effectively to reduce the risk of poor outcomes later in life.
- 1.51 Policy attention has focused on young people aged 16 to 24 identified as not in employment, education or training’ or NEETs. A Department of Employment and Learning policy document, *Pathways to Success*, was launched in May 2012. The document linked the concentration of NEETs in the communities that experience high levels of exclusion and bear the greatest strain in terms of material and social deprivation, with the fact that these communities were those that suffered most from violence. They also continue to experience segregated patterns of living and, to a significant extent, working. Recent reports in Northern Ireland²⁸ and Ireland²⁹ show that the percentage of NEETs has increased significantly over the period 2006 to 2011 and the number of those who made the transition into employment has fallen.
- 1.52 The PEACE Programme presents an opportunity to work with disengaged young men and women to provide them with a sense of belonging, reduce the appeal of partaking in street violence and open up opportunities for them to engage in education and training to increase their employability and sense of citizenship. This can be achieved by developing formal educational, training and work experience

²⁵ Nolan (2013), page 101

²⁶ ‘Too young to Notice’, Professor Paul Connolly, Queen’s University Belfast, 2002

²⁷ *Investigating Young People’s Attitudes to Sectarianism in Northern Ireland*, Young National Children’s Bureau, January 2013

²⁸ Nolan (2013) page 102

²⁹ Kelly, E., McGuinness, S. (2013) *The Impact of the Recession on the Structure and Labour Market Success of Young Unemployed and NEET Individuals in Ireland*, ESRI, Dublin

opportunities on a cross-border and cross community basis through the statutory providers of these services. It can also be achieved through the more informal youth work sector.

Interface Areas and Shared Space

- 1.53 There are many different kinds of interface areas in Northern Ireland³⁰. The most well known of these are the Peace Walls, many of which (58) are owned by the Department of Justice. In addition, there are 41 other barriers throughout Northern Ireland, bringing the total number to 99³¹. The Peace Walls are for the most part walls, fences, gates or barriers between communities. The most recent survey on the attitudes of residents to the removal of the Peace Walls³² reported that 58% of interface residents were in favour of the barriers being removed. This increased to 76% when the views of the wider population were taken into account. This widespread support for action is mirrored in the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to removing all interfaces by 2023, as detailed in the recently published *Together: Building A United Community* (TBUC Strategy), which recognises the importance of dealing with people's actual and perceived safety resulting from barrier removal.
- 1.54 In addition to the physical barriers, there exist virtual barriers (e.g. retail businesses, shopping malls or streets patronised by one community to the almost full exclusion of another community) which not only act as a reinforcement of division, but also negatively impact small businesses. The impact of the PEACE Bridge in Derry / Londonderry, financed by the PEACE III Programme is a good example of what can be achieved by creating shared space that opens up the potential for increased engagement between communities and increased normalisation of economic activity. The creation of shared space however requires a great deal of work with the communities on either side of the interface area and an investment in the normalisation of the resultant shared space. The PEACE Programme provides the opportunity to complement the stated objectives of the TBUC Strategy by working with local authorities and local communities towards the creation of shared spaced in cities, towns and local communities. This may include the creation of additional iconic shared spaces or working towards the normalisation of public places to make them safe for all communities.

³⁰ Nolan, P. (2013) para. 9.1.

³¹ Byrne, J., Gormley-Keenan, C., and Robinson, G. (2012) *Peace walls, public attitudes and impact on policy*, Policy Brief University of Ulster / Institute for Research in Social Sciences.

³² Byrne et al (2012)

Unaddressed Mental Health Needs of Victims and Survivors

- 1.55 The Good Friday Agreement indicated the need to acknowledge the suffering of victims and to provide services “that are supportive and sensitive” with a role for both statutory and community-based organisations. According to a 2013 report compiled by the University of Ulster³³ regarding the mental health impact of the conflict in Northern Ireland, 39% of the study population had experienced a conflict-related traumatic event; 5.1% of the population have met the criteria for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) related to the troubles in the previous 12 months. Recent policy developments in mental health in both Northern Ireland and Ireland (i.e. The Bamford Review³⁴ in Northern Ireland and Vision for Change in Ireland) recognise the urgent need for investment in psychological therapies as one of the key strands of the development and modernisation of services.
- 1.56 In Northern Ireland, The Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland (CVSNI) was established in June 2008 to promote awareness of the interests and needs of victims and survivors of the conflict. The Commission recently completed a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)³⁵ of victims and survivors in Northern Ireland.
- 1.57 The Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) in Northern Ireland was created in 2012. It was designed to be the focal point for funding work with victims and survivors in Northern Ireland and has replaced a number of existing funding schemes. The CVSNI, in their submission to the consultation exercise organised by the SEUPB as part of the preparation of this CP, indicated that the provision of mental health services, in particular, services targeted at the treatment of chronic PTSD, should be a priority for the PEACE Programme.
- 1.58 The PEACE Programme has an opportunity to add to the significant contribution that PEACE Programmes have made to the victims sector over the years by investing in the development of services to victims.

³³ Troubled Consequences: A Report on the Mental Health Impact of the Conflict in Northern Ireland, compiled by the University of Ulster and commissioned by the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland (CVSNI).

³⁴ Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (Northern Ireland) – A Comprehensive Legislative Framework (2007), DHSSPNI, Belfast.

³⁵ <http://www.cvsni.org/images/latest-pubs/CNA%20Final%20Report%20-%2023%20Nov%202012.pdf>

SWOT ANALYSIS

1.59 The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified during the process of conducting a socio-economic analysis of the region in preparation for the planning and implementation of the new programme.

STRENGTHS

- Established mechanisms for cross-border cooperation
- Functioning power-sharing government and relative political stability
- Improved security situation
- Decrease in the number of sectarian related deaths
- Introduction of an agreed community relations strategy in NI: “Together: Building a United Community” Strategy
- Evidence of significantly improved relations between Protestants and Catholics in NI as per Life and Times Survey results
- Significant decrease in housing segregation (from 80% to 55% between “2007 – 2012)
- Relatively young population compared to EU average – especially in NI and Border Region
- Strong population growth
- Strong community and voluntary sector
- Parts of the education system performing extremely well

WEAKNESSES

- Unacceptable levels of sectarian crime
- Largely divided society - 50% live in segregated communities within NI
- Only 6% of children in NI are educated together with children from a different community background
- Lack of shared space
- High number of victims and survivors
- Underdeveloped economy as a result of the Troubles i.e. a lack of large firms
- Under representation of high value sectors and over reliance on public sector
- High level of economic inactivity & low labour market participation rates
- Employment levels in NI (67%) the lowest in the UK
- Significant increase in unemployment (Border region 17.5%)
- High levels of NEETs - people Not in Employment, Education or Training

- Large amount of the population with little or no qualifications
- High levels of poverty
- Lower levels of disposable income than national averages
- Community differentials with regard to education and employment

OPPORTUNITIES

- An increasing number of people within NI wish to live in a mixed area (85%)
- Political and social stability
- Physical and social impact of an agreed strategy for community relations in NI
- Increased levels of shared space
- Significant support for shared education in NI
- Increased cohesion opportunities made possible by the review of local government
- Further development of key growth sectors across the region
- Attract skilled people including Diaspora
- Increased levels of cross-border co-operation
- Build upon cross community and cross-border partnerships and best practice established under previous PEACE Programmes

THREATS

- Increased levels of social exclusion due to rising unemployment and low labour market participation rates
- Vulnerable security situation across the region due to increased threat from dissident paramilitaries
- Potential for public demonstrations and disturbances of a sectarian nature, due to perceived marginalisation, which destabilise society and the economy
- Increasing number of long term unemployed
- Rising number of racially motivated crimes across the region
- Increased levels violent crime
- Significant increase in youth unemployment
- Increasing levels of NEETs
- Large skills gaps identified within growth sectors such as ICT and advanced materials
- Continued brain drain
- Recent set-backs in community relations

- The potential for political stalemate within the power-sharing government in NI which may impact on enhanced community relations and economic growth
- Increased levels of segregation
- Increased competition due to globalisation stunts economic growth

- 1.60 The choice of Thematic Objective 9, “Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination”, provides a relevant strategic theme under which the chosen investment priority, “Contribute to the promotion of social and economic stability in this region through actions which promote cohesion between communities”, and the related specific objectives will form the necessary investment framework to somewhat redress the systemic problems in the region during the period 2014-2023.
- 1.61 To inform the process of choosing the specific objectives for the PEACE CP, the programme developers referred to the most significant evidence gathered during the public consultations (held in 2012 and 2014 and summarised in section 5.58), the consultations with the relevant government departments in both jurisdictions, the socio-economic review (SWOT analysis) and the independent research utilised to create this CP.
- 1.62 Due to the high level of support in the region and the potential for **shared education** to build sustained cross community relationships and contribute to improved educational outcomes, the Socio-Economic analysis identified shared education as an opportunity. This was further substantiated during the consultations and the discussions with government departments, where investment in shared education projects that improve linkages between schools from different sectors, through joint working and collaboration, received strong support for inclusion in the PEACE CP.
- 1.63 The consultations also identified the need to engage and inspire the youth population in the region, the desired outcomes would be characterised by improved levels of higher value youth employment and enhanced social inclusion. The Socio-Economic analysis and the government departments in both jurisdictions also highlighted the significant number of young people not in employment, education or training as a concern in a region with a growing youth population. Informed by this evidence the specific objective relating to **children and young people** has been included in the PEACE CP.
- 1.64 As a direct result of the success of legacy capital dominated projects, delivered under PEACE III, which successfully created shared spaces which have made progress with the integration of previously divided communities, the consultations advocated strong support to continue to build upon this important work. In some areas the segregation of communities is still prevalent; however this has declined since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. The Socio-Economic analysis identified that in a recent survey 85% of the population of N. Ireland wish to live in a mixed area. During the

consultation process, the requirement to facilitate further removal of visible and invisible barriers between communities received strong support. The removal of existing physical barriers, known as Peace Walls (a large number of which remain enforcing segregation in interface areas between divided communities), is a key strategic aim of the NI Executive owned TBUC strategy. To facilitate the removal of visible and invisible barriers between divided communities, real and perceived issues related to physical safety and building trust must be addressed. It is envisaged that the integration of communities can be facilitated and improved through the investment in an increased number of shared spaces and services. Therefore, the inclusion of **shared spaces and services** in the PEACE CP was identified during the public consultations and the consultations with government departments.

- 1.65 The consultations and the PSNI recorded hate motivated incidents and crime figures identified the prevalent issues of sectarianism and racism. The consultation identified the need for solutions based on area based support to be included in the PEACE CP. It is envisaged that interventions designed to build a **civil society** based on respect and diversity and with the potential to reduce community tensions caused by the inappropriate or insensitive manifestations of diverse cultural traditions will be included in the PEACE CP. Building a civil society in economically and socially deprived areas where segregation remains, is a strategic initiative of the N.I. Assembly defined by the recent TBUC strategy.

Table 1: A synthetic overview of the justification for the selection of thematic objective and investment priorities

Selected thematic objective	Selected investment priority	Justification for selection
Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination.	Contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.	EU Regulation 1299/2013 Article 7(2) makes particular provision for the PEACE Programme. Increased cohesion between communities is essential to the long term social and economic development of the region. The resources of the programme will be focussed on this one investment priority in order to maximise impact. There are opportunities to engage young people,

Selected thematic objective	Selected investment priority	Justification for selection
		to promote a shared society and to enhance civic leadership, both within Northern Ireland and the Border Region and on a cross-border basis.

Justification of the financial allocation

1.66 The EU Regulation 1299/2013 Article 7(2) states that the PEACE Programme activities should be located within Thematic Objective 9 of the European Territorial Cooperation Regulation and related activities should “contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.” Accordingly, the entire programme budget will be directed toward this single thematic objective area and one related investment priority; an approach guaranteed to deliver programme concentration.

1.67 The proposed allocation of funding is summarised in the following table.

Thematic Objective	Theme	ERDF Allocation (€ million)	Percentage (%) Of Programme allocation
Promoting social inclusion , combating poverty and any discrimination	Shared Education	45.0	19.7
Promoting social inclusion , combating poverty and any discrimination	Children and young people	50.0	21.8
Promoting social inclusion , combating poverty and any discrimination	Shared spaces and services	90.0	39.3
Promoting social inclusion , combating poverty and any discrimination	Civil society	30.0	13.2
Technical Assistance	Monitoring and evaluation and communication	14.0	6.0
TOTALS		229.0	100%

- 1.68 The allocation of funding across the investment priorities is based principally on an analysis of the needs of the region and the potential offered by the Programme to have an impact in addressing these needs. The main considerations taken into account in the allocation of resources can be summarised in the following paragraphs.
- 1.69 The specific objective related to Shared Education is defined as follows. *The creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds across the Programme area.* In order to achieve this objective it will be necessary to invest over the life time of the Programme in areas such as the increased provision of shared education by creating ongoing and sustained sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities between school children from all backgrounds.
- 1.70 The specific objective related to children and young people can be defined as follows. *The creation of a more cohesive community by equipping young people (through education, employment, training and initiatives that build respect) with a particular emphasis on NEETS from disadvantaged areas, with the tools to access opportunities in society.* In order to achieve this objective, young people from targeted interface areas who are not involved in employment, education and training (NEETs) will be encouraged to get involved in meaningful and sustained cross community activities aimed at enhancing their understanding and respect for other cultures and beliefs and improving their employability.
- 1.71 The specific objective related to the creation and utilisation of shared spaces and the delivery of shared services is defined as follows. *The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.* In order to achieve this objective it will be necessary to invest in; (i) the creation of new shared civic spaces; and (ii) the usage of existing civic spaces; which contribute to social and economic development in targeted areas of the region to build and enhance respect for diversity.
- 1.72 In the area of Civil Society the specific objective is defined as follows. *The creation of a society characterised by good relations and respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.* To achieve this objective it will be necessary to invest in sustainable networks and strong civil leadership to promote the creation of and the participation in cross community events that will build respect and good relationships across

communities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region. It is envisaged that organisations who can make a positive impact in building sustainable cross community relations will be involved in the delivery of this programme.

- 1.73 Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication with regulatory requirements in the management of the Programme will require an investment of 6% of the value of the Programme.

Table 2: Overview of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Investment priorities	Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective	ERDF support EUR	Share of the total Union support to the operational programme (by Fund)
						ERDF
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation	Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	Contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.	1. Shared Education The creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds across the Programme area.	An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community.	45 million	
			2. Children and Young People Providing children and young people with the necessary skills and attitudes to contribute to a more cohesive society.	An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community; An increase in the number of NEETS or disadvantaged youth trained with the other community.	50 million	

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Investment priorities	Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective	ERDF support EUR	Share of the total Union support to the operational programme (by Fund)
			<p>3. Shared Spaces and Services</p> <p>The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.</p>	<p>After the creation or enhancement of up to five transformative shared spaces, the cross-community share of the local population that utilises these spaces.</p> <p>An increase in the number of cross-community events, associations or sustained contacts utilising these shared spaces or services.</p>	90 million	
			<p>4. Civil Society</p> <p>The creation of a society characterised by good relations and respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of community based organisations involved in cross-border or cross community, community work.</p>	30 million	

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Investment priorities	Specific objectives corresponding to the investment priorities	Result indicators corresponding to the specific objective	ERDF support EUR	Share of the total Union support to the operational programme (by Fund)
Technical Assistance (TA)	TA	TA	1. Information and Communication	The level of public awareness about the EU PEACE Programme	4.5 million	
			2. Management, Monitoring and Evaluation		4.5 million	
			3. Learning and Sharing the lessons of the PEACE Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive documentation of the work of PEACE I, PEACE II, PEACE III and PEACE will be developed A network of regions, cities and institutions will be developed to provide for the exchange of experience and the dissemination of the lessons learned from the PEACE Programmes. 	5 million	

SECTION 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIORITY AXES (ARTICLE 8 (2) (B) (C) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)

Priority Axis

2.1 Promoting Peace and Reconciliation

Fund

2.2 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Investment Priority

2.3 Contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.

Calculation basis for the Union support (Public or Total)

2.4 Calculation Basis for the Union support – The intervention rate will be 85% based on total eligible public costs.

Specific Objective 1: Shared Education

2.5 **Specific Objective:** The creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds across the Programme area.

2.6 The Member States aim to achieve the following change in the region with EU support:

2.6.1 Increase in the provision of shared education in the region. Shared education is defined as ‘involving two or more schools from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners promoting the efficient and effective use of resources and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion’³⁶. A key

³⁶ A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland’s Sharing in Education Programme 2013, The Training and Learning Inspectorate.

attribute of all shared education activities will be the 'ongoing and sustained sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities'.

2.6.2 This will result in:

- School children engaged in cross community activities designed to enhance their understanding of diversity and tolerance and to increase their confidence in their own identity while accepting and understanding the identity of others;
- The level of cooperation and communication within and between the communities involved in this shared education initiative increased;
- The attitudes of those involved in this shared education initiative show increased understanding, tolerance and respect for the other community;
- Pupils engaged in shared education activities managed through the delivery of specific areas of the curriculum;
- Improved educational outcomes for pupils;
- Teachers trained in the provision of shared education across the whole curriculum;
- Teachers participating in networks of cooperation with teachers from other schools to promote shared education on a cross community basis.
- The wider school community including class room assistants, non teaching staff, school governors and parents participating in networks to promote shared education within their communities;
- School principals trained in the provision of shared education and the management of shared education provision within networks of exchange and cooperation;
- School governors and parents trained in the values of shared education and will participate actively in the promotion of shared education within their communities;

2.7 The Result Indicator for the Specific Objective 1 will be :

- 2.7.1 An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community.

Specific Objective 2: Children and Young People

- 2.8 **Specific Objective:** Providing children and young people with the necessary skills and attitudes to contribute to a more cohesive society.

- 2.9 The Member States aim to achieve the following change in the region with EU support:

- Young people not involved in employment, education and training (NEETs) will be involved in cross community activities aimed at improving their employability;
- Young people will engage in sustained, meaningful and purposeful cross community initiatives aimed at enhancing their understanding of other cultures and beliefs, increasing their level of tolerance and promoting social cohesion, understanding of civil rights, equality of opportunity and respect for differences;
- Young people involved in the programme will be much less likely to participate in anti-social or sectarian behaviour;
- There will be an increase in cross community cooperation at interface areas between young people in the targeted areas.

2.10 The Result Indicators for the Specific Objective 2 will be:

- 2.10.1 An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community;
- 2.10.2 An increase in the number of NEETS or disadvantaged youth trained with the other community.

Specific Objective 3: Shared Spaces and Services

- 2.11 **Specific Objective:** The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.

2.12 The Member States aim to achieve the following change in the region with EU support:

- Increased provision of new shared civic spaces which will contribute to social and economic development in targeted areas
- Increased usage of existing local civic spaces in a manner that respects diversity.

2.13 **The Result Indicators for the Specific Objective 3 will be:**

2.13.1 After the creation or enhancement of up to five transformative shared spaces, the cross-community share of the local population that utilises these spaces.

2.13.2 An increase in the number of cross-community events, associations or sustained contacts utilising these shared spaces or services.

Specific Objective 4: Civil Society

2.14 **Specific Objective:** The creation of a society characterised by good relations and respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

2.15 The Member States aim to achieve following change in the region with EU support:

- Citizens will participate in events that will build respect and good relationships across communities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region;
- Networks will be created to facilitate exchanges between communities on a cross-border and cross community basis in areas such as sport, culture, history, economic activity, language or adult education;
- Networks will be created to promote greater participation and integration of minority and marginalised groups in communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region.
- Strong civil leadership will be developed, characterised by respect and inclusion within local communities.
- Commemoration events will be conducted in a peaceful and respectful manner.

2.16 The Result Indicator for the Specific Objective 4 will be:

- 2.16.1 An increase in the number of community based organisations involved in cross-border or cross community, community work.

Table 3: Programme Specific Result indicator (by Specific Objective) (Article 8 (2) (b) (ii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

ID	Indicator (255 char)	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	Source of Data	Frequency of reporting
P1	An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community.	Persons	0	2014	To be established		To be established
P2	An increase in the number of children and young people in the area who have sustained a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community;	Persons	0	2014	To be established		Tbe
	An increase in the number of NEETS or disadvantaged youth trained with the other community.	Persons	0	2014	TBe		Tbe

P3	After the creation or enhancement of up to five transformative shared spaces, the cross-community share of the local population that utilises these spaces.	The number of people from each community	0	2014	To be established	.	Tbe
	An increase in the number of cross-community events, associations or sustained contacts utilising these shared spaces or services.	Events, Number of associations. Number of sustained contacts.	0	2014	To be established		Tbe

P4	An increase in the number of community based organisations involved in cross-border or cross community, community work.	Number of organisations	0	2014	To be established		tbe

Actions to be supported under the investment priority (by investment priority) - Article 8 (2) (b) (iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Investment Priority

- 2.17 Contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.

Actions to be supported

2.18 Shared Education

- 2.18.1 Activities will be designed to incorporate a whole school approach involving teachers, classroom assistants, non-teaching staff, governors, pupils, families, wider communities, curriculum development, school policies and wider collaboration with the local community. The programme will bring together school children at early years, primary and post primary level. Projects which incorporate a cross-border dimension will be encouraged.
- 2.18.2 This investment will facilitate participating schools in Northern Ireland and the Border Region to address the barriers to shared education and make the step changes necessary to embed the practice within their schools. Activities should be designed to enable children to understand and deal with difference in whatever form; religious, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, disability or political affiliation; and is premised on equality, human rights and the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child.
- 2.18.3 In the context of shared education, it is essential that teaching and non-teaching staff are appropriately equipped to address controversial and sensitive issues, including community relations and reconciliation. Evidence shows that the majority of teachers have not had the opportunity to develop these skills professionally. The scale of this need has been established within the mainstream education system in Northern Ireland through recent initiatives such as the International Fund of Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme. This thematic objective area will provide support to develop and deliver related teacher training initiatives. Appropriate levels of shared education focused teacher training will also be essential to ensure that the shared education practices are sustained beyond the life of the programme.
- 2.18.4 Indicative actions to be funded will include:

- Joint development and planning of shared education initiatives between schools from different sectors;
- Joint delivery of curriculum between schools from different sectors;
- Courses designed to increase good relations and respect for diversity among pupils, parents, and governors;
- Training and professional development courses designed to provide teachers with the necessary skills for curriculum planning and the delivery of lessons in relation to shared education.

2.19 Children and Young People

2.19.1 In 2013, the percentage of NEETs in Northern Ireland, for the age group 16 to 24 was 23.8%³⁷. In Ireland the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), has increased from 11.8% in 2006 to 24% in 2011; at the same time the number of young people who remained continuously as a NEET increased from 78.6% in 2006 to 86.4% in 2011 while the number of NEETs who made the transition into employment fell from 21.4% in 2006 to 13.6% in 2011³⁸. Research has shown³⁹ that for NEET individuals, there is a need for a greater emphasis towards academic qualification progression and the redesign of vocational training to those areas of the labour market where jobs are emerging. The evidence suggests that the level of disadvantage was much more acute for unqualified individuals by 2011 which also suggests a greater emphasis should be placed on policies designed to tackle early school leaving.

2.19.2 This theme will aim to ensure that young men and women are engaged in non-formal educational activities that will empower young people to see their potential to affect change in their local communities. Youth work, as a non formal educational process, is recognised as having the potential to provide a critical intervention in the lives of children and young people, particularly those who have become disillusioned with the education system or have low educational attainment. It supports children and young people to work towards building fair and just communities concerned about civic rights, equality of opportunity and which recognise and celebrate differences between cultures. As such, it has an important role to play within peace building and the creation of a more inclusive society by developing interventions that are both cross community and cross-border in nature. This work will be co-ordinated at both

³⁷ Nolan (2014) page 88

³⁸ Kelly, E., McGuinness, S. (2013) *The Impact of the Recession on the Structure and Labour Market Success of Young Unemployed and NEET Individuals in Ireland*, ESRI, Dublin

³⁹ Kelly, E., Mc Guinness, S. (2013)

local and regional levels and will have a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion as well as peace building. Given the increase in ethnic population in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland, there is a need to ensure that young people from other nationalities and cultural identifies can live in a peaceful and tolerant society and programme activities should be designed accordingly.

2.19.3 Interventions should be designed to develop increased levels of self-esteem and respect for diversity among our young people. Activities should incorporate extra-curricular programmes of activity and summer schemes, rolled out across the programme area, designed to assist young people to gain a better understanding of difference and to promote integration. Whilst the programme may include short-term diversionary activities, it is important that these form part of a longer term relationship building programme.

2.19.4 The Programme will support the creation of a bespoke, high impact NEETs programme, which will complement other related interventions in operation across the programme area, by targeting NEETs from specific areas most affected by the conflict. On this basis, the programme is likely to involve a higher level of support being provided to a more select number of young people than would be the case in other NEETs initiatives. All programmes of activity must be delivered on a shared basis which gives young people opportunity for sustained, purposeful interaction with others from a different background. In addition, programmes will be encouraged to include a cross-border element.

2.19.5 Indicative actions to be funded will include:

- Joint development and planning of youth work initiatives;
- Shared youth programmes focused on extra-curricular sport, drama, cultural, language, entrepreneurial and volunteering activities;
- Cross community and inter-cultural courses designed to increase good relations and respect for diversity among young people;
- Shared residential training programmes for young people, particularly those living adjacent to common interface areas;
- Peer mentoring initiatives designed to build confidence and enhance skills with a view to improving employability and to improve the attitudes of young people with regard to achieving a more cohesive society;
- Training and professional development courses designed to provide youth leaders with the necessary skills for programme planning and the delivery of

projects designed to build capacity amongst young people individually and collectively and contribute to a cohesive society; and

- Cross-border professional development programmes to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, skills and experience.
- Training courses, including European placements, for NEETs to improve their employability; particular emphasis will be given to those areas of disadvantage most affected by the conflict.

2.20 Shared Spaces and Services

2.20.1 The experience of the PEACE III Programme has demonstrated the value of funding iconic shared space projects that can inspire communities across the programme area. Building on that experience, the Programme will support the development of capital build projects that can demonstrate tangible progress in transforming local communities and building a shared society.

2.20.2 Local authorities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland have an important role to play in ensuring that within their communities, people feel safe and confident of their own identity. The Programme will support the transformation of public spaces in cities, towns and villages with the aim of making them more inclusive. In some cases, activities may include managing dialogue, reconciliation and capacity building between interface communities; through to the creation of a shared vision and conditions where communities feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of interface barriers in their area.

2.20.3 In recognition of the need and demand of those who have suffered from the trauma of the conflict, the Programme will develop upon the services to meet the needs of victims and survivors.

2.20.4 Indicative actions to be funded will include:

- Capital developments to create new shared spaces; both urban and rural;
- Programming initiatives designed to facilitate maximum and sustained levels of shared usage within these new shared spaces.
- Public/Community partnerships and facilitation for programme activities for shared space
- Protocol development programmes to facilitate greater collaboration between people and places;

- Actions to ensure public spaces are welcoming to all and respectful of cultural identity.
- Development of services to victims and survivors.
- Contribute to the creation of shared spaces associated with the removal of interface barriers.

2.21 Civil Society

- 2.21.1 In line with post conflict theories of change, this investment priority area will centre on the creation of a cohesive community through the process of breaking down isolation, polarisation, division, prejudice and stereotypes between/among groups. Activities will focus on facilitating relationships, encouraging dialogue, joint and practical efforts designed to address substantive problems at a local level and promoting change between individuals and communities. Contact should be sustained, meaningful and purposeful, involving a co-operative approach, respectful of diversity.
- 2.21.2 The Programme will build upon the experience of previous programmes by tackling the remaining challenges that exist in building positive relationships at a local level. In line with the objectives of the TBUC strategy, initiatives should evidence commitment to tackling real and complex issues, such as racism and sectarianism, which prevent the benefits of a united and shared community being realised.
- 2.21.3 It is acknowledged that sensitive and appropriately managed exploration of the past can result in a more peaceful future. Partnership initiatives centred on sensitive and challenging initiatives including those relating to commemoration events, should be designed to align with agreed protocols.
- 2.21.4 Within Northern Ireland, good relations will increasingly form an integral part of community planning and regeneration activities. It is vital that related activities are rooted in partnership and locally led, creating an important role for local authorities. Initiatives should incorporate areas of shared interest upon which to centre related activities. As outlined in the *Together: Building a United Community Strategy*, there is evidence to support the fact that areas such as sport or the arts can be particularly useful vehicle to integrate people from different traditions, cultural backgrounds and political persuasions.
- 2.21.5 All projects will involve people from diverse backgrounds and in particular, cross-border activity will be supported and facilitated.

2.21.6 Indicative actions to be funded will include:

- Structured programmes of activities involving groups from different backgrounds.
- Training and development programmes for inclusive civil leadership.
- Development of strong local partnerships aimed at addressing local problems of sectarianism and racism.
- Civil society development programmes focusing on areas such as: commemoration events; history; language; arts and culture; religion; leadership; community development; social enterprise; inclusion and equality; conflict resolution and mediation; entrepreneurial and economic activity; adult education; training; and sport.
- Programmes aimed at engaging individuals and communities not previously engaged in peace-building activities who wish to contribute to a shared society.

The guiding principles for the selection of operations (Article 8 (2)(b)(iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

(3,500 characters)

Investment priority	Contribute to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.
<p>The following suggested selection criteria will be used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Contribution of the project towards achieving the stated results and outputs of the call for grant aid;2. Quality of the project design3. Quality of the project team, partnership and implementation arrangements;4. Value for money;5. Quality of cross community and cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value;6. Contribution towards sustainable development;7. Contribution towards equality.	

Table 4: Common and programme specific output indicators (by investment priority) Article 8(2)(b)(iv) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Target Value (2023) (100char)	Source of Data (200char)	Frequency of reporting (100 char)
P1	Number of participants in shared education;	Persons	To be established	To be established	To be established
	Number of trained teachers.	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Number of schools involved in shared education.	Schools	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
P2	Number of participants participating in X programmes.	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Number of NEETs programme participants.	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	tbe
	Number of participants in cross-border mobility initiatives (common indicator)	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	tbe
	Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across-borders. (common	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Target Value (2023) (100char)	Source of Data (200char)	Frequency of reporting (100 char)
	indicator)				
P3	Number of transformative iconic shared spaces.	The number of transformative iconic spaces	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Number of local shared space initiatives	The number of local initiatives	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Open space created or rehabilitated in urban areas (common indicator)	Square meters	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
P4	Number of cross community and or cross-border programmes designed to result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities.	Programmes	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Number of organisations participating in cross-border and or cross community meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact.	Organisations	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

Performance framework (Article 8 (2)(b)(v) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 5: The performance framework of the priority axis

Priority Axis	Indicator or Type	ID	Indicator or key implementation step	Measurement unit, where appropriate	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)	Source of data	Explanation of the relevance of indicator, where appropriate
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation	Output	P1	Number of participants in joint education;	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Number of trained teachers	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Number of schools involved shared education	Schools	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Output	P2	Number of participants participating in X programmes.	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Number of NEETs programme participants.	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

			Number of participants in cross-border mobility initiatives (common indicator)	Persons	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across-borders. (common indicator)		Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Output	P3	Number of transformative iconic spaces.	Square meters	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Number of local shared space initiatives	Square meters	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
			Open space created or rehabilitated in urban areas (common indicator)	Square meters	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Output	P4	Number of cross community and or cross-border programmes	Organisations	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

			designed to result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities.					
			Number of organisations participating in cross-border and or cross community meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact.	Programmes	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

TO BE CONFIRMED

Additional qualitative information on the set-up of the performance framework may be added if need

Categories of intervention (by priority axis) – Article 8(2)(b)(vii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Tables 6-9: Categories of intervention

Table 6: Dimension 1 Intervention field		
Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation	108	
	110	
	113	
Total		

Table 7: Dimension 2 Form of finance		
Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation	01	

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory		
Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation	01	
	02	
	03	
	04	
	05	

Table 8: Dimension 3 Territory

	06	
	07	
Total		

Table 9: Dimension 6 territorial delivery mechanisms

Priority Axis	Code	€ amount
Promoting Peace and Reconciliation		

A summary of the planned use of technical assistance - Article 8(2)(b)(vi) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Technical Assistance

2000 characters

2.22 In accordance with Article 59 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, technical assistance will be utilised by the SEUPB as Managing Authority for the PEACE Programme to assist in the administration and implementation of the programme.

2.23 The types of activities that will be funded through a technical assistance budget will include:

- Programme preparation including technical studies and public consultation
- Programme management including costs associated with the Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Joint Secretariat, Support and advice to potential beneficiaries
- Advice and support in relation to equality and sustainable development
- Monitoring and evaluation, including the commissioning of specific reports
- Networking of programme bodies and beneficiaries
- Complaint resolution procedures
- Audit and control including the costs of Audit Authority
- Information and communication
- Electronic data exchange.

A description of the priority axis for technical assistance - Article 8(2)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Priority Axis 5: Technical Assistance

2.24 Technical Assistance will be used to facilitate the efficient and effective implementation of the Programme, in order that the maximum impact is achieved and in compliance with all the EU regulations.

Fund

2.25 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Calculation basis for the Union support

2.26 The intervention rate will be 85% based on public sector contribution.

Specific objective 1

2.27 **Specific Objective:** To ensure that the programme is managed, monitored and evaluated in an efficient and effective manner.

The Result Indicator for the Specific Objective will be:

2.28 The programme objectives are achieved and that there is compliance with all the required regulations.

2.29 The necessary systems and procedures will be put in place to ensure that the programme is implemented in a timely manner, and to ensure that programme objectives are achieved, including the targets set out in performance framework. An additional challenge in this programme period will be to ensure that there is a noticeable reduction in the administrative burden for beneficiaries whilst respecting regulatory compliance.

2.30 Technical assistance will be used to fund costs associated with the Managing Authority, Certifying Authority and Joint Secretariat. Funding will also be used to support the Monitoring Committee and the Steering Committee. Funding may also be used to fund intermediate bodies that may be appointed to implement parts of the programme.

- 2.31 Technical assistance will be used to ensure adequate support and advice is available to potential applicants. In particular guidance will be given on eligibility criteria, result orientation and expected outputs. Some limited direct support may be given to applicants to assist in the preparation of strategically important operations. It is anticipated that this approach will increase the quality of appropriate applications and the overall success rate, as a result of a better alignment of the number of applications with the available resources and programme objectives.
- 2.32 Technical assistance will be used to assess applications against programme results and outputs. This may include the commissioning of specific technical studies and reports, including economic appraisals as required.
- 2.33 Technical assistance will be used to fund the audit and control arrangements, including the Audit Authority. Increased emphasis will be placed on providing advice and support to applicants in relation to cost simplification to ensure that potential gains in relations to reducing the administrative burden are maximised. This may include commissioning specific studies and reports to support the application of costs simplification measures.
- 2.34 The verification of expenditure and on-the spot—checks as required by first level of control will be funded by technical assistance. This will include verification of outputs as may be required by costs simplification methodologies.
- 2.35 Programme performance will be monitored through the identification of indicators for each operation and the measuring of their subsequent achievement. Evaluations may be commissioned to track achievement against the result indicators.
- 2.36 In response to comments from public consultation and partners, technical assistance will be used to provide support to applicants and lead beneficiaries in relation to equality and sustainable development. This will include the provision of support and training at all stages of the programme cycle to ensure that these horizontal themes are fully incorporated into the programme.
- 2.37 Technical assistance will fund the design and implementation of a central database to meet all the regulatory requirements of e-cohesion. The costs of the database will be shared with other ETC and regional programmes in Northern Ireland.

Specific objective 2

2.38 **Specific objective:** To ensure that potential beneficiaries are aware of the opportunities presented by the programme and that the general public is aware of the outputs and results of the programme.

The Result Indicator for the Specific Objective will be:

2.39 The programme receives high quality applications in line with the potential funding provision and that the public are aware of the positive impact of the programme.

2.40 The Managing Authority will develop a communication plan for the programme which details the communication messages and actions to be addressed towards various stakeholder groups. Updates on the implementation of this plan will be shared with the monitoring committee and reported in the annual report.

2.41 The result orientation of the programme requires that potential final beneficiaries are informed of the expected outputs and results of the programme in order that an informed decision about applying for funds can be made. It is desirable that there is close alignment of the request of funds with the funding capacity of the programme. Good communication measures can assist with this outcome.

2.42 It is important that the general public become aware of the positive impacts of the programme and are informed of funding awards, outputs and results. A list of all funded operations will be made easily available on the SEUPB website. The programme will participate in joint initiatives including awareness raising events, workshops and conferences to promote positive messages about ETC programmes.

2.43 Final beneficiaries will be supported in the development and implementation of communication plans for their operations.

2.44 The programme will actively promote the use of social media to achieve its communication objectives.

Specific Objective 3

2.45 **Specific Objective:** To evaluate and document the lessons of the PEACE Programmes and to disseminate the materials produced, sharing them with other regions emerging from conflict and with professionals involved in peace building and conflict resolution.

- 2.46 Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland have been in receipt of EU funding for peace and reconciliation since 1995; the wealth of knowledge built to date provides a valuable source of best practice across the programme region to be shared with other societies emerging from conflict. PEACE provides an opportunity for lessons to be further learned in this next stage in the transition to a normalised society.
- 2.47 To meet the EU Commission recommendations that robust and structured documentation of lessons learnt from the PEACE Programmes are produced. The objective is to facilitate related learning and dissemination across other regions affected by conflict within the EU and beyond. The PEACE Programme has the opportunity to create a lasting legacy on peace building based on the combined experiences of the PEACE Programmes. This should constitute an invaluable resource for all those involved in peace building within the EU and beyond. This resource, while rooted in the lessons of previous programmes, should be designed to inform and enhance current and future peace building initiatives.
- 2.48 **The Result Indicators for the Specific Objective will be:**
- A network of regions, cities and institutions will be developed to provide for the exchange of experience and the dissemination of the lessons learned from the PEACE Programmes
 - Two-way exchange programmes will be developed between groups involved in peace building initiatives.
 - Electronic exchange of experience and dissemination of information to support the activities of the network of regions, cities and institutions will be facilitated

Table 10: Programme Specific Result Indicators for Technical Assistance – Article 8(2)(c)(ii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

ID (5 char)	Indicator (255)	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2022) -100 char	Source of Data (100 char)	Frequency of Reporting (100 char)
PTA1							
PTA2							
PTA3							

Actions to be supported and their expected contribution to the specific objectives (7000 characters)

Priority Axis: Technical Assistance

2.49 The following actions will be supported in relation to the specific objective of management, monitoring and evaluation:

- Employment of staff and related costs necessary for the Managing Authority, Certifying Authority and Joint Secretariat to carry out its functions;
- Contracting of services with external bodies/organisations in relation to the delivery of the programme;
- Costs associated with the meeting of the Programme Monitoring Committee and its sub-committees/working groups;
- Allocation of technical assistance for preparatory projects;
- Provision of support and advice to applicants and final beneficiaries on the horizontal principles of equality and sustainable development;
- Technical costs associated with project assessment including specialised support and economic appraisal as may be required;
- Evaluations at a thematic level and programme level to assess achievements of anticipated results;
- Exchange of information and best practice within the programme and between programmes;
- Development and management of central database and other costs associated with e-cohesion;
- Support and training to all organisations using the central database, including lead partners, audit bodies and certifying authority;
- Support and training to Lead Partners and Joint Secretariat in the collection and quality assurance of monitoring data;
- Activities associated with management and including first level control activities;
- Funding of the Audit Authority to carry out its functions.

2.50 The following actions will be funded in relation to the specific objective of information and communication:

- Staff costs and associated expenses of the Managing Authority to carry out its functions in relation to information and communications;
- A major information activity to launch the Programme;
- Workshops, seminars, conferences and other costs to inform potential beneficiaries about the funding opportunities;
- One major information activity per year to highlight programme achievements;
- Distribution of information and publicity about the Programme and its impacts including the development and dissemination of examples of good practice to include examples in a widely spoken language of the EU other than that of the Member State (or States);
- Production and dissemination of a citizens' summary of the annual and final implementation reports;
- Design, maintenance and promotion of a single website (<http://www.seupb.eu>) providing information on the Programme;
- Support and assistance to final beneficiaries in the correct use of programme's logo/emblem and other references to the Programme by implementing bodies, funded operations and media relays;
- Support and advice to final beneficiaries in the creation and placement of relevant posters, billboards and plaques referencing EU support and information about the operation,
- Coordination of communication networks across the programme area to exchange results on the implementation of communication strategies;
- Translation of communication and information material into another official language of the EU;
- Stakeholder surveys and other technical reports associated with evaluation of information and communications activity.

2.51 The following actions will be funded in relation to the specific objective of learning and sharing the experiences of the PEACE Programmes

- Across each of the individual thematic objective areas, support will be provided for the creation of a structured, evidenced based evaluation programme.
- The establishment of robust monitoring methodologies, designed to evaluate programme impact will result in an evidence base to inform future policy.
- This evaluation and analysis will also extend to learning the lessons of PEACE I, PEACE II and PEACE III.

- The intention will be to create a documented legacy of the activities of the PEACE Programmes, recording and disseminating the lessons learned to inform current and future peace building activities across the programme region and beyond.
- Suitably qualified organisations located within the eligible area including Colleges and Universities and social / community enterprises will be eligible to apply for research funding to add to the body of knowledge by completing designated and approved research projects.
- The dissemination of this learning will require the establishment of networks across other conflict zones in Europe.
- Support will be provided to facilitate the active involvement of appropriate organisations across Europe, toward the exchange of best practice, research and transnational learning in relation to peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- This two-way exchange process will also impact favourably upon the delivery of PEACE activities

Table 11: Output indicators for the Specific Objectives

ID	Indicator (255)	Measurement unit	Target value (2023)	Source of data (100)
	Public Launch of Programme	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Dissemination activities supported	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Press releases	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Hits on website per month	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	Training Workshops and Seminars for Beneficiaries	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	A comprehensive documentation of the work of PEACE I, PEACE II, PEACE III and PEACE will be developed	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe
	A network of regions, cities and institutions will be developed to provide for the exchange of experience and the dissemination of the lessons learned from the PEACE Programme	Tbe	Tbe	Tbe

Categories of Intervention

Table 12 Dimension 1 Intervention Field

Priority Axis	Code	€ EU Support
Technical Assistance	120	
	122	

Table 13 Dimension 2 Form of Finance

Priority Axis	Code	€ EU Support
Technical Assistance	01	

Table 14 Dimension 3 Territory

Priority Axis	Code	€ EU Support
Technical Assistance	00	

**SECTION 3: THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE CO-OPERATION
PROGRAMME WITHOUT ANY DIVISION BY PARTICIPATING MEMBER
STATES - ARTICLE 8 (2) (D)(I) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013**

Text

Table 15

Fund	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
ERDF								
Total								

Table 16 Financing Plan

	Fund		Basis for the calculation of the Union support (Total eligible cost or public eligible cost) €	Union Support (a) €	National counterpart (b)=(c)+(d) €	Indicative breakdown of the national counterpart €		Total funding (e)=(a)+(b) (2) €	Co-financing rate (f)=(a)/(e) €
						National Public funding (c)	National private funding(1) (d)		
Priority axis 1	ERDF (possibly incl. Amounts transferred from IPA and ENI)		253,000,000	215,000,000	38,000,000			253,000,000	85%
Priority axis 2	Technical Assistance		16,000,000	14,000,000	2,000,000			16,000,000	85%
Total	ERDF (possibly incl. Amounts transferred from IPA and ENI)	NA	269,000,000	229,000,000	40,000,000			269,000,000	85%

Table 17 Breakdown by priority axis and thematic objective

Priority axis	Thematic objective	Union support €	National counterpart €	Total funding €
Priority Axis 1	Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination	215,000,000	38,000,000	253,000,000
Priority Axis 2	Technical Assistance	14,000,000	2,000,000	16,000,000
TOTAL		229,000,000	40,000,000	269,000,000

Table 18: The indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives - Article 27(6) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013

Priority axis	The indicative amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)	Share of the total allocation to the operational programme (%)
Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination	€0.00	€0.00
Total	€0.00	€0.00

SECTION 4: INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT – Article 8(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

(3,500 characters)

- 4.1 The programme recognises the particular territorial development challenges of the eligible region and the need for an integrated approach. The programme has been planned in co-operation with the other programmes funded by European Structural and Investment (ESI) funds, including the Investment for Jobs and Growth and the Rural Development Programmes. This co-operation is reflected in the UK Partnership Agreement (Northern Ireland Chapter) and the Ireland Partnership Agreement. These Partnership Agreements set out the complementarity of the activities being planned under PEACE with other ESI funded programmes. Throughout the entire PEACE programme, in all cases and at all stages of programme planning and delivery, including calls for applications and the assessment of projects, where there is any potential overlap with other national ESI funded programmes the relevant departments in the eligible jurisdictions will be consulted prior to any commitment of support being made by the PEACE programme. This will ensure that there is no possibility of double funding with other ESI funded programmes.
- 4.2 The responses to the public consultation (2012) noted agreement with the broad principles of community led development, i.e. a partnership approach to address local identified needs through a local plan. The PEACE Programme has a strong track record of working effectively with local authorities within the eligible area to fund investments through partnership structures led by local authorities.
- 4.3 Detailed consideration has been given as to the most effective mechanism to ensure a continued significant level of local authority involvement within the programme. It is important to take due account of the changes in local authorities in Northern Ireland as a result of the planned implementation of the Review of Public Administration in 2014-15. This will result in the formation of 11 councils from the existing 26 councils. These new councils will have enhanced responsibilities, which will be reflected in development of local community plans.
- 4.4 In Ireland, local government is also being reformed with the implementation of “Putting People First”. This has resulted in a significant programme of restructuring and change, including enhanced economic development responsibilities for local authorities.

- 4.5 The PEACE Programme will continue to use the partnership model for the delivery of a significant proportion of the programme. The programme will aim to ensure that activities are integrated with other initiatives that are being delivered at a local level by local authorities. The community planning approach which is being adopted in both jurisdictions offers the opportunity for this co-ordination.
- 4.6 The Managing Authority is liaising with the other managing authorities in Northern Ireland (rural development and investment for growth and jobs) with the aim of producing common guidance for the production and implementation of local plans that will form part of a wider community planning initiative. Appropriate guidance will also be prepared for the Border Region that is consistent with “Putting People First”.
- 4.7 Local plans developed by local authorities will be encouraged to have a cross-border dimension in keeping with the overall policy objectives of European territorial co-operation.
- 4.8 The local plans will detail a local investment plan that will articulate the contribution of the local authority to achieving the results and outputs specified under, children and young people; shared space and; civil society. It is anticipated that in the region of 30% of the programmes will be delivered via this mechanism.
- 4.9 Local authorities will be encouraged to identify synergies between all ESI programmes being implemented locally, with regard to capturing any efficiencies savings that may be possible through a shared services approach to project implementation.

The contribution of the cooperation programme to the planned interventions under macro-regional and sea basin strategies, taking into account, where applicable, strategically important projects identified in the respective strategies – Article 8(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

7000 characters

4.10 The UK and Ireland make up two of the five Atlantic Member States. As a result both Member States have been involved in the development of the Action Plan for a Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area.

4.11 The Atlantic Action Plan identified four priorities:

- Promoting entrepreneurship and innovation;
- Protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment;
- Improve accessibility and connectivity
- Create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development.

4.12 In response to the challenges and history of the programme area, the PEACE programme is a distinctive programme to contribute to social and economic stability, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.

4.13 The Programme will not make a direct contribution to the achievement of the Atlantic Action Plan, but it will make an overall contribution to sustaining regional stability, and in so doing will contribute to a context which will facilitate the implementation of the Action Plan.

SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME - ARTICLE 8 (4) OF REGULATION NO 1299/2013

Identification of the relevant authorities and bodies - Article 8(4)(a)(i) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Table 19: Identification of and contact details for the relevant authorities and bodies

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body	Head of the authority/body
Managing Authority	Special EU Programmes Body	Shaun Henry
Certifying Authority	Special EU Programmes Body	Gina McIntyre
Audit Authority	Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland	Fergal McAneney

Table 20: The body to which payments will be made by the Commission is:

The Managing Authority	
The Certifying Authority	√

Table 21: Body or bodies carrying out control and audit tasks – Article 8(4)(a)(ii)(iii) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Authority/body	Name of the authority/body	Head of the authority/body
Body or bodies designated to carry out control tasks	Financial Control Unit of the Special EU Programmes Body	Alistair Mackenzie
Body or bodies designated to be responsible for carrying out audit task	Financial Control Unit of the Special EU Programmes Body	Alistair Mackenzie

Procedure for setting up the joint secretariat – Article 8(4)(a)(iv) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

- 5.1 In accordance Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013: Article 123 (1); The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is the designated Managing Authority of the Programme.
- 5.2 The SEUPB is one of the six cross-border Bodies set up under the “Agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland establishing implementing bodies” signed on 8 March 1999 (the British-Irish Agreement of 8 March 1999). The Agreement was given domestic effect, North and South, by means of the North/South Cooperation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999 respectively.
- 5.3 In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013: Article 23 (2) the Managing Authority has agreed with the Member States that the joint secretariat (JS) for the programme will be part of the SEUPB.
- 5.4 The JS shall have the following functions:
- assist the Managing Authority and the monitoring committee in carrying out their respective functions;
 - provide information to potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities under the Programme;
 - assist beneficiaries in the implementation of operations.
- 5.5 A memorandum of understanding will be issued to the JS from the Managing Authority delegating the roles and responsibilities of the JS.
- 5.6 The SEUPB will allocate sufficient staffing and financial resources to the JS to enable it to carry out its functions. These resources will be agreed with the Member States as part of the approval of the corporate and business plans for the SEUPB.

A Summary of the Description of the Management and Control Arrangements – Article 8(4)(a)(v) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

5.7 In accordance with the general principles for management and control systems as identified in Article 72 of regulation (EU) 1303/2013, this section will describe the following:

- Overview of responsibilities;
- The Monitoring Committee;
- The Managing Authority;
- Financial Control Unit;
- The Joint Secretariat;
- The Certifying Authority, including financial flows;
- Data management systems;
- Use of intermediate bodies;
- Audit arrangements;
- Irregularities and fraud.

Overview of responsibilities

5.8 The Member State roles will be exercised by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland. These Departments are sponsor departments for the SEUPB. A Financial Memorandum governs the relationships between the two government departments and the SEUPB.

5.9 The formal designation of Managing Authority and Certifying Authority as detailed in this section of the Cooperation Programme will be deemed to have been approved upon the submission of the programme by the Member States and its subsequent approval by the EU Commission.

5.10 The SEUPB will act as the Managing Authority and Certifying Authority. The Managing Authority will be assisted in carrying out its functions by the Joint Secretariat.

5.11 There is a strict separation of functions within the SEUPB. The organisation is divided into three Directorates, namely, the Managing Authority, Corporate Services (which acts as Certifying Authority) and the Joint Secretariat. Each Director is responsible to the Chief Executive who acts as the overall accounting officer for the

Programmes. The organisation is structured in this way to ensure functional separation of responsibilities and to reflect the necessary regulatory requirements.

- 5.12 The Audit Authority is functionally independent of the SEUPB. The Audit Authority is separate unit within the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Monitoring Committee

- 5.13 In accordance with Article 47 and Article 110 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013, a Programme Monitoring Committee will be established by the Member States to monitor the implementation of the Programme. The Monitoring Committee will be set up within three months of formal approval of the Programme.
- 5.14 The Monitoring Committee will draw up and adopt its own rules of procedures and agree them with the Managing Authority. At its first meeting, the Committee shall approve detailed provision for the proper and efficient discharge of the duties assigned to it, including the frequency of its meetings, which will be not less than once per year.
- 5.15 The Monitoring Committee will be chaired by the Managing Authority and will include balanced representation from across the eligible region including representatives of the Member States; economic and social partners; relevant bodies representing civil society, environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, bodies promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination; and locally elected representatives. Particular effort will also be made to promote the balanced participation of women and men. The EU Commission shall participate in an advisory capacity.
- 5.16 Non-Permanent Members or other relevant organisations may be invited by the Programme Monitoring Committee to attend meetings in response to specific agenda items. Other interested parties will be invited to attend as observers.
- 5.17 The names of the members of the Monitoring Committee will be published on the SEUPB website.
- 5.18 The Monitoring Committee may be assisted by a number of working groups. The membership and remit of these groups will be proposed by the Monitoring Committee and may operate on a limited or long-term basis.

5.19 The Managing Authority will be responsible for the preparation of documentation relating to Monitoring Committee meetings including reports, agendas and summary records of meetings. In particular, the Monitoring Committee will:

- Meet at least once a year and review implementation of the programme and progress towards achieving its objectives having due regard to the financial data, common and programme specific indicators and milestones defined in the performance framework;
- Examine all issues that affect the performance of the programme including the conclusions of any performance reviews;
- Make observations to the Managing Authority regarding the implementation and evaluation of the programme including actions relating to the reduction of the administrative burden on beneficiaries. The monitoring committee shall monitor actions as a result of its observations;
- Establish a Steering Committee(s) to select operations for funding in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EU) 1299 /2013.
- Review the implementation of the communication strategy;
- Review the actions in relation to equality and sustainable development;

5.20 The Monitoring Committee shall examine and approve:

- The methodology and criteria used for the selection of operations;
- The annual and final implementation reports;
- The evaluation plan and any amendments to the plan;
- The communication strategy and any amendments to the strategy;
- Any proposal by the Managing Authority to amend the programme.

Managing Authority

5.21 The Managing Authority is overseen by a Director who is responsible for ensuring that all functions of the Managing Authority are implemented in full and in accordance with the EU Regulations and programme rules. The Managing Authority will delegate the implementation of some of its functions to the Joint Secretariat and the Financial Control Unit as detailed under the respective sections

5.22 In accordance with Article 125 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 and Article 23 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013 the Managing Authority will carry out the following functions:

- Support the work of the monitoring committee and provide it with the information it requires to carry out its tasks, in particular data relating to the progress of the operational programme in achieving its objectives, financial data and data relating to indicators and milestones;
- Draw up and, after approval by the monitoring committee, submit to the Commission annual and final implementation reports;
- Make available to intermediate bodies and beneficiaries information that is relevant to the execution of their tasks and the implementation of operations respectively;
- Establish a system to record and store, in computerised form, data on each operation necessary for monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit;
- Draw up and, once approved, ensure that appropriate selection procedures and criteria are applied that ensure the contribution of operations to the achievement of the specific objectives and results of the relevant priority axes; are non-discriminatory and transparent; and take into account the general principles of equality between men and women and sustainable development;
- Ensure that operations selected for support do not include activities which were part of an operation which has been or should have been subject to a procedure of recovery in accordance with Article 61 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 following the relocation of a productive activity outside the programme area;
- Draw up an evaluation plan and submit to the Monitoring Committee no more than one year after the approval of the programme in accordance with Article 114 of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013;
- Put in place effective and proportionate anti-fraud measures taking into account the risks identified;
- Draw up the management declaration and annual summary referred to in Article 59 (5) (a) and (b) of the Financial Regulation.
- Ensure compliance with the information and publicity requirements laid down in Article 115 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013.
- Ensure that the Certifying Authority receives all necessary information on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure for the purpose of certification.

- 5.23 The Managing Authority will delegate functions through service level agreements to Financial Control Unit and Joint Secretariat. The Managing Authority will retain the overall responsibility for the delivery of these functions.

Financial Control Unit

- 5.24 The Financial Control Unit will act as the Controller in accordance with Article 23(4) of the Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013. The legislative basis of the SEUPB enables it to perform the functions of the Financial Controller throughout the eligible area.

- 5.25 The main role of the Financial Control Unit is to ensure that administrative pre-payment verifications and on-the-spot verifications are carried out in accordance with Article 125 (4 & 5) of the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013. Specifically, the FCU will:

- Verify that the co-financed products and services have been delivered and that expenditure declared by the beneficiaries has been paid and that it complies with applicable Union and national law, the operational programme and the conditions for support of the operation;
- Ensure that beneficiaries involved in the implementation of operations reimbursed on the basis of eligible costs actually incurred maintain either a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code for all transactions relating to an operation;
- Set up procedures to ensure that all documents regarding expenditure and audits required to ensure an adequate audit trail are set up in accordance with requirements;
- Carry out administrative verifications in respect of each application for reimbursement;
- Carry out on-the-spot verifications of operations, based on sampling informed by the principles of proportionality and risk.

- 5.26 The final beneficiary will receive payment no later than 90 days from the submission of the payment claim, subject to the availability of funds, in accordance with Article 132 of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

Joint Secretariat

- 5.27 The Joint Secretariat will carry out the following functions:

- Creation of an operation pipeline by issuing calls for proposals in line with the criteria defined in the Cooperation Programme;
- Provide information to potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities;
- Assess operations for consideration by the relevant Steering Committee;
- Satisfy itself that the beneficiary has the administrative, financial and operational capacity to fulfil the conditions for support before approval of the operation;
- Satisfy itself that, where the operation has started before the submission of an application for funding, applicable Union and national rules relevant for the operation have been complied with;
- Ensure that selected operations falls within the scope of the Programme and can be attributed to a category of intervention;
- Ensure that successful operations are provided with a contract setting out the conditions for support including the specific requirements concerning the products or services to be delivered, the financing plan, and the time-limit for execution;
- Assist beneficiaries in the implementation of operations;
- Maintaining monitoring records on behalf of the Programme and entering these into a database system.

Certifying Authority

5.28 The SEUPB is designated as the Certifying Authority for the Programme.

5.29 In accordance with Article 126 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013, the SEUPB in its capacity as Certifying Authority shall be responsible for:

- Drawing up and submitting to the Commission payment applications and certifying that these result from reliable accounting systems, are based on verifiable supporting documents and have been subject to verifications by the Managing Authority;
- Drawing up the accounts referred to in Article 59 (5) (a) of the Financial Regulation;
- Certifying the completeness, accuracy and veracity of the accounts and that the expenditure entered in the accounts complies with applicable Union and national rules and has been incurred in respect of operations selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the operational programme and complying with Union and national rules;

- Ensuring that there is a system which records and stores, in computerised form, accounting records for each operation, and which supports all the data required for drawing up payment applications and accounts, including records of amounts recoverable, amounts recovered and amounts withdrawn following cancellation of all or part of the contribution for an operation or operational programme;
 - Ensuring for the purposes of drawing up and submission of payment applications that it has received adequate information from the Managing Authority on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure;
 - Taking account when drawing up and submitting payment applications of the results of all audits carried out by or under the responsibility of the audit authority;
 - Maintaining accounting records in a computerised form of expenditure declared to the Commission and the corresponding public contribution paid to beneficiaries;
 - Keeping an account of amounts recoverable and of amounts withdrawn following cancellation of all or part of the contribution for an operation. Amounts recovered shall be repaid to the general budget of the Union prior to the closure of the operational programme by deducting them from the next statement of expenditure.
- 5.30 The Certifying Authority will receive ERDF initial pre-financing and annual pre-financing amounts as detailed in Article 134 of regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013. The Certifying Authority will retain these monies for the purposes of making reimbursements of duly verified claims to beneficiaries. In accordance with Article 27 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013 all ERDF will be paid into a single account maintained by the Certifying Authority with no national sub accounts.
- 5.31 The Certifying Authority may also receive additional pre-financing from the Member States for the purposes of making payments to beneficiaries.
- 5.32 The Certifying Authority will submit interim payments claims to the Commission on a regular basis, and submit the final application for an interim payment by 31 July following the end of the previous accounting year, in accordance with Article 135 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013. The Certifying Authority will retain interim payments for the purposes of making reimbursements of duly verified claims to beneficiaries.
- 5.33 The Certifying Authority, of behalf of the Managing Authority, will make payments to final beneficiaries upon receipt of a duly verified claim by the Financial Control unit.

Data Management

- 5.34 In accordance with the Article 122 (3) of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 the Managing Authority will ensure the installation, operation and interconnection of computerised systems for the management, monitoring, audit, control and evaluation of the Programme. This will facilitate the exchange of information between the Managing Authority, certifying authority, audit authority, intermediate bodies and beneficiaries by 31 December 2015 at the latest.
- 5.35 This system, which will be formally procured during 2014, will be a database-driven web-based system hosted on a 'failsafe' hosting environment, capable of handling a required number of concurrent users.
- 5.36 The system will be a shared system between the INTERREG and PEACE Programmes and other ESI funded programmes in Northern Ireland. The Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland will have lead responsibility for the development and procurement of the system.
- 5.37 The system will be used to collect essential financial and non-financial monitoring data. The first level of control function will be extended to include the quality assurance of data input by the Lead Partner in relation to monitoring data. This is an important aspect of ensuring the quality assurance of data. Staff and lead partners will be trained accordingly.
- 5.38 All operations funded under the Cooperation Programme will be recorded onto the system. This includes the recording of all stages of the application / operation life-cycle and all transactions associated with approved operations.
- 5.39 The system will also provide input data for use by programme authorities when communicating with the European Commission using the web interface of the Commission's electronic data exchange systems (SFC 2014).

Audit Authority

- 5.40 The Audit Authority for the Programme will be a unit designated for this purpose within the Department of Finance and Personnel for Northern Ireland. The Audit Authority is functionally independent from the Managing Authority and the Financial Control Unit.

5.41 The Audit Authority will carry out the functions as detailed in Article 127 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013, namely:

- Ensuring that audits are carried out on the proper functioning of the management and control system of the operational programme and on an appropriate sample of operations on the basis of the declared expenditure. The declared expenditure shall be audited based on a representative sample and as a general rule on statistical sampling methods. There is provision to apply a non-statistical sampling method which may be used on the professional judgement of the audit authority in duly justified cases.
- Ensuring that where audits are carried out by a body other than the audit authority, any such body has the necessary functional independence.
- Ensuring that that audit work takes account of internationally accepted audit standards.
- Preparing an audit strategy for performance audits, within eight months of adoption of an operational programme. The audit strategy shall set out the audit methodology, the sampling method for audits on operations and the planning of audits in relation to the current accounting year and the two subsequent accounting years. The audit strategy shall be updated annually from 2016 until and including 2022.
- Draw up an audit opinion in accordance with Article 59 (5) (b) of the Financial Regulation.
- Draw up a control report setting out the main findings, including deficiencies found in the management and control systems, of the audits carried out and the proposed and implemented corrective actions.

5.42 A combined audit strategy will be developed which covers the PEACE Programme and the INTERREG Programme for the Border Region, Northern Ireland and Western Scotland.

5.43 The Member States have agreed that the Audit Authority referred to above, will have the authority to carry out its duties directly in all jurisdictions of the eligible area without the establishment of a group of auditors drawn from the two Member States (Article 25 of the Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013).

Irregularities and Recoveries

- 5.44 The definition of an ‘irregularity’ is any breach of Union law, or of national law relating to its application, resulting from an act or omission by an economic operator involved in the implementation of the ESI Funds, which has, or would have, the effect of prejudicing the budget of the Union by charging an unjustified item of expenditure to the budget of the Union.
- 5.45 The Managing Authority will put robust systems in place to detect, record, report and follow-up cases. These systems will be tested during checks performed as part of the first and second level of control. This testing will be further augmented through the role of the Audit Authority.
- 5.46 Identified irregularities will be recorded in sufficient detail to check whether there is any evidence of a breakdown of systems or a need to take action to correct emerging systemic weaknesses in programme management and control arrangements.
- 5.47 The Managing Authority will ensure that any money paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the lead beneficiary in accordance with Article 27 of Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013.
- 5.48 In compliance with Article 126 (h) of the Regulation (EU) NO. 1303/2013, where the processing of an irregularity results in the recovery of funds from and operation, the Certifying Authority will keep account of amounts recoverable and amounts withdrawn following cancellation of all or part of the contribution for an operation. Amounts recovered shall be repaid to the budget of the Union prior to the closure of the operational programme by deducting them from the subsequent statement of expenditure.

The Apportionment of Liabilities among the participating Member States in case of financial corrections imposed by the Managing Authority or the Commission – Article 8(4)(a)(vi) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

- 5.49 When a financial correction is attributable to a named operation the Managing Authority will ensure that any money paid as a result of an irregularity is recovered from the lead beneficiary in accordance with Article 27 of Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013.
- 5.50 If the Managing Authority is unsuccessful in securing repayment from the lead beneficiary, the Member State on whose territory the beneficiary concerned is allocated shall reimburse the Managing Authority any amounts unduly paid. The Managing Authority shall be responsible for the reimbursement of any monies to the general budget of the Union.
- 5.51 In cases where the financial correction is not attributable to a named operation, as may be the case for systematic irregularities and corrections imposed by the Commission in accordance with Article 144 Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2103, the Member States shall make provision for repayment to the Union of any monies unduly paid, based on proportions of the national ERDF allocations made to the programme in accordance with Article 4 of regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013.

Use of the Euro – Art. 28 REGULATION (EU) NO. 1299/2013 Regulation

- 5.52 As per Article 28 of Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013 and Article 123 of Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013, expenditure that is incurred in a currency other than euro by the beneficiary shall be converted to euro using the monthly exchange rate of the Commission, in the month during which the expenditure is submitted for verification to the Financial Control Unit. This conversion will be verified by the Financial Control Unit.
- 5.53 All commitments and payments at the programme level will be made in euro (€). Statements of expenditure from the Certifying Authority to the Commission will also be made in euro.

Role of the relevant partners referred to in Article 5 of the CPR in the preparation and implementation, of the cooperation programme – Article 8(4)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013

Preparation of the Cooperation Programme – A Partnership Approach

- 5.54 The SEUPB co-ordinated the preparation of the Programme. This was carried out in conjunction with the preparation of the EU Programme for INTERREG Programme.
- 5.55 To facilitate a partnership approach, the SEUPB established a Programme Development Steering Group (PDSG) to oversee the drafting and development of both programmes. This partnership included the range of stakeholders consistent with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, with representatives comprising the Member States (NI / Ireland / Scotland), local government, social partners and the community and voluntary sector. In order to ensure further stakeholder participation, additional informal sub groups were established to provide input on the following topics: the selection of themes; delivery mechanisms; sustainable development; and equality. A full list of membership of the Programme Development Steering Group is included in section 9.
- 5.56 The SEUPB held a large number of bi-lateral meetings with interested parties including government agencies and departments with policy responsibility for emerging themes.
- 5.57 Wider stakeholder engagement was facilitated through two public consultations. The first public consultation held in 2012. It presented an analysis of the EU Cohesion Policy draft regulations and the implications for the development of cross-border programmes. This consultation also sought views on the content, management and delivery of the new PEACE programme. A total of almost 1,000 stakeholders participated in 20 consultation events across the eligible area and 173 written submissions were received. The SEUPB published a summary of the responses to the consultation on 22 February 2013 – http://www.seupb.eu/Libraries/2014-2020_Programmes/2014-2020_Programmes_130305_Final_Summary_of_Consultation_Responses.sflb.ashx These responses informed the drafting of the operational programme.
- 5.58 A second statutory public consultation was held in June 2014. This consultation was held on the draft Cooperation Programme, together with the following supporting

documentation: the Ex Ante Evaluation; the Strategic Environmental Assessment; and the Equality Screening Report.

Consultation 2012: Summary of Issues Raised

- 5.59 To facilitate the consultation, stakeholders were invited to comment on three programme specific considerations; namely that of Lessons Learnt from PEACE III; Themes for PEACE; and Delivery Structures. Furthermore, the stakeholders also discussed four general issues around programme administration i.e. application, assessment and approval process; project finance and match funding; reduction of the administrative burden; and equality and the environment.
- 5.60 Direct consultation and discussion was also held with the government departments, North and South, the Scottish Executive and representatives of all sectors, including business, rural, agricultural, community and voluntary, trade unions and public sector organisations.
- 5.61 All stakeholders were encouraged to respond to the consultation through the SEUPB website or by written submission; with 76 PEACE-specific written responses received, in addition to a further 49 written responses covering both the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.
- 5.62 Existing documentation on PEACE, written by external parties, has also been reviewed, with the key recommendations and issues informing the consultation exercise and the development of the programme proposals. Below we detail a summary of the consultation input under the key headings referred above.

Lessons Learnt from PEACE III

- 5.63 The overall feedback in relation to PEACE III was positive, with the programme activities and projects supported being regarded as having a core focus on peace and reconciliation; notwithstanding this, there was discontent expressed by a minority of submissions in relation to the lack of economic focus within the programme; with economic development regarded as an integral part of addressing the legacy.
- 5.64 A strong acknowledgement and support was expressed for legacy capital projects such as the Peace Bridge and the Skainos Project; as well as those projects that have made progress in the removal of physical barriers between communities.

- 5.65 There was widespread support for the local delivery mechanisms deployed in the implementation of PEACE III; with recognition given to the necessary capacity, competence and skills development at local government level undertaken to deliver PEACE III. A number of benefits of this local delivery mechanism were cited, these included the de-stigmatisation of applying to the programme and an improved depth and breadth of reach into all communities, particularly into communities and groups not previously involved in the programme.
- 5.66 The consultation indicated a general view that PEACE III was successfully rural proofed insofar as the cross-border, community development approach advocated through the programme had worked well in rural areas in addressing issues such as segregation and sectarianism.
- 5.67 Children and young people were cited as being substantial beneficiaries of the PEACE III programme, through the likes of educational, sports and detached youth programmes; with positive feedback received in relation to the first time programme inclusion of former security force members. The continued targeting of ex-prisoner and ex-combatant groups received mixed reviews, with some supporting this target beneficiary due to their reach into previously low level involvement areas; whilst this is countered by those who indicated the view that better value for money may be achieved in alternative economic development and/or victims initiatives.
- 5.68 Some submissions expressed concern over participation rates amongst women and within certain PUL⁴⁰ communities; with some submissions expressing a view for the continuation of single identity engagement in hard to reach communities.
- 5.69 The delivery structures, whereby there were locally and regionally funded projects within PEACE III, were considered to have scope for improvement in terms of both delivery and outcome/impact achievement, through improved co-ordination and communication, with a call for better integration with key policy areas of education, rural development and community planning.
- 5.70 Following on from this, there was general agreement that the programme would have been better placed by having a larger focus on impacts and outcomes as opposed to being so highly concerned with financial expenditure targets; with recognition that whilst the Aid for Peace approach to project monitoring had successfully brought

⁴⁰ Defn:Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist.

project managers along the learning curve to consider their contribution to the programme objectives, the approach was generally not fulfilling its purpose.

- 5.71 There was overwhelming support for a significant overhaul of the administration of the programme; which was considered to consist of unnecessarily cumbersome and inflexible procedures that had caused delays in the timely implementation of projects.

Themes for PEACE

- 5.72 In facilitating the discussion on possible themes for PEACE, stakeholders were asked to document the type of change they would like to see in the region in the period to 2020; with a large percentage of those responding citing improvements rooted in increased economic development (manifesting in higher value employment and economic activity, particularly for young people) and enhanced social inclusion. The supporting characteristics desired for the region included:

- Mature cross-border co-operation evidenced by greater access to education, health and transport in both jurisdictions;
- Political leadership bought into an agreed strategy for addressing issues such as flags, emblems and the manifestation of diverse cultural traditions;
- Invigorated and modernised approached to the education of children and young people through shared educational resourcing and improved linkages;
- Confident, engaged and inspired youth population, characterised by improved levels of youth employment;
- Empowered, active and outward looking communities playing an active role in their socially deprived areas, with leadership coming from both women and the younger generation; and
- Reduced community tensions through further removal of visible and invisible barriers between communities.

- 5.73 In seeking to achieve a society displaying the above characteristics, most submissions advocated the continued focus that prevailed in PEACE III, with a small proportion of respondents calling for this peace and reconciliation focus to migrate to a more economic basis. Notwithstanding this divergence in opinion, there was

general agreement as to the type of activities that PEACE should fund to effect this change. These are listed below:

- Educational Programmes that develop linkages between schools from different sectors through joint working and collaboration;
- Shared Space Programmes that support the transformation of contested spaces and places;
- Detached Youth Programmes to address the growing level of the population classified as being not in employment, education or training;
- Community and Institutional Capacity Building Programmes to continue to equip both urban and rural communities to make use of peace and reconciliation resources in order to deal with the past and address social exclusion, particularly amongst areas hitherto showing a low level of involvement; and
- Area Based Support to address issues of sectarianism and /or racism.

Delivery Structures

5.74 Generally there was a high level of support for the continuation of the PEACE III programme delivery structures; in particular, there was a strong avocation of the continued use of the local authority based partnership structures combined with a range of regionally implemented projects and delivery mechanisms. If this dual level of project implementation (local and regional) does proceed, it was noted that there would need to be enhanced communication and co-ordination within and outside the programme.

5.75 In considering the application, assessment and approval process, submissions expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the overall time taken to assess and approve applications – resulting in the unanimous call for the timeframe for the approval of project applications to be shortened, with a bench mark comparator target from within other European countries of 20 to 26 weeks. In addition, there was a call for action in the following guises:

5.76 Calls for Applications - it was suggested by a number of submissions that there needs to be a review undertaken of the process used for the publication of calls; with scope to increase the uptake of the programme by improving the communication protocols and timeframes for the opening of calls, by providing additional pre-

application support in the sourcing of partners, and by providing thematic-based workshops.

- 5.77 Assessment of Applications – it was suggested that a two-stage approach to application assessment was preferable and there were various operational improvements suggested e.g. opportunity for applicants to present to the Steering Committee, Steering Committee constituted to have technical competence and the application of proportionate effort to applications based on the amount sought.
- 5.78 Approval Timeframe - In achieving the target reduction in the approval timeframe, it was widely considered that the Green Book Economic Appraisal approach to investment appraisal was not wholly suitable to the programme. In addition, a number of submissions requested the development of a procurement strategy for the whole programme.

Consultation 2014: Summary of Issues Raised

SECTION 6: COORDINATION - ARTICLE 8(5) (A) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013

Overview

6.1 The following programmes are of particular note for coordination with the PEACE Programme;

- INTERREG Programme;
- Investment for growth and jobs: Northern Ireland; Border Midland and West Regional Programme; Scotland;
- Transnational programmes: Northern Periphery and Arctic; Atlantic Area; North West Europe;
- Interregional Programme – INTERREG Europe;
- Rural Development Programmes.

In addition, the programme area further benefits from European funding through the International Fund for Ireland; albeit that the organisation has a declining profile of activity over the programme period.

6.2 The following initiatives are not relevant in relation to co-ordination mechanisms with this programme: Cohesion Fund; Connecting Europe; *European Neighbourhood Instrument* (ENI); European Development Fund (EDF); Instrument for pre-Accession Assistance (IPA); European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Programmes; and competitive programmes such as Horizon 2020 and LIFE.

6.3 The Partnership Agreements between the EU Commission and UK (Northern Ireland Chapter) and Ireland present a framework for the co-ordination of the programmes funded by ESI funds at national level.

6.4 At a regional level the SEUPB has coordinated the development of this programme in close consultation with the relevant authorities in Northern Ireland and Ireland who are responsible for the development of other programmes. To facilitate this process in Northern Ireland, the Department of Finance and Personnel chair regular meetings between the respective managing authorities, including the SEUPB. In addition, the SEUPB attend the Consultative Partnership Group in Northern Ireland which leads

the development of the programme for growth and jobs. In Ireland, the SEUPB is a member of the National Strategic Reference Framework Monitoring Committee that co-ordinates the development of all ESI funded programmes, including the Border Midlands and West Regional Programme.

- 6.5 The Programme Development Steering Group for the PEACE Programmes includes representation from all the relevant national and regional bodies in the eligible region with programme planning responsibility.
- 6.6 The INTERREG and PEACE Programmes share the same Managing Authority, Certifying Authority, Joint Secretariat and Audit Authority. There will be complementarity between the memberships of the respective Monitoring Committees. There was been joint planning and consultation mechanism for both the INTERREG and PEACE Programmes. There will be shared systems and procedures for the implementation of the two ETC programmes.
- 6.7 The SEUPB will provide the Regional Contact Point for Northern Ireland for the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme. The SEUPB will liaise with the national contact points for the other transnational programmes. This will assist in building a regional awareness of the full range of funding opportunities available under ETC programmes and facilitating relevant participation by beneficiaries in the appropriate programme.
- 6.8 The aim of this coordination mechanism is to ensure maximum complementarity between programmes. All ESI funded programmes have a requirement to demonstrate focus and concentration. All programmes are based on a common list of thematic objectives, however the distinctive nature of the investment priority for the PEACE Programme ensures there is limited potential for duplication of activity. Whilst not all activities may be cross-border in nature, (Article 12 Regulation (EU) No. 1299/2013) the programme will encourage the adoption of cross-border approaches to addressing local needs. This will distinguish the programme activities from other regional programmes. Other relevant regional programmes bodies and policy departments will be consulted during project selection to ensure maximum levels of coordination with regional programmes.
- 6.9 The Programme has been planned in consultation with the IFI and has taken due regard as to likely profile of funding available from the Fund over the programme period. The proposed activity has been informed by the extensive experience of the

Fund in implementing projects in the relevant policy areas and the best practice identified by the Fund.

SECTION 7: REDUCTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN FOR BENEFICIARIES - ARTICLE 8 (5) (B) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013

A summary of the assessment of the administrative burden for beneficiaries and where necessary, the actions planned accompanied by an indicative timeframe to reduce the administrative burden

- 7.1 The responses of the public consultation public conducted in 2012 articulated concerns on the long processing times associated with project assessment and approval. In addition, there were widely held views that there was an over-emphasis on inputs and financial propriety to the detriment of outcomes and the achievement of programme objectives. There was a general consensus that the level of bureaucracy within the programme needed to be reduced.
- 7.2 Sound, effective and efficient management of the EU funds requires appropriate, effective and transparent systems by all institutions involved. These systems need to ensure the selection of high quality operations and effective implementation of these operations to achieve programme objectives.
- 7.3 The management and control systems must also ensure the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud, and thus ensure reasonable assurance on the regularity of expenditure. The delivery system should be as simple and streamlined as possible and be compliant with both EU and national rules.
- 7.4 In response to the results of the consultation and the opportunities presented in the regulations, the Managing Authority has agreed with the Member States a number of administrative simplifications to be undertaken. These are outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 7.5 *Harmonisation of Rules:* There will be common rules applied between the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes, both of which are managed by the SEUPB as the Managing Authority. The current system of guidance notes will be incorporated into a single set of rules, applied throughout the programme area, which will be available

at the beginning of the programme period. The rules will reflect the minimum required to meet EU regulations and national procedures.

- 7.6 *Application process:* Support will be available to potential applicants through information seminars and workshops. Where appropriate a two stage process will be used. Stage one will be a short application form, with applicants receiving a decision within three months of applying. Applications emerging from stage one of the process will then be invited to provide additional detailed information for stage two of the application process.
- 7.7 *Information on calls for grant aid:* The Managing Authority will publish a rolling 24 month programme of calls for applications. Calls will have a high degree of focus and will detail the results and outputs required and total financial allocation of each call. A calendar of Steering Committee dates will be published at the time of the call. The SEUPB and Member States are committed to reducing processing times to not more than 40 weeks. More details on targets for processing times will be published following conclusion of the discussions on the assessment process.
- 7.8 *Assessment:* The primary purpose of the assessment process is to assess the potential of the proposed project to deliver the specified results and outputs of the programme in a cost effective manner. The details of assessment process are under discussion between the SEUPB and the Member States.
- 7.9 *Allocation of funding:* The regulations require that the final decision on the allocation of grant aid is made by the Steering Committee (appointed by the Programme Monitoring Committee). The Steering Committee will include representatives of the Member States, accountable departments and social partners. The Steering Committees will have access to required technical and financial expertise to make an informed decision. There will be no additional approval processes post-Steering Committee.
- 7.10 *Project duration:* The duration of the project can be up to 7 years depending on the nature of the activities being proposed. Where a project is over 3 years duration, the second phase of the project will be conditional on a rigorous mid-term evaluation to re-confirm the allocation of funding. This will eliminate the need for re-application during the programming period.

- 7.11 *Letter of Offer Conditions:* Additional conditions in a Letter of Offer will be reduced to the minimum required to ensure effective management, and will not replicate those contained within programme rules or standard conditions.
- 7.12 *Monitoring:* The number of indicators within a letter of offer will be reduced to not more than 3 project specific indicators in addition to programme indicators. These indicators will reflect the result and output focus of the programme. There will be a renewed focus of programme *indicators and independent* evaluations at the thematic level. Arrangements for monitoring the horizontal principles (Section 8) will be reviewed to ensure effectiveness and to minimise the burden on participants.
- 7.13 *Budget structure:* A simplified budget structure will be used within letter of offer, reflecting the limited number of categories of eligible expenditure. This will increase the operational flexibility of Lead Partners in the implementation of operations without the requirement to seek approval for modifications to sub-budget lines.
- 7.14 *Simplified costs:* The Programme will pro-actively promote and implement simplified costs. All relevant projects will avail of the flat costs for overheads. Calls for applications and assessment will identify opportunities for unit cost methodology. Where there is a suitable basis for unit costs, this methodology will be mandatory. It is considered that there will be limited scope to apply lump sum payments, but these will be used as appropriate.
- 7.15 *Lead Partners:* Local authority and other lead partners who are engaging with a large number of final beneficiaries will be required to state how they are reducing the administrative burden for final beneficiaries. Local authorities will be required to use unit costs, flat rates, lump sums or resource allocation models to reduce the administrative burden for final beneficiaries. This will form part of the assessment process.
- 7.16 *Verification:* Risk based sampling methodology will be used by the first level of control in carrying out its administrative checks. A focus on unit costs and outputs will significantly reduce the level of verification of underlying financial transactions. Increased emphasis will be placed during verification on the achievement of outputs and results as outlined in the letter of offer, and linked to the performance framework of the Programme. The verification process will include control checks to

ensure the accuracy and reliability of data collection and input into the central database.

- 7.17 *E Cohesion:* The programme will embrace the principles of e-cohesion from the first call. There will be an opportunity for all applicants to apply on-line if they desire to do so. Applicants will be able to review the status of their application on line. Lead partners will have access to up to date monitoring and financial information on line.
- 7.18 Arrangements for all measures to reduce administrative burdens will be in place at the time of the first call for applications.

SECTION 8: HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES - ARTICLE 8(7) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013

Sustainable development

- 8.1 This principle seeks to ensure that the Programme supports activity that promotes sustainable development and creates sustainable communities by safeguarding, and requiring the sustainable use of, existing resources to enhance the long-term management of, and investment in, human, social and environmental resources for future generations.
- 8.2 The Programme has been subject to an Environment Impact Assessment. The report and accompanying documentation is available on the SEUPB website.
- 8.3 The programme development process has included participation of the relevant bodies responsible for sustainable development, and these bodies have contributed to the development of the programme
- 8.4 All operations in all themes have to align to and comply with the Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted by the European Council in June 2006; as well as the respective national Sustainable Development Strategy within each jurisdiction.
- 8.5 As part of the assessment of applications, consideration will be given to the projects adherence to the principles and objectives of sustainable development; as well as the associated environmental costs and benefits resulting. Where deemed appropriate, Environmental Impact Assessments will be made. To inform this assessment, all project applications will detail how their project complies with Directive 85/337/EEC as amended by 97/11/EEC, which requires a statement of environmental impact i.e. that either the project does not have any significant, negative environmental impact or, where this is not the case, the application should provide a full description (if possible) of the anticipated negative impact as well as of the mitigating measures.
- 8.6 Additional levels of scrutiny will be applied in the following instances:
- Special Protection Areas - Within areas classified as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC (on the conservation of wild birds), aquaculture Structural Fund plans or projects shall only be co-financed following

an appropriate written assessment of their effects individually, and in combination with other plans and projects, and following ascertainment that they will not adversely affect the integrity of the SPAs concerned.

- *Major Projects* - In accordance with Article 40, applications for assistance concerning major projects must include further project detail that allows an evaluation to be conducted on the project's anticipated environmental impact; including information that confirms the application of the principles of precautionary and preventive actions; that confirms the rectification at source of any environmental damage and that the burden of compliance will reside with the polluter.
- *Aquaculture Plans or Projects* - Pending their full classification, enhanced scrutiny will apply to areas:
 - Proposed or required to be proposed by the Government of the United Kingdom or the Government of Ireland as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) pursuant to Directive 92/43/EEC (on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora); and
 - Proposed or required to be proposed by the United Kingdom Authorities or Ireland Authorities as SPAs pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC (on the conservation of wild birds).

8.7 Lessons learned from past programmes and the responses to the public consultation have informed the proposed process for incorporating the principle of sustainable development into the programme. The approach taken in the previous programme was considered too heavily weighted towards minimum compliance at the assessment stage which has not particularly added value to the overall design and implementation of operations. Therefore, the intention is that the Joint Secretariat will:

- Incorporate the principle of sustainable development in the design of measures and operations;
- Involve bodies working in the fields of sustainable development at all stages (preparation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation), including the provision of advice on sustainable development in fund-related activities. This will involve engagement with applicants at the development stage of their application. Based on feedback and pilot training sessions delivered near to the end of the previous programme, the intention is to provide access to training to raise awareness with applicants in the best practice pertaining to sustainable development to positively influence project design and implementation;

- Ensure that project selection criteria will assess projects on the basis of environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster resilience and risk prevention;
- Monitor and evaluate the application of the principle of sustainable development.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

- 8.8 In accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Employment Equality Act (1998) and the Equal Status Act (2000), as amended by the Equality Act (2004) in Ireland, operations part-financed by the Programme shall comply with and, where appropriate, contribute to Community policy and legislation on equal opportunities and non discrimination.
- 8.9 Accordingly, the Programme will have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation:
 - Between men and women generally;
 - Between persons with a disability and persons without;
 - Between persons with dependants and persons without; and
 - Without prejudice to the above, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 8.10 The Programme has been subject to equality screening in accordance with relevant national legislation and the SEUPB's equality policy. All relevant documentation is available on the website of the SEUPB.
- 8.11 Project applicants will be required to include a statement of the likely equality impact on their application and identify any differential impacts on the above mentioned categories.
- 8.12 Lessons learned from past programmes and the responses to the public consultation have informed the proposed process for incorporating the principle of equality into the programme. The approach taken in the previous programme was considered too heavily weighted towards compliance at the assessment and monitoring stage which

has not particularly added value to the overall design and implementation of operations. Therefore, the intention is that the Joint Secretariat will:

- Provide specialised training to applicants and lead partners on issues regarding equality, with a particular emphasis on disability; including the provision of tool kits and advice, drawing upon resources as appropriate that have been funded and developed in previous programme periods;
- Provide equality training to members of the Monitoring Committee and Steering Committees, with a particular emphasis on raising awareness on disability issues;
- Involve bodies working in the area of equality at all stages (preparation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation) of operations, including the provision of advice on equality-related issues;
- Ensure that project selection criteria will assess projects on equality impact;
- Monitor and evaluate the application of the principle of equality.

Equality between men and women

8.13 The Programme shall pursue the objective of equality between men and women and the take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination during the preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages of the programme.

8.14 Gender equality aims to ensure that men and women enjoy the same rights and opportunities; with equal value and weighting attributed to the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men.

8.15 The programme development process has included participation of the relevant bodies responsible for promoting gender equality and non-discrimination, and these bodies have contributed to the development of the programme.

8.16 The Managing Authority in partnership with the Monitoring Committee will undertake general self-assessment exercises in relation to gender equality, and may commission specific evaluation studies or structured reflection focusing on the application of gender main streaming principles.

- 8.17 The monitoring committee and steering committee for the programme will, as far as possible, be gender balanced and include an equality expertise / responsibility function.
- 8.18 As stated in paragraph 8.10, lessons learned from past programmes and the responses to the public consultation have informed the proposed process for incorporating the principle of equality into the programme. . Therefore, the intention is that the Joint Secretariat will:
- Pursue the objective of equality between men and women and ensure its mainstreaming through the integration of a gender perspective at all stages of the implementation of the funds, including preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
 - Take account of the potential contribution of the programme to gender equality with reference to the specific challenges in the priority investment areas chosen, where relevant;
 - Make arrangements for training of relevant staff in the fields of gender equality law and policy as well as on gender mainstreaming related to the implementation of the funds;
 - Monitor and evaluate the application of the principle and have regard to the results of such monitoring and evaluation actions.
- 8.19 These commitments are additional to legal obligations applying under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Employment Equality Act (1998) and the Equal Status Act (2000), as amended by the Equality Act (2004), in Ireland.
- 8.20 The Programme notes the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in October 2000 that recognises the distinct and diverse issues concerning women affected by conflict. The resolution focuses on the different effects that war has on men and women; it also recognises that women can and should be active participants in rebuilding their communities and countries following conflict. The central demands of UNSCR 1325 are for the full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes relating to peace and security; the inclusion of gender perspectives in all peacemaking and peace-building strategies and initiatives that are undertaken by the UN and by Member States; and for the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings.

- 8.21 The National Action Plan for Ireland, references the importance of supporting cross-border, and cross-community initiatives to strengthen women's political participation in Ireland and Northern Ireland, and in particular the exchange of best practice and cross-learning in relation to participation and decision making. Ireland also commits itself to engaging with relevant authorities in Northern Ireland to encourage development of policies and measures in relation to UN SCR 1325.
- 8.22 The UK Government has not included Northern Ireland in its National Action Plan on UN SCR 1325.

SECTION 9: SEPARATE ELEMENTS - PRESENTED AS ANNEXES IN PRINTED DOCUMENT VERSION – Article 8(2)(e) of regulation (EU) no 1299/2013

The performance framework of the co-operation programme

Table 22: The performance framework of the co-operation programme

Priority axis	Implementation step, financial, output or result indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018	Final target (2023)
Promoting social Inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination.				

List of relevant partners involved in the preparation of the co-operation programme

(10,500 characters)

Programme Development Steering Group

1. Border Regional Authority (BRA)
2. Border, Midland & Western Regional Assembly (BMW)
3. Community Workers' Co-operative (CWC)
4. Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
5. Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP)
6. Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, Ireland (DJEI)
7. Department of Public Expenditure & reform, Ireland (DPER)
8. Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)

9. Irish Rural Link
10. Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)
11. Office of the First Minister & Deputy of the First Minister (OFMDFM)
12. Rural Community Network
13. Scottish Enterprise
14. Scottish Government
15. Scottish Social partner
16. Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)
17. The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)
18. The Irish Business & Employers Confederation (IBEC)
19. The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)

Equality Sub Group

1. Community Workers' Co-operative (CWC)
2. Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP)
3. Equality Authority
4. Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)
5. Women & Peace building – Developing Shared Learning
6. Women into Public Life

Environment Sub Group

1. ADAS
2. Council for Nature Conservation & Countryside (CNCC)
3. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG)
4. Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP)

5. Scottish Government

Environment Statutory bodies

1. Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Ireland
2. Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), Ireland
3. Directorate for Local Government and Communities, The Scottish Government, Scotland (INTERREG only)
4. Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), Northern Ireland
5. Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

Respondents to Consultation / Meetings

1. Agricultural & Environmental Consultancy (ADAS)
2. Aisling Ghear Theatre Co
3. Alliance Party
4. Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair – Theatre
5. An Gaelaras
6. Ards Borough Council
7. Armagh City & District Council
8. Ballymena Borough Council
9. Banbridge District Council
10. Belfast City Council
11. Cairde Teo
12. Carlingford Marine Enterprises LTD.
13. Carntogher Community Association
14. Carrickfergus Borough Council
15. Cavan Community Forum
16. Cavan County Council
17. Cavan PEACE III Partnership
18. CBG Officers
19. Central Procurement Directorate (CPD)
20. Centre for Advanced Sustainable Energy QUB

21. Ceolteoir Luraigh
22. Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge
23. Clann Credo
24. Clinton Centre
25. Club Oige Luraigh
26. Co. Monaghan Community Network
27. Coiste na nIarchimi
28. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
29. Comhaltas Uladh
30. Community Relations Council (CRC)
31. Cooperation Ireland
32. CouncilConradh na Gaeilge
33. Councils of the metropolitan Area (COMET)
34. County Leitrim PEACE Partnership
35. Craigavon Borough Council
36. Cross-border Groups
37. Culturlann McAdam O Fiaich
38. Democratic Unionist Party
39. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
40. Department of Children and Youth Affairs
41. Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DECAL)
42. Department of Education
43. Department of Employment and Learning (DEL)
44. Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation (DETI)
45. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG)
46. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA)
47. Department of Health
48. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)
49. Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, Ireland (DJEI)
50. Department of Justice

51. Department of Social Department (DSD)
52. Department of the Environment (DOE)
53. Department of the Taoiseach
54. Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
55. Derry City Council & Derry-Londonderry Strategy Board
56. Derry City Council Sports Development
57. Development Consultant
58. Diversity Challenges, AFTERMATH project
59. Donegal Community Workers Cooperative
60. Donegal County Council
61. Down District Council
62. DULRA - environmental consultancy
63. Duncairn Community Partnership
64. Dundalk Institute of Technology
65. Dundalk Town Council
66. Dungannon&South Tyrone Borough Council
67. Early Years
68. East Belfast Mission
69. East Border Region
70. Equality Authority
71. Equality Commission
72. FASA
73. Fermanagh District Council
74. Foras na Gaeilge
75. Gael Linn
76. Gaelscoil na gCeithre Maistri
77. Gaelscoil Neachtain Dun Geimhin
78. Glen Dimplex
79. Glor Dhun Geimhin
80. Glor Leim an mhadiadh
81. Glor na Mona

82. Glor na n Gael
83. GRADAM an Iuir
84. Groundwork Northern Ireland
85. Health and Social Care
86. Health Research Board
87. Integrated Education Fund
88. Integration Centre Ireland
89. International School for Peace Studies
90. Intertrade Ireland
91. Invest NI
92. Iontaobhas na Gaeilge
93. La Nua
94. Letterkenny Hospital
95. Lifelong Learning/Widening Access
96. Lisburn-Castlereagh PEACE III Partnership
97. Louth County Council
98. Monaghan County Council
99. Naiscoil an Chaistil
100. Naiscoil Charn Tochair
101. Naiscoil Dhun Padraig
102. Naiscoil Mhachaire Ratha
103. Netwell Centre
104. Newry & Mourne District Council
105. Newtownabbey Borough Council and CAN PEACE III Partnership
106. NI Water
107. North Down, Ards & Down PEACE III Partnership
108. North West PEACE III Partnership
109. North-East PEACE III Partnership
110. Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group
111. Northern Ireland Environment Link
112. Northern Ireland Phoenix Organisation

113. Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
114. Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)
115. Northern Irish Environmental Link
116. Ogras
117. Ogras Oirialla
118. Omagh District Council
119. Opportunity Youth
120. Pobal
121. Pobal an Chaistil
122. Queens University Belfast
123. Raidio Failte/Lionra Uladh
124. Sinn Fein
125. Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Committee
126. South West PEACE III Partnership
127. Springboard Opportunities Ltd
128. Strabane District Council
129. Stranmillis College Belfast
130. Tar Abhaile
131. The Atlantic Philanthropies
132. The Centre for Cross-border Studies
133. The Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland
134. The Council for Nature Conservation & the Countryside (CNCC)
135. The Fermanagh Trust
136. The International Fund for Ireland
137. The Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation (NICTT)
138. The Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI)
139. The Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS)
140. The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP)
141. The Training for Women Network (TWN)
142. The Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership (YESIP)
143. Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

144. Ulster Unionist Party and Jim Nicholson MEP
145. ULTACH Trust
146. University of Strathclyde Glasgow
147. University of Ulster
148. WAVE Trauma Centre
149. Women & Peace building – Developing Shared Learning
150. Women into Politics
151. Women into Public Life
152. Women Leading the Way
153. Young Enterprise Northern Ireland (YENI)
154. Youth Initiatives
155. Youth Work Ireland-Monaghan
156. YouthLink NI
157. Youthnet

ANNEXES

Draft report of ex-ante evaluation, with an executive summary (mandatory) (Article 48 (2) CPR).

Confirmation of agreement in writing to the contents of the cooperation programme, Article 7 (8) ETC Regulation.