



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

# **DISABILITY ACTION PLAN**

**2017 – 2019**

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## **Foreword from the Chief Executive**

The Special EU Programmes Body's Disability Action Plan 2017-2019 (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan') is a statement of our commitment to fulfilling the statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006). This Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:-

- promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities; and
- encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life.

Disability issues are important to SEUPB for reasons beyond compliance with statutory obligations. Access to our services and facilities is central to our aim of creating the right conditions to support inclusion, equality of opportunity, and also increased public participation and appreciation of the work of SEUPB. Consequently, the Plan is aligned with the strategic commitments to disability issues in our Corporate Plan 2017-2019 and annual Business Plans during these years.

The Plan provides a strategic framework which place disability issues at the heart of policy and decision-making within our organisation, and outlines positive action measures which will be mainstreamed and prioritized across all of our work programmes.

**Gina McIntyre**  
**Chief Executive**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995), as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, SEUPB is required, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:-
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
  - encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- 1.2 Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, SEUPB is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a Disability Action Plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Disability Action Plan**

- 2.1 SEUPB is committed to the fulfillment of its disability duties in relation to its business functions, and in making these duties central to our aim of creating the right conditions to support inclusion, equality of opportunity and increasing public participation and appreciation of its work.

This Plan outlines the positive action measures SEUPB will deliver during 2017-2019. It builds upon the achievements of the previous Plans, whilst also identifying new opportunities to make disability issues an integral part of SEUPB's work programmes.

## **3.0 SEUPB's Role, Functions and Strategic Business Objectives**

- 3.1 SEUPB is the largest of the six North / South Implementation Bodies established under the British Irish Agreement of 10<sup>th</sup> April 1998. This agreement was given domestic effect by means of the North / South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, and the British-Irish Agreement Act, 1999 respectively.

As a Cross Border Body we are responsible to our sponsor Departments, the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) in Ireland.

The Body operates under the policy direction of the North South Ministerial Council and the two Governments, and is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Its principal function is to oversee the implementation of the new PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Programmes for 2014-2020, and manage the closure of the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes (from 2007-2013). With a combined value of approximately €550 million the new Programmes will operate across Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland (for INTERREG VA only). Each Programme has a set of core objectives, results and outputs and will provide funding to hundreds of innovative projects up until 2023.

The SEUPB also has a signposting role to facilitate project participation in the INTERREG VB Transnational Programme which are relevant to Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland and also the INTERREG VC Programme, which is open to projects across the European Union.

As the Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat and Certifying Authority for the Programmes, the SEUPB is responsible to the European Commission, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government for the delivery and management of these programmes.

Additional information on the work of the SEUPB is available on-line at [www.seupb.eu](http://www.seupb.eu)

### **3.2 Our Mission Statement**

To effectively manage and implement funding programmes on behalf of the two Governments aimed at delivering social and economic improvements to the people in Northern Ireland, Ireland and parts of Western Scotland through cross-border, transnational and inter-regional co-operation.

#### **Our Vision**

The SEUPB will work as a trusted agent of both Governments and the European Commission in the management and delivery of programmes that contribute to the economic and social well-being of the region. Its work will be imbued by the values of openness, transparency and accessibility.”

#### **Our Guiding Principles**

These describe the essence of how we work. They define our culture and core beliefs and are firmly embedded within the strategic and business objectives outlined within this Corporate Plan. Our guiding principles have been developed through consultation with staff members and consideration of the dynamic environment within which we operate.

- Financial integrity
- Customer/Stakeholder focused
- Equality in opportunity and accessibility for all
- Efficiency and value for money
- Transparency and openness in governance
- Collaboration, sharing and learning
- Respect for all

## **4.0 Implementation of the Plan**

- 4.1 SEUPB is committed to the effective implementation of this Plan throughout the organisation.
- 4.2 Overall responsibility for determining policy on how this Plan will be achieved lies with the Chief Executive. Day to day responsibility for carrying out the policy determined by the Chief Executive lies with the Director of Corporate Services, who will be responsible for the implementation of administrative arrangements to ensure that SEUPB complies with disability duties when carrying out its functions.
- 4.3 Necessary resources, in terms of people, time and budget, will be allocated in order to effectively implement this Plan and also deliver associated objectives and targets relating to disability duties in our corporate and business plans. SEUPB is committed to ensuring that this Plan is communicated to all staff and will provide the necessary training and guidance on disability duties on the implementation of this plan.
- 4.4 SEUPB will also ensure appropriate internal arrangements are in place to monitor and report on compliance with the disability duties, and implementation of this Action Plan. A three year review of the Plan will be carried out in consultation with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

## **5.0 Annual Report**

- 5.1 SEUPB confirms its commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission based on the implementation of this Plan. A copy of the annual report will be made available on our website and can be provided in alternative formats on request.
- 5.2 Details of progress on meeting objectives in relation to Disability Duties will also be included in SEUPB's corporate Annual Report.

## **6.0 Effective Engagement**

- 6.1 We are committed to engaging effectively with people who have disabilities and their representative groups on the development, implementation and review of this plan.

## 7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 SEUPB is committed to carrying out meaningful consultation in the development of its disability duties. We believe it is important to give people with disabilities an opportunity to provide feedback in a constructive manner, as to how we are implementing our employment duties. Consultation with people who have disabilities is also integral to the effective development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan. It is intended that this reflective and forward looking engagement of consultees will ensure that the actions SEUPB put in place bring about sustainable change for people with disabilities.
- 7.2 Specifically, we seek the views of consultees listed at Appendix A of this plan in relation to the Action Measures set out in Section 10. We welcome comments, enquiries and feedback in relation to these actions and also suggested additional actions.
- 7.3 The involvement of consultees is designed to assist SEUPB by:
- 7.3.1 Identifying barriers faced by people with disabilities in participating in public life in general and specifically any barriers they have encountered when dealing with us;
  - 7.3.2 Identifying circumstances in the past in which we have not promoted positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and by identifying future opportunities to promote such attitudes;
  - 7.3.3 Setting priorities and identifying solutions to take remedial action; and
  - 7.3.4 Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of measures taken.
- 7.4 The consultations process will consist of:
- 7.4.1 Written requests for responses to stakeholders and target groups on the draft Plan;
  - 7.4.2 Placement of the draft 2017 - 2019 Plan on SEUPB's website;
  - 7.4.3 Face to face meetings with advisory groups and use of other methodologies identified as best practice; and
  - 7.4.4 Removal of barriers to participation by offering to make consultation documents available in alternative formats such as Braille, audio formats and large print.
- 7.5 Consultation responses will be accepted in a variety of formats including:
- 7.5.1 In any written form, for example, letters, papers, fax, etc.
  - 7.5.2 By e-mail to [consultation@seupb.eu](mailto:consultation@seupb.eu)
  - 7.5.3 By requesting a one-to-one meeting; and
  - 7.5.4 Any other method which could be reasonably accommodated.
- 7.6 On completion of the consultation process SEUPB will review the feedback received and update the Disability Action Plan as necessary. All consultees will receive a copy of our response to the consultation comments received.
- 7.7 The Corporate Services Directorate will have responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this Plan.

## **8.0 Public Life Positions over which SEUPB has Responsibility**

SEUPB does not have direct control over public life positions, however, we will continue to clearly communicate our commitment to encouraging the participation of people with disabilities in public life through recruitment and representation on our Programme Monitoring Committees.

## **9.0 Previous Measures**

The following measures are indicative of the many positive actions we have taken in delivering previous Disability Actions Plans, with a number of these actions established as part of our continuing commitment to promoting good equality practices.

- 9.1 Accessibility Audits are regularly carried out at our 3 premises, including the Headquarters building in Belfast, in order to improve access for people with disabilities.

Employees, who have requested assistance to carry out their duties, have been provided with additional support. Additionally, we invite employees to notify us if they wish to have a personal evacuation plan developed to accommodate their needs, in the event of an evacuation from our office buildings.

- 9.2 A Text phone is installed in our Headquarters building to improve accessibility for customers with hearing difficulties.
- 9.3 All capital and maintenance projects are designed in accordance with best practice standards. This policy is integral to promoting disabled access to goods, services and information across the organization.
- 9.4 Positive images of people with disabilities are included in our corporate publications, and articles are published in our internal newsletters.
- 9.5 SEUPB has delivered equality awareness training to all staff in our accordance with the commitments in our Equality Scheme which has raised awareness of our responsibilities concerning people with disabilities. Specialist training was provided to those who deal specifically with disability and equality of opportunity matters.
- 9.6 New employees are informed of our commitment to Equal Opportunities through an Induction process and provided with a copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy and Dignity At Work Policy.
- 9.7 All policies are available to staff with disabilities in an appropriate format as requested, including large type.



- 9.8 All policies being developed or reviewed are subject to the provisions of the Equality Scheme and the ethos of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 9.9 New policies are screened during development to seek to identify, address and mitigate, where possible, any adverse effect on people with disabilities.
- 9.10 Existing policies are reviewed to ensure best practice and compliance with new legislation relating to people with disabilities.
- 9.11 SEUPB's website is fully dynamic and interactive and conforms to level Double-A of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
- 9.12 As part of staff recruitment job advertisements publicly state that all appointments are made on the basis of merit. All job vacancies are posted on our website, potentially opening up career opportunities to a much wider audience and promoting equality of opportunity. It is SEUPB's policy to provide employment equality to all existing and potential employees, irrespective of disability.
- 9.13 All selection processes address the special needs of applicants on an individual basis. Applicants are requested on their application form to advise SEUPB of special provisions or facilities required at interview and all job details and related information can be offered in alternative formats upon request.
- 9.14 All selection panel members have received specialist training to ensure equality of opportunity is taken account of throughout the recruitment process.
- 9.15 Where public meetings are planned, consideration is given to ensuring that the venue and required services is accessible to all attendees. Invitations for events also include a request for details of any special requirements.

Section 10 of this Plan details the action measures and associated performance indicators and outputs SEUPB commits to delivering between 2017 - 2019.

## 10.0 Action Measures

Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>Public Life Action Measures</p> <p>SEUPB has limited opportunity to directly encourage disabled people to apply for / participate in public life positions other than becoming an employee of the Body. However when seeking volunteers for SEUPB's Programme Monitoring Committees / Steering Committees and Independent Review Panels the Body will encourage other agencies who forward these individuals, to promote the participation of disabled people in public life.</p>	<p>Higher participation of disabled people in public life</p>	<p>Disability issues are mainstreamed and therefore are considered at all stages of the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Director of Corporate Services</p>

<b>Action Measure</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Impact / Outcome</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Public Life Action Measures				
Review and revise if necessary SEUPB's Recruitment & Selection procedures to ensure fair participation from job applicants with disabilities	Recognition that SEUPB's procedures and processes provide equality of opportunity for disabled people.	All SEUPB's processes are applied fairly and equally to all applicants including those with a disability, taking into account any reasonable adjustments	Dec 2017	HR Manager

<b>Action Measure</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Impact / Outcome</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Training Action Measures				
Provide refresher disability equality training to all staff members and going forward to all new staff.	Number of staff that have received refresher training and number of additional new staff that have received disability equality training.	Ensures that staff are made aware of disability equality issues and SEUPB's commitment to addressing concerns.  Improves staff knowledge of disability issues and provides them with an understanding of legislation and potential access issues.	All staff to have received refresher training by March 2017  All new staff to receiving training within 3 months of start date	Human Resources Manager  Human Resources Manager

Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>Training Action Measures</p> <p>Provide specialist training for all staff and external panel members involved in recruitment and selection panels on their disability duties.</p> <p>SEUPB will not discriminate on the grounds of disability when providing opportunities for training and will make any reasonable adjustments necessary to facilitate the training of disabled employees.</p> <p>Review Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) procedures for staff and regular visitors to SEUPB offices.</p>	<p>Number of panel members who receive specialist training.</p> <p>Data will be collected relating to the uptake of training and other benefits to determine the level of participation by disabled employees.</p> <p>Number of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) developed or reviewed.</p>	<p>Ensures panel members have an up-to-date knowledge of disability issues and an understanding of current legislation</p> <p>Ensures that the Body is aware of employees' needs and acts upon them appropriately.</p> <p>Ensures that all staff and visitors have safe egress from SEUPB offices in the event of an emergency.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually in December in line with Training Plan</p> <p>Annually in December</p>	<p>Human Resources Manager</p> <p>Human Resources Manager</p> <p>Human Resources Manager</p>

Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>Communications Action Measures</p> <p>Work with funded projects to promote positive images of people with disabilities.</p> <p>When hosting internal or external events ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation and promotional material are easily readable;</li> <li>- Signage is clear;</li> <li>- Handouts are in accessible format;</li> <li>- Venues are easy to reach and are accessible;</li> <li>- Delegates are made aware of fire evacuation policies and location of toilets.</li> </ul>	<p>Number of photographs / images of people with disabilities in both SEUPB and projects corporate publications, on social media and on websites.</p> <p>Any location used by SEUPB will undergo an accessibility inspection.</p> <p>Feedback forms / surveys will be used after events to gather information in relation to venue location, accessibility and facilities.</p>	<p>Encourages people with disabilities to participate in project activities. Such imagery also removes pre-conceived perceptions of the capabilities of people with disabilities.</p> <p>Any issues identified will be rectified before proceeding with the event or alternative locations will be sought.</p> <p>Data will be used to mitigate any future adverse impact and / or promote better equality of opportunity for disabled persons.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p> <p>Communications Manager</p>

Action Measure	Performance Indicator	Impact / Outcome	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>Communications Action Measures</p> <p>Provide appropriate information and advice to people with disabilities.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the SEUPB Disability Action Plan 2017-2019 amongst all staff</p>	<p>Maintenance of SEUPB website, social media, telephone and textphone services in accordance with disability guidelines.</p> <p>Number and nature of alternative format requests responded to.</p> <p>Notify all staff by e-mail.</p> <p>Make 'Progress on Delivery of the Disability Action Plan 2017-2019' a quarterly Agenda item at Senior Management Executive Team Meeting.</p>	<p>Promotes equality of opportunity and accessibility to SEUPB's facilities and services.</p> <p>Create awareness of SEUPB's shared disability obligations, and additionally provide a confidential opportunity to advise staff if they have any related requirements.</p> <p>Drive cross-directorate responsibility and delivery of the Action Plan 2017-2019.</p>	<p>New Website under development</p> <p>Dec 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p> <p>Human Resources Manager</p> <p>Director of Corporate Services</p>

## 11.0 Publication of the Plan

- 11.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, this Disability Action Plan will be made available at [www.seupb.eu](http://www.seupb.eu)

SEUPB will, through its ongoing work with people with disabilities, seek out further opportunities to communicate the Plan and develop collaborative disability programmes. Additionally, the Plan will be highlighted through advertisements, mail shots and meetings directly with disability organisations and representative groups, where requested. A copy of the Plan will also be made available to all employees.

- 11.2 The Plan will be made available in alternative formats on request, including large print, Braille, audio cassette, audio CD, computer disc, Irish and Ulster Scots. It may also be provided in other minority languages, subject to demand.

For further information on the content of this Plan or to discuss your specific format / translation requirements, please contact:

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Special EU Programmes Body  
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2 Clarence Street West  
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BT2 7GP

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## **Appendix A**

### **List of Consultees**

#### **GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS**

Department of Finance (NI)

#### **EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS**

District Councils (11)

European Commission

Members of the European Parliament

Members of the House of Parliament (MPs)

North / South Implementation Bodies (6)

North / South Ministerial Council

Northern Ireland Assembly Members

The Executive Office

Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs

Department for Infrastructure

Department for the Economy

Department of Education

Department of Health

Department of Justice

Department of the Communities

#### **ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTING A WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS**

Arts Council NI

Assoc. Of Independent Advice Centres

Belfast Regeneration Office

Big Lottery

CFNI

Committee on the Administration of Justice

Community Relations Council (NI)

Community Workers Co-operative

Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

Disability Action

Early Years

Employers' Forum on Disability

Equality Coalition



Equality Commission for Northern Ireland  
Heritage Lottery Fund  
International Fund for Ireland  
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network  
Northern Ireland Assoc of Citizen Advice Bureau  
Northern Ireland Committee ICTU  
Joint Business Council  
NICVA  
NIEA  
NILGA  
Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission  
Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum  
NISRA  
Playboard  
Pobal  
Rural Community Network  
Sports Council Northern Ireland  
The Local Govt. Staff Commission for NI  
Training for Women Network  
Workers Educational Association  
Youth Council NI  
Youthnet

### **TARGET GROUPS**

Age NI  
An Munia Tober  
Barnardo's  
Belfast Islamic Centre  
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre  
Bryson House  
Carers NI  
CAWT  
Chinese Welfare Association (NI)  
Coalition on Sexual Orientation  
Commission for Victims and Survivors Northern Ireland  
Co-operation Ireland  
Gay and Lesbian Youth NI  
Gingerbread NI  
Indian Community Centre  
MENCAP

Multi-Cultural Resource Centre (NI)  
NIACRO  
NIAMH  
NICMA  
Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre  
NICEM  
Northern Ireland Council for the Homeless  
Northern Ireland Filipino Association  
Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association  
Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation  
NSPCC (NI)  
Rainbow Project  
RNIB  
RNID  
Shelter NI  
Simon Community  
Sustainable Northern Ireland  
The Cedar Foundation (formerly NICOD)  
The Corrymeela Community  
The HIV Support Centre  
The Moderator, Presbyterian Church  
The Most Reverend, Archbishop Eames, Church of Ireland  
The Most Reverend, Archbishop Eamonn Martin  
The President, Methodist Church of Ireland  
Traveller Movement NI  
Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC)  
WRDA  
Youth Action NI  
Youth Initiatives