



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

European Territorial Co-Operation 2014 – 2020

Preparing a new EU Programme for Cross-Border Co-Operation (INTERREG V) and a new EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV) 2014 -2020

Summary of Consultation Responses

February 2013



European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

Investing in your future

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Part 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to Consultation Process

In April 2012, the Special EU Programmes Body, in its role as Managing Authority, was invited by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Belfast and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Dublin to commence preparation for a new EU Programme for Cross-border Co-Operation (INTERREG V) and a new EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE IV).

An important step in the development of both programmes is to seek the views of stakeholders and members of the public on the shape and content of the future programmes. As such, a public consultation was held for a twelve week period from 28 August – 20 November 2012.

In relation to the INTERREG V Cross-border Programme, stakeholders were invited to comment on:

- Lessons from the Current Programme
- Themes for INTERREG V
- The Eligible Area
- INTERREG V Delivery Structures

In relation to the PEACE IV programme, stakeholders were invited to comment on:

- Lessons from the Current Programme
- Themes for PEACE IV
- PEACE IV Delivery Structures

A number of general questions, applicable to both programmes were posed and stakeholders were invited to comment on:

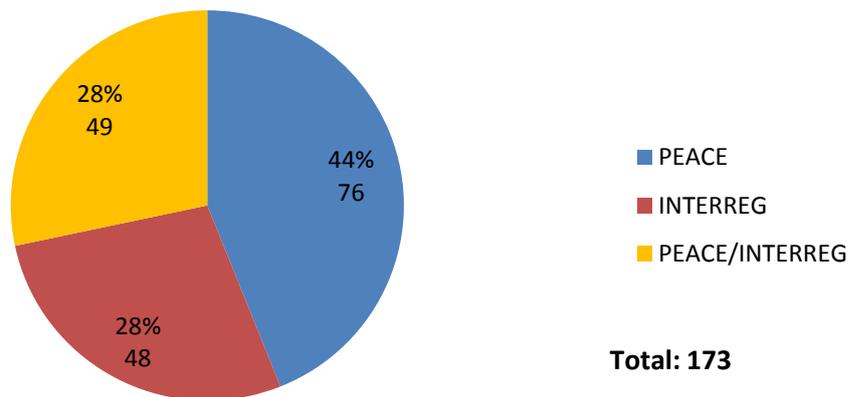
- The Application, Assessment and Approval Process
- Project Financing and Match Funding
- Reducing the Administrative Burden
- Equality and the Environment

During this period, the SEUPB organised 8 public consultation events and participated in a further 12 events organised by stakeholders. These events informed stakeholders how to respond to the public consultation and provided an overview of the current EU draft Regulations which will govern the management and delivery of European Territorial Programmes. Almost 1000 people participated in these events. A full list of events is available in Appendix 1.

1.2 Consultation Responses

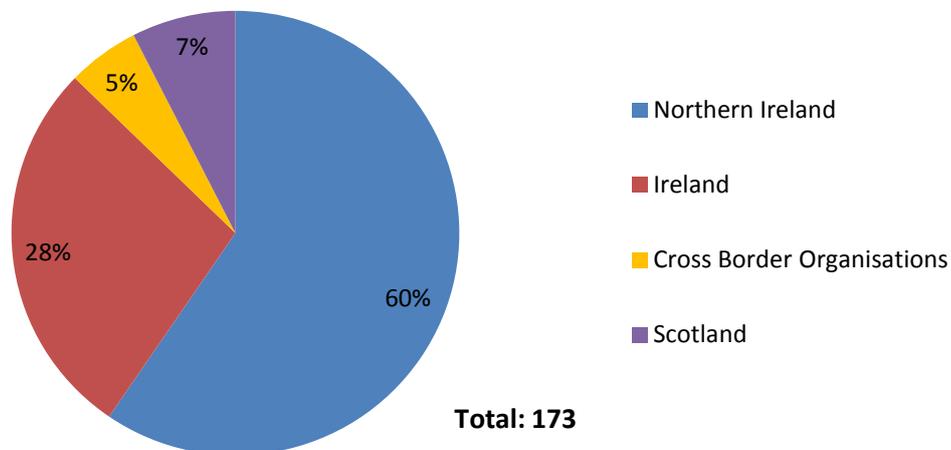
Following the close of the consultation process a total of 173 written responses have been received. The majority of responses relate to the PEACE Programme, with a total of 76 respondents answering the questions on this programme only. A total of 48 responses relate to the INTERREG Programme and 49 responses relate to both programmes. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Consultation Responses by Programme



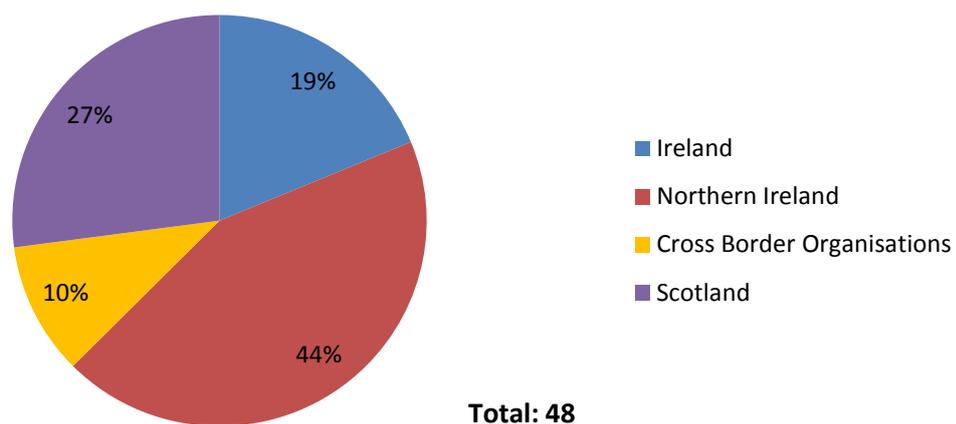
The majority of these responses, a total of 103 were submitted by organisations from Northern Ireland, with 48 responses from Ireland and 13 responses from Scottish organisations. A total of 9 responses were received from cross-border organisations. See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Consultation Responses by Geographical Area



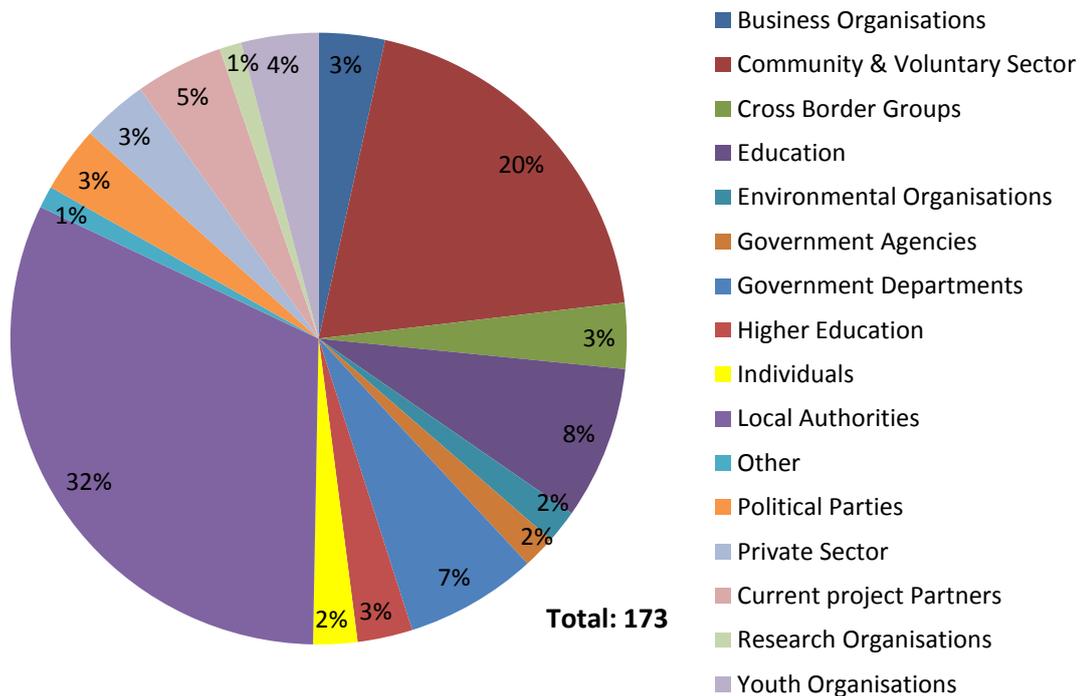
Looking at the responses to the INTERREG programme by geographical area, 44% of responses came from Northern Ireland with 27% of responses from Scotland, 19% from Ireland and 10% from North / South organisations.

Figure 3: Consultation Responses for INTERREG by Geographical Area



The responses received are from a range of organisations, with the highest number submitted by local government sector, followed by the community and voluntary sector. Responses have been also received from political parties, government agencies, the education sector, youth sector, business organisations and current project partners.

Figure 4: Consultation Responses by type of Organisation



In line with a commitment from SEUPB, to provide a summary of consultation responses within three months following the end of the consultation period, the SEUPB has produced this ‘Summary of Consultation Responses Document’.

The SEUPB has aimed to provide this summary in a fair and consistent manner, which gives a flavour of the responses received. The response summary for the PEACE programme reflects the quantity and detailed responses received. A number of submissions reflected detailed research and consultation carried out by organisations and the qualitative nature of the issues under discussions have resulted in a more detailed summary.

Please note that it is important to read the document in the round, as comments are grouped according to the most appropriate question and the answers you provided may have been captured under a different question to the one you responded to. However, if you feel that any significant comment you have made has not been adequately captured, please inform SEUPB by emailing: consultation@seupb.eu

A list of respondents to the consultation exercise is listed in Appendix 2. The consultation responses, as well as notes of the public consultation meetings, organised by SEUPB can be viewed on the SEUPB website at:

<http://www.seupb.eu/2014-2020Consultation/feedback.aspx>

Next Steps

The SEUPB will consider all the consultation responses in the drafting of Operational Programmes for INTERREG V and PEACE IV. These programmes will be developed over the coming months. During the drafting process, an Ex Ante Evaluation, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Equality impact assessment will be carried out on the two draft Operational Programmes. A further statutory public consultation will be held, which will allow the public the opportunity to comment on the draft Operational Programmes, the Strategic Environmental Assessments and the Equality Impact Assessments. This second consultation is likely to be held in the third quarter of 2013.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this document reflects the views contained within the consultation responses received. This document does not necessarily reflect the views of the Special EU Programmes Body.

Part 2: INTERREG V

2.1 Learning the Lessons from the Current Programme

Question 1a: If you are currently involved in the INTERREG funding, please share your experiences of the impact of the programme on the cross-border region.

The Positive Impact of INTERREG IV

From an economic perspective, submissions stated that the programme has had a significant impact across the eligible region. It has created high skilled, well paid jobs in the local economy which in turn has contributed to creating sustainable economic regeneration in rural communities. Many responses highlighted the enhanced economic activity, the forging of good business links, increased business development, increased turnover and profitability for local companies as significant impacts of the programme.

Submissions outlined that the programme has delivered for local areas across the eligible region with the more high value projects having had greater impact on the ground. The success of project Kelvin, the Co-Operation and Working Together (CAWT) project, Sail West, Tradelinks and the Women into Public Life projects, were amongst those that were highlighted as having a positive impact across the participating regions. It was also reported that the programme has increased the knowledge and understanding of thematic issues, such as tourism, skills development and energy in cross-border area.

It was reported that the programme has allowed for innovative pilot projects, which because they were unproven, would not have been funded by mainstream Government funding and there were views expressed that the new programme needs to continue with this approach.

It was also reported that the programme has facilitated excellent levels of cross-border co-operation and that enhanced relations across the regions, particularly between government departments, agencies, the wider public sector and other sectors.

From a geographical perspective, some Scottish partners reported that some potential impacts have been undermined by closed calls and insufficient investment by the programme in Western Scotland. It was also noted that the impact of the programme in the Greater Belfast area (COMET region) has been minimal.

Many sectoral responses reported on the particular impact of the programme on their sector. For example, the impact has been positive for people with sensory impairment as it has provided a good social structure, better access to services and strengthened community involvement. The programme has facilitated increase in patient cross-border mobility and health professionals working across jurisdictions.

Challenges in Measuring the Impact of INTERREG IV

Some submissions pointed out that that it is difficult, at this stage, to measure the impact of the programme, as many projects have started later than expected, due to delays in approvals, with a significant number of projects only beginning in the final third of the programming period. Others reported that the current programme could have greater impact if local authorities had been given more autonomy to identify, plan and resource needs within their communities (as with the PEACE partnerships).

Question 1b: Please share your views of what works well and what could be improved within the current programme.

What Works Well

The majority of submissions state that the sharing of ideas and the collaboration elements of the programme works well, together with common approaches to addressing problems in the cross-border region. The Programme has been seen as particularly helpful in the area of promoting cross-border health care and cross-border collaboration within the academic sector. The programme has allowed for additional 'spin offs' between projects and there are suggestions that the programme should build on this work, with SEUPB assisting with cross fertilisation of projects.

The 2007 – 2013 INTERREG IVA programme has for the first time, included Western Scotland and many responses from across the eligible regions endorsed the inclusion of

Scotland. Scottish partners have brought new ideas and new ways of working to the programme.

Submissions from both Scotland and across the eligible region stated that the National Contact Point system in Scotland has worked well, with many stating that a Contact Point system should be adopted in other parts of the eligible area to assist with partner searches. Some organisations noted that the NCP system in Scotland would benefit from being placed in an independent organisation, or within the Scottish Government and not in an organisation that is also competing for INTERREG funding.

Several submissions from Scotland reported that the high ERDF intervention rate of 75% has been valuable (in comparison to ERDF rates in some other EU programmes). Scottish involvement in the programme is approx 9% which is viewed as good, considering the relative difficulties of securing and maintaining the 25% match funding commitment.

In relation to processes, submissions indicated that the reporting structures, such as providing progress reports, use of indicators and the communication database works well. Training offered by SEUPB has been viewed as positive, particularly in relation to procurement. The role of SEUPB acting as an interface with the European Commission was also reported as beneficial.

Some respondents stated that the relationship between SEUPB and Accountable Departments has worked well, whilst others reported that SEUPB's co-operative approach has been refreshing. Some respondents stated that there is a need to ensure sufficient resources in SEUPB to allow staff to focus on case management.

The role of cross-border Groups as a facilitator for the local authorities is reported by many respondents as working well, as is their role in profiling the region across Europe.

Many respondents reported that the sustainability in INTERREG IVA projects has been much better than in INTERREG IIIA.

What Could be Improved

In relation to what could be improved within the current programme almost all responses commented on the high levels of bureaucracy within the programme and the length of the

assessment and approval times for projects. There was general consensus that the high levels of bureaucracy within the programme need to be reduced and that there should be an approval system which can respond in a more efficient and appropriate manner to project applicants.

Application, assessment and approval Process

Many responses outlined improvements to the application process. Suggestions relate to more project development support to be offered to potential project applicants, possibly through a National Contact Point system or a partner search facility. It was also noted that there should be a longer lead in time, ahead of calls for applications, with the potential of an expression of interest system being used. Also suggested was the use of a timetable to outline when calls would take place over the lifetime of the programme. Some submissions requested that all calls should be open calls and many responses referred to the need for a more consistent approach to the application and assessment process.

The assessment and approval process was highlighted by the majority of responses as an area for improvement. The decision making process and the length of time that the process takes is considered as unacceptable by a large majority of respondents. Some responses call for more resources to be allocated within SEUPB to assist with the assessment process, whilst others called generally for SEUPB to be adequately resourced.

There was widespread opinion that the economic appraisal system is a part of the process where improvements could be made. There was a high level of responses calling for a single decision making structure to be used for approval of projects and this process should adequately take account of the role of Accountable Departments. Some respondents stated that the role of Government Departments should not be to inhibit the process. Many responses ask for consideration to be given to the use of one Accountable Department in each jurisdiction for the flow of all ERDF and match funding. Also in relation to the approval process, some responses suggested that more experts from specific sectors should be involved on the Steering Committee when technical applications are being discussed.

Some submissions suggested that a higher weighting should be allocated to projects which involve all three jurisdictions in the eligible area, whilst some other responses suggested that the option to carry out bilateral projects between Scotland and Ireland only should be explored. Some respondents also suggested using private sector funding as match funding.

Project monitoring

In relation to post project approval and monitoring, a small number of responses suggested projects should be afforded greater flexibility in delivering on their project outputs. There should be greater monitoring of the geographical spread of projects and more guidance is needed on carrying out project evaluations. Approved projects should be provided with more opportunities to come together to share experiences and ideas. Other responses suggested that the Programme should be making more use of online facilities for reporting and there were suggestions to explore how the Programme Database, Systems 2007 could be easier to use.

Delivery

On the issue of delivery, it was noted that parts of the Programme are delivered through overarching bodies. Some local government respondents stated that this adds another level of bureaucracy without adding value. There were several responses which requested that the new programme should be allocated to lead Councils without the extra bureaucracy of a further overseeing body and that each programme is granted some administrative staffing to take forward the programme. It is reported that this has been done successfully with rural development funding and the allocation of funding from this fund has allowed Councils to plan accordingly.

The role of the Lead Partner was highlighted as an area for improvement from a number of respondents. The Lead Partner should be allowed to take decisions and should not have to revert to SEUPB for decisions. It was also suggested that more training should be offered to projects, particularly for Lead Partners.

A high number of responses referred to the upcoming changes in local government in both Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. Responses indicated that it will be important to take cognisance of the new local authority structures and competencies, when considering the management and delivery of the new INTERREG VA programme.

Communication

A number of submissions suggested that the profile of the Programme and the SEUPB could be improved, especially across Scotland. Other submissions view the nature, depth and duration of engagement of SEUPB as insufficient. A number of responses suggest that there is a need for better partnerships between SEUPB, DFP and Local Authorities.

It was suggested that a survey could be carried out on approved projects to ascertain views on improvements to the process. Communication could be improved through the use of ICT and other new means of communication. The programme is often seen as difficult to access, particularly for the third sector. The programme should continue to focus, not only on economic issues, but also to build on the success of the social inclusion projects which have been successful in the current programme.

Governance

A number of suggestions have been received which relate to the governance arrangements for the programme. Some responses have suggested that there should be a tripartite Board of Directors / Management Group, similar to that used in Northern Periphery Programme for overseeing the management of the programme. Other responses suggest that the Programme Monitoring Committee should be given a more robust role in ensuring good governance of programme direction and implementation.

Themes

Other improvements relate to the themes of the programme and the need to ensure that there is complementarity between funding programmes and other public sector bodies operating in the same domain. It is noted that this is particularly relevant in relation to economic issues and employment. It was also suggested that when the four thematic objectives of the programme are defined, there needs to be training on developing projects in these themes, using the cross-border impact assessment toolkit.

Question 1c: If you have not been involved in INTERREG, can you please identify any obstacles to your participation and your views on how these could be addressed?

Whilst this question was posed to those stakeholders that have not been involved a high level of responses were received from those that are involved.

Respondents from Scotland indicated that the economic climate has created problems for sourcing match funding and this has become an obstacle to participation.

The length of time of the approval process is seen as an obstacle to participation, as is the investment of time required for preparing the project application. It is reported that some approved projects are 'fearful' of delivering a project which subsequently has issues of

ineligible expenditure. The public procurement rules which the projects must adhere to are also cited as an obstacle to participation in the programme.

2.2 Themes

Question 2a: What are the problems / issues / opportunities in the cross-border area that are best addressed by the new INTERREG V cross-border programme?

Effect of the recession

The eligible area is a rural area with a large rural economy, which has been disproportionately affected by the recession. There is an over reliance on traditional industries such as farming, manufacturing and small scale agriculture. The programme area is made up of a high level of small and micro businesses. The economy of the area is depressed, innovation levels are low, access to finance for SMEs is difficult and there are low levels of research and development. The overwhelming majority of responses refer to unemployment as the single biggest issue facing the region and suggest that the programme needs to focus on combating unemployment and providing support for SMEs, particularly for micro enterprises. Other issues which should be addressed include: stemming the brain drain and dealing with the loss of traditional industries.

Connectivity

The peripherality of the programme area was highlighted as an issue and this is evident from the low level of connectivity across the regions, particularly in terms of transport, ICT and rural broadband and this has an impact on business development, e-government and education outreach. Lack of access to services was also outlined as a major issue for respondents, as is social exclusion which prevails across the eligible area.

Health

A number of responses state that the health of the population has a direct link to the health of the natural environment, so the programme should focus on ensuring the quality and management of water, protecting the natural environment, enhancing land and habitat management on a cross-border basis and reducing the environmental footprint of the eligible area. Reducing energy consumption was also identified as an issue for the region.

Other responses suggest that there should be a focus on addressing health inequalities across the programme area as there is evidence of the link between material deprivation and poor health. A number of responses referred to the new EU Directive on cross-border health, which comes into effect in October 2013. It outlines the right of EU citizens to receive healthcare in other EU Member States and this is likely to have an impact in cross-border area.

Regional development

Some responses stated that the potential for co-ordinating and leveraging regional development in the border region has not been realised. A number of responses indicate that the programme needs to continue to have a focus on research. Understanding the concept of territorial cohesion requires good spatial planning that supports and drives future orientated and international development. Spatial planning should be supported (both with policy and practice focus).

There is also a lack of cross-border data, which means that it is difficult to monitor and evaluate short term and longer term impacts. There is a need to focus on data interpretation and analysis as the eligible area is 'data rich and insight poor'.

Opportunities

In terms of the opportunities in the eligible area, many responses refer to a range of sectors that could be exploited through the programme. These include: marine tourism, green tourism, energy, the environment and cultural heritage.

Submissions suggest the need for the programme to focus on initiatives that can retain the population of working age, particularly young people, in the eligible area. Related to this, retaining and enhancing skills is needed as a key driver for the success of the economy and to increase the life chances of individuals.

A high number of responses suggest that there are opportunities in the cross-border area for promoting innovation, through increased links between the business sector and third level research institutions. Several responses referred to exploiting the natural resources of the regions through offshore, wind and wave energy.

Question 2b: What type of change should the INTERREG V programme be striving to bring about in relation to these problems/issues/opportunities?

In relation to the type of change which the INTERREG V programme should be striving to bring about, some general comments were reported:

- The programme can act as a catalyst for change through social and economic regeneration
- It highlights the importance of people across the eligible area
- It should address the fractured nature of the services in the border region
- It can assist with ensuring better connections across Europe.

Economy

'The overriding issue for the programme should be the economy'. Many responses indicated that the programme should focus on supporting enterprises - of all sizes to revive, rebuild and rebalance the economies of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Retraining of young people was also highlighted as important as was the need to focus on enterprise creation. Respondents stated that with very little foreign direct investment there is a need to help indigenous business become more innovative, more export focused, and better equipped to carry out research and development. The idea of cross-border research centres of excellence was raised as a means to improving research and development across the eligible area.

Innovation

Related to this, was the theme of innovation and particularly building cross-border innovation partnerships in new and emerging fields such as: marine innovation, bio-pharma, medical technologies, renewable energy (wood, marine, offshore wind, wave energy), creative industries, broadband etc and use of natural resources.

The Programme needs to increase levels of innovation so that the regions become more competitive, more export focused which will result in economic growth and increased employment. ICT can play a greater role in boosting the economy as this sector is continually defying the economic downturn and improved access across the eligible area to ICT would help in this regard.

Environment and energy

The importance of protecting the environment was also highlighted and several responses called for the programme to contribute to halting biodiversity loss and to assist with meeting EU and international requirements to restore 15% of the ecosystem by 2020.

Several responses called for projects in the field of renewable energy, which would not only assist in protecting the environment, but would also provide employment benefits, develop specific skills and promote economic development. The economic potential for the production and storage of energy was also cited as a relevant theme for consideration.

Health

The theme of promoting health was also raised and the important role that the programme can play in reducing health inequalities was highlighted. Also outlined were the strong links between good physical and mental health and natural environment. The emerging and important role of 'e-health' was also presented, not only for the obvious benefits for more efficient health services, but also for the potential of 'e-health' to create SME business opportunities in research and innovation. It was stated that the use of ICT in health is still peripheral and with emerging societal challenges such as an ageing population there is a need to mainstream this work and the programme could assist in doing this across the eligible area.

Rural economy

Given the large rural nature of the programme area and bearing in the mind the changing landscape of rural communities, the programme should focus on enhancing employment in rural communities and promoting cross-border transport. It was also suggested that the programme could provide an opportunity to take steps to develop educational attainment, care and well being and economic productivity by investing in childcare provision. It was also cited that rural childcare is a service, which across the EU, allows families to participate in the economic, social and political life.

Other

Some respondents outlined various different sectors where the programme should focus: tourism, culture, creative assets, green economy, skills, education and enterprise, connectivity – transport and communications. Many responses outlined the importance of culture and heritage for the region, citing the indigenous language and the need to use artistic endeavour, cultural vibrancy and environmental protection to deliver social cohesion.

Question 2c: Bearing in mind your answers to 2a and 2b, from the list of thematic objectives, which four objectives should be included in the new programme?

In the analysis of the responses to this question, it was clear to see that there was no overall consistent view on four themes for the INTERREG programme. Stakeholders advocated themes based on their own expertise and sectoral interests, recognising the difficulty of selecting only four themes.

The four most favoured themes were:

- ***Thematic Objective 3 – Competitiveness of SMEs*** (many responses recognise that if this is chosen, there has to be a clear demarcation between the work of INTERREG and other programmes in this area).
- ***Thematic Objective 4 – Low Carbon Economy***
- ***Thematic Objective 6 – Environmental Protection and Resource Efficiency***
- ***Thematic Objective 2 – ICT***

Other themes which featured strongly in responses included:

- ***Thematic Objective 1 – Research and Innovation***
- ***Thematic Objective 7 – Sustainable Transport***
- ***Thematic Objective 9 – Promoting Social Inclusion and Combating Poverty***

Many respondents noted disappointment that the theme of tourism was not included in the eleven thematic objectives in the draft Cohesion Policy Regulations. Some responses suggested that social inclusion should be a cross cutting theme of the programme. It was recognised that in order to choose the final four themes, it will be necessary to map the economic priorities of the three regions and use these as part of the process to identify four themes. The Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation noted that the programme needs to be hard edged, with a focus on job creation. There were also many comments calling for complementarity between INTERREG and other EU programmes and with other similar national government programmes.

Question 2d: What are your views on including a sustainable urban development dimension and / or an integrated territorial investment option?

The general response to the use of sustainable urban development was fairly negative, with many responses stating more information would be required if either of these options were to be pursued.

A high level of responses stated that sustainable urban development is not relevant for the INTERREG programme. Respondents were aware that cities undertaking sustainable urban development would be chosen at Member State level and were unsure if cities in Northern Ireland would be chosen. Also, it was noted that there are other initiatives for cities so the INTERREG programme should not have a particular focus on urban areas, particularly when much of the eligible area is rural in nature. Other suggestions put forward included the need to exploit urban and rural partnerships, particularly in areas such as e-health.

On the issue of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs), it was noted; particularly in responses from some local authorities and research bodies, that ITIs could provide an opportunity to allocate EU funds in line with local spending plans in areas such as economic development, education, environmental protection and social inclusion. Combined with other Council funds ITIs could ensure regeneration and economic development of cross-border areas. A small number of responses asked how the ITI approach would interact with the Social Investment Zones in Northern Ireland.

Question 2e: Do you have any cross-border projects in mind that will contribute to bringing about the type of change that you think is necessary within the region?

A very wide range of project ideas were put forward by respondents with varying levels of detail and many ideas were provided in outline form. The SEUPB has aimed to list these against an appropriate Thematic Objective. This list is provided in Appendix 3. For ease of reference, it should be noted that projects in similar themes have been collated collectively. This categorisation is not definitive and should not be deemed as an assessment of eligibility.

2.3 Eligible Area

Question 3: Do you have any views on the eligible area?

A significant number of responses indicated that Belfast should be included within the eligible region, stating that the inclusion of Belfast will allow for a number of strategic cross-border initiatives to be developed along the Belfast, Newry, Dundalk (and possibly Dublin) corridor. There were also a number of responses which indicated that there would be merit in examining the possibility of including Dublin in the eligible area and / or exploring how Dublin could be involved. Some responses were less favourable to the inclusion of Belfast, stating that the inclusion of Belfast in the programme would drain resources from the cross-border areas which need it most.

In relation to the eligible area in Scotland, it was suggested that there may be a case for including further NUTS III areas of South Western Scotland and that the North West Highlands should be named as 'adjacent areas' as should Argyle and Bute, the Western Isles, Cathese, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, Inverness and Nain, Moray and Badeloch and Strathspey.

It was suggested that there may be a need to provide mechanism to allow projects to do further work outside the eligible area as many organisations have wider links across Ireland / UK that could be exploited.

Meath is an adjacent eligible area and inclusion is on a case by case basis in projects – this should continue.

2.4 Delivery Mechanisms

Question 4a: Bearing in mind the limited number of themes, the need for a strategic approach and the need to ensure delivery of bilateral and trilateral projects, what delivery mechanism do you consider to be appropriate to implement the INTERREG V cross-border programme?

A high number of responses pointed out that it would not be possible to decide on delivery structures for the programme until the thematic objectives are chosen. Respondents were clear in stating that it will be necessary to consider the implications of the Review of Public Administration for local government in Northern Ireland and the proposed changes to local government in the Border Region of Ireland through the 'Putting People First' initiative. Under this initiative, Social and Economic Committees which will be set up in Ireland and they will have cross sectoral representation that will develop local development plans. It was suggested that the delivery of INTERREG should fit well with these plans.

Organisations such as the Border Regional Authority stated that it is divided over delivery. Some submissions argue that Cross-border Groups add value, whilst others state that they add an extra level of bureaucracy. It was suggested that a cost benefit analysis should be carried out to ascertain the added value. Cavan County Council outlined that 'the role of Cross-border Groups should be selectively depended and expanded in terms of networking, lobbying and community involvement'. Some responses stated that Cross-border Groups act as facilitators in the delivery of the programme and are trusted enablers, allowing for local involvement.

Many submissions stated that the success of the PEACE partnerships should be applied to the INTERREG programme, taking into account the proposed changes to local government in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Fermanagh District Council points out that with the range of structures needed for PEACE, INTERREG, the Rural Development Programme and the Social Investment Fund, delivery becomes 'unwieldy and resource intensive'. Practical difficulties for local authorities include the problem of recruitment of suitably qualified people in small geographical areas. It was suggested that ways in which to streamline delivery should be considered.

In relation to the current delivery system of allocating resources to lead partners, many reported that this is working well, whilst some others reported that the process needs to be more effective.

There were mixed views about the approach the programme should be taking. Some responses reported that a more strategic approach is needed, whilst others stated that a bottom up approach is favoured. A number of responses suggested that the two approaches are needed with local delivery through local government and regional delivery for strategic projects. Cavan County Council stated that 'the likely emphasis on larger strategic projects makes the sub-regional approach an imperative'. ERNACT, the cross-border network, suggested that sub regional structures should focus on cross-border partnership building, needs analysis, strategy development, monitoring of developments, rather than implementation of specific projects.

Question 4b: What are your views on using the Community Led Local Development approach and / or Joint Action Plans?

Views expressed were generally much more in favour of using Community Led Local Development (CLLD) than using Joint Action Plans (JAPs).

Respondents stated that the use of the CLLD model – that is the setting up of a Local Action Group, involving a wide range of local stakeholders, delivering a Local Action Plan – is generally welcome, if the group is actually empowered to deliver the plan. It was suggested that CLLD can work, but that it is important to have a national overarching focus. Several responses highlighted the importance of ensuring that all sectors are involved in a truly partnership approach in local action groups and local action plans.

Again, the issue of the Review of Public Administration in Northern Ireland and the proposed changes to local government in Ireland was raised, with respondents reiterating the need for the implications of these changes to be taken into account when considering the use of the CLLD model.

The Cross-border Groups indicated that some of the detail, currently in the draft Cohesion Policy Regulations, on the issue of population sizes for CLLD would have a negative impact on the current make up of the groups. This should be given due consideration. It was also

stated, by the Cross-border Groups, that if future accountability remains with Government Departments, there is need for an appropriate framework to underpin any delegation of funds to Local Action Groups. These responses went on to say that the use of the CLLD model will ensure that the funds are administered in a more integrated, efficient and responsive way to meet the needs of local communities.

There were mixed views from Scotland on the use of the CLLD model. One view was to either 'adopt the CLLD approach across entire eligible area or dispense with the approach completely'.

However, some responses state that, whilst the model is considered to work well in the LEADER programme, there are some important lessons to learn about CLLD in the Rural Development Programme.

In relation to Joint Action Plans, the general aim – to simplify the programmes – is considered to be welcome; however, many respondents considered that their use in cross-border programmes is unfeasible. Responses pointed out that if JAPs are to be used, then much more information would be needed and if to be used, a specific amount of funding should be ring fenced for this initiative.

The West of Scotland Colleges Partnership welcomed the use of JAPs, stating that they have experience of using this model. However, this group pointed out that the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat may not have the technical expertise required for the most complex of these.

Part 3: PEACE IV

3.1 Learning the Lessons from the Current Programme

Q.5.a If you are currently involved in PEACE III Programme please comment on/share your experiences of the impact of the programme?

The Positive Impact of PEACE III

The contribution of the PEACE III Programme is seen as being particularly important for the economic and social wellbeing of the region, particularly in a time of economic difficulty across the whole region.

The PEACE Programme is described as having been an essential support to peace-building on the island of Ireland. Without this funding it is questionable that there would be any public funding to support the wide range of local authority and civil society initiatives that have made a real difference to social cohesion on the island of Ireland. EU funding has driven much of the progress towards the stability of the region and the wider island that has been made in recent years.

The majority of submissions stated that the PEACE Programmes to date, have had made a major contribution to the peace process and to building reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. In particular, PEACE III was seen as a very focused programme that put building peace and reconciliation at the heart of its activities.

Local delivery

The local delivery approach has resulted in the establishment of positive working relationships at a local level and has facilitated reach into all communities. This has resulted in the development of local competence, capacity and skill sets and has facilitated dialogue and supported relationships between communities. The PEACE III Programme has also provided access to larger amounts of funding for longer period and this has enabled the development of more strategic interventions. As a result of the use of local delivery

structures, there is also less stigma attached to applying and bidding for PEACE funding in communities that traditionally have not availed of these funds. For that reason, the Programme has been very successful in including organisations, groups and communities that have previously not been involved in PEACE Programmes. Much progress has been made in reaching out to 'hard to reach' groups although there is still a lot of work to be done in this area.

The delivery of a large part of the PEACE III Programme through clusters of local Councils presented a new set of challenges. Collective delivery of the programme across multiple Council areas with different demographic, religious and cultural profiles – from almost exclusively Protestant or Catholic populations, through majority Protestant / Catholic populations, to the more mixed demographics, including wider migrant and ethnic minority mix and different rural / urban compositions. Delivering the PEACE Programmes under these circumstances has required a new approach. In addition, Councils in each area have different traditions and approaches to how they have engaged with the PEACE Programme. Each of these areas experienced the conflict in very different ways. The response needs to reflect this and new forms of working together across local authority boundaries needed to be developed.

New ways of working

The development of new ways of working together has included the need to develop increased capacity, skills and/or knowledge to address issues of racism and sectarianism; the need to develop increased awareness, understanding and appreciation of other communities or cultures; the need to generate a greater sense of inclusivity and shared space across the cluster and the need to promote increased engagement and working relationships across traditional boundaries. The submissions point to considerable success in each of these areas while also pointing out that much work still needs to be done and there are still important parts of our communities that have not engaged with the PEACE process.

Physical legacies

The submissions also pointed to the fact that PEACE III has created important physical legacies across the region. In this context mention was frequently made of projects like the PEACE Bridge in Derry / Londonderry, the Skainos Project in East Belfast, the Castlesaunderson Project on the border of Counties Cavan and Fermanagh. In addition, work with organisations like the GAA, the Orange Order, the Apprentice Boys, the IFA and

others, has extended the reach of the programmes into the non-statutory sector in a manner that strengthens the community-wide reach of the Programme and develops the relationship between these organisations and the communities.

Social integration

The PEACE III Programme therefore has been seen as underpinning the peace and political processes – the PEACE III programme allowed the user groups the opportunity to explore the meaning of ‘peace’ and consider the implications of the past while moving forward into a stable future. The Programmes are seen as contributing to the health and social well-being of people within their local communities by promoting better understanding and greater respect. This has resulted in opportunities for the positive expression of cultural heritage and shared cultural collaboration. It has also contributed positively to the integration of minority migrant and ethnic groups into society and facilitated interventions at early years and later in areas such as racism, sectarianism and bullying. The Programme has also seen much progress on the removal of physical barriers between communities while recognising that there is still much left to be done in this important area. The work of the local councils and other voluntary groups on re-imaging communities and improving the physical environment in which people live has also received a significant boost from the PEACE III Programme.

Children and young people

Many submissions indicate that projects and programmes which worked with children and young people had the greatest impact. Such programmes included training for early years practitioners, educational programmes with schools, sports programmes and detached youth work. The diversity of settings and approaches enabled engagement with a diversity of children and young people in an age appropriate way and also increased the impact of the programmes due to the ability to tailor the approach to the needs and capacity of the beneficiaries. Creative programmes which used drama to explore issues provided an accessible mechanism for the wider resident population who may not be part of organised groups to engage with discussion on the issue of sectarianism.

The Programme has achieved some notable successes in working with young people. Submissions from those involved in youth work point to the fact that through the work of two individual projects in excess of 1500 young people and adult volunteers will have gained knowledge, skills and competencies in youth work, active citizenship, and peace and reconciliation and received accreditation at OCN NI Level 1, 2 and 3.

Targeted groups

The Programme has also had success in working with former members of the security forces, a group that has not been involved in PEACE Programme activity in the past. Those involved in the management of these projects point to a noticeable increase in those who declare themselves to be finally at peace within themselves, to be reconciled with their community, to be happy to cross the border into the Republic of Ireland and to work with ex-service groups across the border. The organisers point to the achievement of great impact in a relatively short period of time.

The PEACE III Programme is also seen as unique in having a rural, cross-border and community development approach. The Programme is described as having had a very positive impact on tackling segregation, sectarianism and racism in rural areas across Northern Ireland and the Border Region.

The PEACE III Programme has also successfully engaged with ex-prisoner and ex-combatant groups. Some of these groups have a long tradition of engagement with the PEACE Programmes but PEACE III has also been successful in engaging with groups who had limited previous involvement with the PEACE Programmes. The responses that addressed this issue noted that engagement with these groups has been deemed to have had a very positive impact on the peace building in the region. Responses also noted that individuals had participated in programmes to build their capacity to promote peace building within their communities.

The Shortcomings of the Impact of PEACE III

A minority of submissions are unhappy about the lack of an economic focus within the PEACE III Programme and argue for a re-establishment of what they considered a more even handed approach in previous programmes where economic development was seen as an integral part of addressing the legacy of the conflict. Some of these submissions point out that to achieve genuine reconciliation and to build a lasting peace, it is essential that issues of poverty, disadvantage, unemployment and lack of commercial development be tackled.

The reach of the programme

The involvement of the PEACE III Programme with former prisoners, ex-combatants also comes in for criticism from a minority of submissions. They argue that a much greater emphasis should be placed on what they refer to as 'the real victims' of the conflict. They

also argue that money that is used to fund ex-prisoner groups would be better used in economic development initiatives or for the development of wider services for victims and their families. Some of these submissions say that the issue of services for victims should receive greater prominence in any future PEACE Programme.

Many of the submissions also point to the continued existence of important parts of the protestant, loyalist communities who have not engaged with the Programme. Some of these submissions contend that not enough is done to reach out to these groups. On the issue of single-identity projects, many submissions contend that there is still a need for this kind of work in order to build confidence within hard to reach communities and to encourage them to engage with the Programme.

While the involvement of women in the PEACE III Programme had many positive aspects to it, there was a general feeling that not enough emphasis is placed on engaging with this important group. On the positive side, projects aimed at women resulted in over 3600 women availing of political skills training and a range of accredited peace and reconciliation courses. In addition, the Programme helped to place funding into areas of high tension with little to no community activity and thus participated in kick-starting community activity and activism throughout Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. On the negative side, these groups bemoaned what they describe as the intolerable burden of bureaucracy and the inability of the Programme to fund their work for the entire duration of the Programme period. Many of these groups ended up feeling disadvantaged in their engagement with the Programme.

Levels of bureaucracy

Many submissions point to the burden of bureaucracy that is associated with participation in the Programme. They contend that the impact of the Programme is seriously undermined by the onerous demands of bureaucratic compliance and an over-emphasis on financial propriety and quantifiable outputs to the detriment of outcomes and the achievement of the objectives of the Programme. In particular, the length of time it takes to assess and approve applications militates against the ability of the projects to deliver on their objectives as project start much later than they otherwise should have. The majority of the Local Authority PEACE Partnership Groups indicate that the division of the PEACE Programme into phases 1 and 2 also militated against their effectiveness. A single tranche of funding to cover the whole of the Programme period is advocated as a better way to ensure that these Partnership Groups can operate at a strategic level for the benefit of their communities without unnecessary delays or gaps between phases.

Many submissions also point to the fact that small community based groups find the bureaucratic burden of the Programme too much to bear. For that reason, many choose not to engage with the Programme. This militates against the objective of working with these groups, particularly those in 'hard to reach' communities.

Challenges of evaluation

Many of the submissions indicate that it is difficult to evaluate the overall impact of the Programme because of the fact that SEUPB does not have sufficient resources to work more closely with the Lead Partners in the implementation of their projects and the monitoring of their progress. It is generally felt that the Aid for Peace methodology, as a programme wide approach to ongoing evaluation, has not helped in monitoring impact to date. Many submissions claim that a much greater emphasis on outcomes and impact should be evidenced by the dedication of SEUPB resources to this important aspect of Programme delivery.

Q.5.b Please share with us your views of what works well in the current programme as well as what could be improved.

What Works Well

Local Authority based partnerships

The work of the local authority based partnerships was generally viewed as a great success within the PEACE III Programme and underlined the important leadership role that local authorities must take in the building of peace and reconciliation. The contribution made by the Community Relations Council (CRC) / Pobal Consortium to project development was seen as making a very positive contribution. The embedding of partnership structures into the delivery mechanisms at local level was also seen as a success. In particular, the use of local steering groups in the identification and approval of projects that addressed real local needs was seen as very effective. Some concern was expressed about the representative nature of some of these partnerships and the potential for conflicts of interest due to the participation of organisations that could benefit financially. It was suggested that SEUPB should monitor these partnership structures and carry out equality and rural representation proofing to ensure that they were balanced.

The availability of multi-annual financing for projects was generally welcomed. It was argued however that, in the case of the local authority partnerships, the 'gap' between phases 1 and phase 2 funding was detrimental to the work of the partnerships. Many of these argued for a funding envelope that spanned the lifetime of the Programme in order to avoid any interruption in the momentum of the work on the ground. Similarly, it was argued that the Programme should review its approach to funding organisations that could not exist on a drawdown approach to funding because of their lack of scale and resources. This is particularly important in reaching out to smaller community groups who should be involved in the programme. More flexible funding mechanisms are required to reach these groups. Among the suggestions that emerged to address this need was the use of 'facilitatory grants', involving the lead partner taking responsibility for the management of the finances of smaller groups, lifting away from them the burden of financial management and compliance.

The local authority partnerships were seen as being particularly effective in reaching into hard to reach communities and bringing a strong strategic response to real local needs. In this regard, many submissions highlighted the importance of being able to carry out single identity work in order to build the confidence within communities necessary for wider engagement. Other submissions however argued that it was time to bring an end to single identity work unless there was a clear commitment to measurable progress in wider engagement. Some submissions however argued that the current programme does not adequately acknowledge the varying stages of development and progress of communities in regard to peace and reconciliation. Many communities still exist where there are high levels of paramilitary control and activity, where segregation remains the norm and where the relevance of a "Peace" programme has yet to be proven to those who live there. They argue that the continued need for single identity work for those who are only starting to engage with the PEACE process needs to be reflected at Programme level.

Young people

The work carried out by the Programme with young people, from early years to later years, was seen to be very beneficial. It was argued however that the inter-generational impacts of the conflict, particularly for those who have family members bereaved or injured, were only beginning to be recognised and understood. It was argued that such work should be led by non-aligned youth organisations and by statutory service providers based on a strategic plan and animated by values and principles that promote peace building and reconciliation.

Submissions from those involved in youth work argued that much success had been achieved in engaging local community based youth groups in areas of social disadvantage in

a range of innovative, accredited community relations training and development programmes. These programmes were helping to build in participants to build their confidence and self respect, empowering them as agents of a culture of non-violence. This work also provides young people with an opportunity to explore their attitudes and feelings in relation to sectarianism, racism, homophobia and disability discrimination and to build skills in reconciliation, mutual understanding and respect. It was argued that this work needed to be developed further and extended into those urban and isolated rural communities that were hard to reach and where levels of participation in this kind of work were low. It was also argued by some contributors to the consultation that work with young people should have an economic focus and assist them in gaining access to education and training opportunities that would improve their chances to participate in a more meaningful way in civic society.

A number of submissions highlighted the importance of using creative approaches to work with young people though the use of drama and theatre. This approach was also seen as being of benefit on a wider scale in facilitating opportunities for groups and individuals to communicate their own experiences and tell their stories in an environment where everybody is respected.

What Could be Improved

Use of consultants

There was some criticism of the use by the partnerships of external consultants in the implementation of work within communities. Some submissions argued that there was an over use of these consultants and that genuine progress within communities could only be achieved when these communities took ownership of the work themselves. This could not be achieved by 'parachuting' into these communities external consultants who could not be there after the project came to an end. The sustainability and long term value of the work could be undermined by this approach. On the other hand, it was also argued that the use of consultants greatly contributed to removing from small groups the burden of onerous compliance with control and governance arrangements.

Improved co-ordination

While the combination of regional projects and local based strategies in the programme was welcomed, a number of submissions argued for more coordination and communication between local projects and regional projects. This would assist in avoiding duplication and

would ensure greater coordination of efforts and achievement of impact. Similarly, it was argued that there was a need for greater communication between the local authority partnerships, introducing some region wide coordination function in the form of strategic advisory groups. This should also involve improved communication with other funders and statutory bodies, including government departments in key policy areas such as education, rural development and community planning. There was an argument made for the adoption of a more 'whole community' approach that would focus on the overall needs of a community rather than on specific groups. This approach could only be done by working through public bodies with an appropriate remit or through recognised community / area based organisations working on behalf of the whole community.

Improved support

Many of the submissions identify the allocation of a dedicated case officer to support the Lead Partner in the implementation of the project as a very beneficial element of programme management. They argue for more continuity in the allocation of resources and a number of submissions also argue that not enough resources are available to SEUPB for this task.

Guidance notes provided by SEUPB are identified by many submissions as of great value. However, some submissions are critical of what they perceive as the lack of consistency in the interpretation of these guidelines and argue for more clarity and training of Lead Partners in key areas such as procurement and verification of expenditure. A number of submissions welcome recent changes to procurement rules that increased the ceiling to €5,000 / £5,000 before full procurement is required. Similarly, the introduction of the flat rate for the calculation of overheads was welcomed as a valuable simplification. Some of the submissions also argued that the application of procurement rules militated against the involvement of local businesses and service providers.

Reducing administration

Many of submissions argued for a more flexible regime in the interpretation of financial control rules and a more proportionate response in the strict application of these rules. In general, the burden of compliance with financial control rules was identified as onerous and a significant factor in discouraging participation in the Programme, particularly by smaller groups with less experience and resources. Some submissions also argued for greater flexibility in making changes to project implementation conditions in order to facilitate a greater ability to adapt to changing circumstances on the ground.

The length of time taken to assess and approve project applications came in for significant criticism and there was a general call for a more efficient system that would ensure that decisions were made within a maximum of 26 weeks. Many of the submissions also argued for more assistance at pre-application stage and a general increase in the amount of development support available from the Programme. All of the submissions commented positively on the availability of 100% funding and argued that in the current economic climate it would be difficult for project applicants to find the match funding if this was not available. There was appreciation for the availability of advances to assist with cash flow although some submissions argued for a more flexible approach to this and one that took into account the previous track record of projects with other funders (e.g. DSD and Big Lottery) in the determination of risk profile.

More focus on outcomes

There was a general agreement that the Programme management should be focusing more on impact and outcomes rather than financial expenditure and compliance. A commonly held view in the submissions was that the Programme, because of lack of resources within the Managing Authority and Joint Technical Secretariat, was overly concerned with the achievement of expenditure targets and less concerned with the contribution the projects were making towards the achievement of the Programme's objectives or the impact on building peace and reconciliation. The Aid for Peace approach introduced to monitor the achievement of the Programme objectives was not seen as achieving its aim. There was however recognition that the collection of data was still at an early stage and that the Aid for Peace approach had served to focus the minds of project leaders on the importance of identifying the contribution their project was making to the achievement of the objectives of the Programme. In general, it was felt that while overall monitoring of projects was good, there was not enough emphasis placed on ongoing evaluation. Many submissions argued for a return to project based evaluation to complement the Programme wide evaluation. This would contribute more toward an approach that sought to 'capture learning' and take advantage of the many good experiences within the Programme.

Other improvements

Many submissions argued that there was a need for greater communication about the successes of the Programme in order to ensure that the greater public and elected representatives knew what was being achieved. Similarly, some submissions argued that there were still parts of our communities that were unaware of the opportunities available to them under the Peace Programmes, particularly in Protestant communities.

A number of submissions from communities promoting the use of the Irish language were critical of the lack of opportunity to engage with the Programme in their own language. It was also argued that this failed to recognise the potential contribution to peace and reconciliation that could be gained from the promotion of the culture and traditions of the Irish language.

A number of submissions argued that the cross-border dimension of the PEACE III Programme was unclear. It was argued that there was a need for a greater concentration on the integration of cross-border co-operation opportunities in the design and delivery of projects.

Research from community and voluntary sector

Research carried out within the community and voluntary sector identified a number of key challenges for the PEACE III Programme within that sector. These included:

- A perception that the Programme was burdened by increased, unnecessary, cumbersome and inflexible administrative procedures and bureaucratic delays negatively impacting on the programme's successful and timely deliverance.
- A feeling that the impact of work being done at project level is being overlooked by SEUPB due to a lack of qualitative feedback.
- A perception that core community needs are being missed under a risk averse system which does not encourage innovation.
- A view that there was a lack of wider strategic leadership and no agreed political strategy for reconciliation from political leaders.
- A belief that the focus of the original five strands of reconciliation identified in PEACE II was workable but became too focused on community relations.
- A belief that some areas have not so far benefitted from the peace dividend and it is essential that this is addressed.

The research made a number of recommendations that should help to address these issues. These included:

- Overhaul and rebrand the overly bureaucratic and administrative systems to destigmatise the programme and to become more user-friendly, efficient, accountable and focused on outcomes.
- Speed up payments system to avoid cash flow issues.

- Provide longer term project funding.
- Place greater focus on long term and small innovative projects and those benefitting groups most in need.
- Address problems with exchange rates and payments being disallowed as a result.
- Political input and leadership is required alongside an agreed overarching political strategy for reconciliation (PEACE model).
- Civil servants in the border counties need help breaking through the economic, social and political interface that is the border.
- More support for smaller organisations to improve their capacity for funding and in the application process.
- Innovation and risk taking should be encouraged, programmes have become too risk averse.

Q.5.c If you have not been involved in PEACE funding, can you please identify any obstacles to your participation and your views on how these can be addressed?

A number of obstacles to participation in the PEACE III Programme were seen as common to many EU Programmes. These include:

- The difficulties applicants face in clearly defining the need / opportunity to be addressed and then aligning this with the requirements of the Programme.
- Providing evidence of consultation.
- Projects feel pressure to achieve spend targets.
- The need to ensure full compliance with audit controls.

Many submissions suggested that there is a need for a great deal more assistance at the pre-application stage in order to assist those groups with the greatest need to overcome the obstacles to participation. It was suggested that it is necessary to recognise that there is an uneven playing field with regard to participation in the programme – those groups who are approaching the programme for the first time need considerable development support to familiarise them with the demands of programme participation, including creating support mechanisms to guide them through the process and assist them in the implementation of their work. These groups also require assistance in dealing with the control and verification

demands of the programme. A more sympathetic and innovative approach to dealing with these groups is called for.

Groups involved in youth work identified the fear of paperwork, the fear of bureaucracy and of being left in debt, as barriers to participation at a group and organisational level. On an individual level, young people resist getting involved because of the fear of peer rejection because of their involvement in the PEACE Programme – expressions such as “if I did that I would be beaten up or get a slugging” or “that is not acceptable where I come from”, articulate the fears and uncertainties of young people about getting involved. In order to address these obstacles, the submissions from youth groups suggest that there is need to provide the Partnerships and SEUPB with the resources to provide appropriate help to these groups. The kind of support needs to be based on an approach that says “here’s how to do it correctly” rather than “if you don’t get it right you’ll lose money”.

In addition, obstacles still exist in developing work with hard to reach communities and groups. It was suggested that much of this work is still at an early stage and much more needs to be done. One of the issues in addressing this related to what were referred to as the ‘Gatekeepers’ within these communities who resisted relinquishing control over what they perceived as their territory.

Finally, a considerable number of submissions were received from groups involved in the promotion of the Irish language. They argued that the lack of facilities to engage with the Programme in Irish was an obstacle to their participation.

3.2 Themes

Q.6.a What type of change do you wish to see in the Northern Ireland and border region society over the next 7 years?

A common theme in most of the submissions was the wish that the next 7 years would witness a further embedding of peace and building of positive relations, in a mutually beneficial relationship with economic development and inclusion, characterised by lower rates of unemployment and economic inactivity and greater prosperity. In particular, the submissions expressed the desire to see a lowering of youth unemployment and a young

population with the necessary skills to secure employment and subsequently progress up the skills ladder.

Mature cross-border co-operation

In addition, submissions expressed a wish to see the developing maturity of cross-border co-operation within civic society and between public administrations. This should include greater access to cross-border services such as health, education and transport, especially by targeting isolated rural areas. This should encompass the development of a cross-border community development approach in addressing issues of poverty, social isolation, community relations and racial tension across rural areas of the border region.

Political leadership

In order to underpin these aspirations there was a general desire for strong political leadership in the development of an agreed strategy for peace and reconciliation between all communities, including addressing contentious issues such as flags, emblems and the manifestation of diverse cultural traditions. This should lead to the development of a more inclusive society based on mutual respect for each other's traditions, beliefs and values. This will also require the mainstreaming of peace building and reconciliation across government departments, government agencies and local authorities. This should build on the great progress that has been made in this regard.

Reducing community tensions

There is a great desire for a reduction in tensions between communities and the elimination of barriers to co-operation and communication between different community groupings. This should include progress in the elimination of the visible and invisible barriers between communities, including the gradual elimination of the need for Peace Walls in our cities and towns. Associated with this is the need to continue to build trust and confidence between communities and the police and to mainstream community based approaches to policing. Many submissions also expressed the wish to see progress towards a more integrated approach to housing built on confidence and respect. A reduction in crime, sectarianism, hate crime, racism and discrimination is also wished for as part of the overall normalisation of relationships between communities and the building of a culture of mutual respect and tolerance. There is a general belief that there is a strong role for leadership from local government in all of this and the work of the PEACE III Partnerships can contribute greatly to the achievement of these wishes. All communities need to be able to feel confident in their own identities, have the ability to move freely, express their identity and feel secure and free

from threat. These aspirations were seen as of particular importance as we approach a period of commemoration of great historic events over the coming years.

Focus on young people

There was a great emphasis in the submission on the importance of working with youth. In this regard, many of the submissions referred to the need to equip young people with the skills, experiences and tools they need to become active participants in society. It was noted that the greatest challenge facing our young people is that of youth unemployment – they have been the greatest casualty of the global economic downturn. Government statistics reveal that more than one in five of our working age population aged 16-24 are classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET). These figures represent around 48,000 of our young people – an increase of 10,000 in the last five years which also means our NEET population is growing at a faster rate than the rest of the UK. Since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, youth unemployment has more than doubled and it is clear the young generation are bearing the brunt of the recession. Talk of a lost generation is rife and there is a real danger the young unemployed people of today becomes the long-term unemployed of the future and coming under the influence of dissident groups and criminal influences. Many of the submissions stated that we are sitting on social and economic time bomb, exacerbated by the fact that in Northern Ireland the problem is lack of work not a lack of work ethic. Our young people are ‘opportunity youth’ because of the untapped potential they offer. They have the potential to infuse our economy with skills, leadership, energy and eagerness. They want to offer solutions for a better future. We must help them and harness their ability.

Education

In order to address these challenges, most of the submissions point to the need to change the way in which we educate our young people. Some submissions expressed the desire to see a single, shared educational sector. There is a desire for change to be embedded into the educational structures and make provision for the development of programmes which support collaborative working practices between schools; the provision of opportunities for greater cross-community contact and engagement between young people of all communities; the training of teachers to equip them with skills to work within an integrated learning environment; the sharing of resources such as schools, sporting and recreational facilities, community facilities; the development of linkages between the formal educational system and the community. This will require the development of an over-arching strategy for working with young people, their families and their communities.

Active communities

There is an express wish to see empowered, active communities with young people at the centre; to see socially deprived areas boosted through capacity-building, learning, confidence and inspiration within their communities and becoming more outward looking. These enabling factors can help build communities that are resilient and who can begin to take on the diverse social and economic challenges that face them day in day out. The manifestation of this will be happier, more progressive, more prosperous and more peaceful communities.

Addressing trans-generational effects of the conflict

There was also an expression of desire to see the trans-generational effects of the conflict addressed by providing access to trauma treatment services for all those who have been affected by the conflict. It is perceived that there is a lack of service provision in this area and the PEACE Programme is ideally suited to address this need.

Role of women

Many submissions also pointed to the desire to see the role of women addressed within society in line with the provisions of UN 1325. This would entail a proactive approach to encouraging the participation of women in all institutions in the region and ensuring that they are closely involved in planning and decision making within society. This will require the development of life-long learning opportunities, skills development, preparation for employment and child support.

Q.6.b What type of activities should the PEACE Programme fund to bring about this change?

While there was general agreement about the range of activities that were required to bring about the desired change articulated in the submissions, there was some disagreement about the broad orientation of any future PEACE Programme. Some of the submissions felt that there was a need for a more economic focus to the work of the Programme and therefore suggested activities that were strongly focused on areas of economic development. This approach would include a movement away from supporting targeted groups such as ex-prisoners and dedicating the resources to economic development activities, including training, education and preparation for work and participation in society for young people. The majority of submissions however expressed a desire to continue to

build on the work of the current PEACE III Programme and in doing so work closely with communities and targeted groups such as ex-prisoners, victims, young people and women.

Building on PEACE III

The submissions that advocated continuing to build on the work of the current PEACE III Programme made suggestions for activities are based on the principles of maximising peace building and reconciliation outcomes; implementing effective delivery mechanisms and structures; prioritising cross-border Peace and Reconciliation; ensuring effective and efficient use of existing Peace and Reconciliation resources; providing support, mentoring and knowledge based networking; building institutional capacity and sustainability in peace building; reducing the administrative burden.

Young people

The considerable emphasis on young people that emerged in all of the submissions implied that when funding provision for young people, it was important to ensure that it included specific linkages with longer term opportunities for young people to develop in positive directions and to enter and progress in the workplace, training and further and higher education. This could include support for development of essential skills among young people through provision made by and in the shared environment of further education colleges, in partnership with schools. Many young people at risk of social and economic exclusion and alienation have found school not to be an optimum learning environment, and an initiative of this kind could make a significant contribution to reducing future numbers of 16-24 year olds not in education, employment or training. In turn, this could have a very positive effect on lifelong life-chances – there is a significant evidence base for the “scarring” effects of unemployment when young – as well as on reconciliation. Reference was made to the Northern Ireland Executive’s *Pathways to Success* strategy to prevent exclusion and promote participation of young people aged 16 to 24. It was also suggested that PEACE IV could also helpfully support programmes designed to equip young adults with the tools, methods and skills required to be able to face and respond to the prevailing and future challenges of getting into their preferred careers through training and workplace experience overseas, again through participation on a shared basis to promote reconciliation. Opportunities for young people to come together through sport should also continue to be supported.

Capacity building

It was also suggested that it would be important to continue to make provision to further enhance capacity building for communities and in particular to support initiatives to address rural poverty and isolation. This should include continuing with the regeneration work with single identity groups with the long term aim of closer co-operation across community boundaries. It was suggested that much of this work would benefit from greater integration and coordination between EU Programmes. This approach is in keeping with the role envisaged for local authorities under the Review of Public Administration and there is a need to ensure that the leadership role of local authorities is promoted and supported.

Area based support

It was suggested that activities should be promoted that encouraged area based support in estates and villages identified to be in need of specific intervention to address issues of sectarianism and/or racism. Such an area based approach should be flexible enough to recognise the links between the need for peace building and weak community infrastructure/capacity and poor economic prosperity. This should include the provision of targeted activities for children, young people and their parents/guardians through family support, preschool, primary school, secondary school, uniformed organisations and youth groups. This could include the promotion of the idea that *“peace building is everyone’s business”* with local business creating recognition of the benefits of Peace building in the local economy. It should also include work aimed at the integration of ethnic minorities within the local community to improve links between the local and ethnic minority communities and help ethnic minorities and migrant workers cope with racism linked to the legacy of the conflict.

Educational programmes

There were strong arguments made to continue some of the successful activities funded through PEACE III, including educational programmes - (playgroups/nursery schools, primary schools and post-primary schools programmes), including shared education programmes aimed at developing linkages between schools from different sectors and to build bridges between our two main communities, creating the potential for future joint working, sharing and collaborating.

Shared space

Many submissions advocated continued funding for capital projects aimed at creating shared public spaces and which have the capacity to demonstrate the significance and purpose of

PEACE funding. These projects should include social clauses for local employment and/or local development and be complemented by a programme of work aimed at achieving the objectives of the programme. Such projects should focus on the promotion of shared community spaces and the transformation of contested or derelict spaces and places into sites and centres which operate for the wider benefit of the community.

Targeted groups

Arguments were put forward for the need for continued work with families, victims, ex-prisoners / combatants and former and current members of the security forces. Projects are required which address the causes of the sense of marginalisation of such groups, which create opportunities for engagement with the wider community and which provide the opportunity to have their voices heard. In particular there is a need for work with women who have suffered as a response to their position in the family but who have continued to be silenced by our peace process along with the impact this has had upon their children. Education is required which enables a deeper understanding across Northern Ireland society about the motivations of those involved in the various aspects of the 'Troubles,' from army and police to paramilitary organisations right through to the peacekeepers, mediators and community workers today.

Decade of commemorations

Many submissions made reference to the forthcoming decade of commemorations. There were suggestions that the new programme should contain provisions to plan for an integrated approach to the management of these commemorations. It was also argued that a degree of flexibility needs to be built into the programme to enable dynamic responses to events as they develop on the ground.

Research from the community and voluntary sector

The most popular suggestions for PEACE IV activities to emerge from research carried out within the community and voluntary sector included the following:

- Youth unemployment.
- Education (particularly shared education).
- Dealing with the past.
- Intergenerational work.
- Rural peace lines and the 'invisible' barriers between communities.
- Targeting areas with a low peace dividend.

Thematic objectives

Many of the suggested activities could be broadly categorised under the heading *Social Inclusion and Combating Poverty* (Thematic Objective 9). Many submissions expressed the view that the PEACE IV Programme should focus on the intergenerational problems which are still prevalent in the region. These problems hold back individuals, families, communities and the region as a whole and a future Programme should be an integral part in targeting these. The objective of social inclusion and combating poverty will be instrumental in helping Northern Ireland progress in both a social and economic sense. It is also suggested that support for social enterprises would help to remedy some of this as some people have never been in employment. This could help to build a sense of cohesion in the community and benefit the economy.

Some of the suggested activities could also be categorised under the heading *Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning* (Thematic Objective 10). - Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure and developing and implementing joint education and training schemes will help combat intergenerational educational underachievement and the myriad social and economic issues associated with this.

A range of specific suggestions for activities were received in submissions and these are listed in Appendix 4. The SEUPB has aimed to list these against the appropriate Thematic Objective. For ease of reference, it should be noted that projects in similar themes have been collated collectively. This categorisation is not definitive and should not be deemed as an assessment of eligibility.

Q.6.c Based on your answer to question 6.a. and 6.b., and from the list of thematic objectives in Appendix 2 of the Consultation Information Document, identify up to 4 thematic objectives that should be included in the new programme.

The most popular themes suggested in the submissions were:

- ***Thematic Objective 10 – Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning***
- ***Thematic Objective 9 – Social Inclusion and combating poverty***

- ***Thematic Objective 8 – Employment and supporting labour mobility***
- ***Thematic Objective 11 – Institutional Capacity Building and Efficient Public Administrations***

Other suggestions for themes included:

- ***Thematic Objective 1 – Research and Innovation***
- ***Thematic Objective 2 – Information and communication technologies*** - roll out of better broadband - access for all
- ***Thematic Objective 3 – Competitiveness of SMEs***
- ***Thematic Objective 6 – Environmental protection and resource efficiency***

Q.6.d What are your views on including a sustainable urban development dimension and / or an integrated territorial investment option in the programme? (See appendix 3 of the Consultation Information Document)

The submissions that were received from organisations and groups located within urban environments are very supportive of the concept of sustainable urban development and integrated territorial investment.

The majority of submissions however expressed concern about the potential for these approaches to detract from the core work of the PEACE Programme and felt that this approach would be more suitable to INTERREG than PEACE. It was also pointed out that it would be difficult to envisage how such an approach could be adopted on a consistent basis across the region in advance of local government reorganisation in Northern Ireland in 2015. The Council cluster arrangement pursued under PEACE III could provide a building block for development of such an approach; however, it would be important to incorporate robust mechanisms to ensure consistency and complementarity with regional strategies. Similarly, any approach to include urban development should not be to the detriment of supporting rural communities and should include a provision for supporting rural / urban links.

Submissions that voiced concerns about adopting this approach also recognised that there are strengths in the principles behind this model which promotes an integrated approach combining areas such as physical renewal, the promotion of education, economic

development and social inclusion and strong partnerships between local citizens, civil society, the local economy, and local regional government.

Q.6.e Do you have any projects in mind that will contribute to bringing about the type of change that you think is necessary within the region?

There were many suggestions contained in the submissions about the type of projects that could be implemented to bring about the kind of change that was wished for in the region. Most of these suggestions mirrored the kinds of activities that were suggested in the answers to question 6b and are listed in Appendix 4. The SEUPB has aimed to list these against the appropriate Thematic Objective. For ease of reference, it should be noted that projects in similar themes have been collated collectively. This categorisation is not definitive and should not be deemed as an assessment of eligibility.

More specific suggestions around the kind of projects that should be funded were also contained in many of the submissions.

It was suggested by a number of submissions that the Programme should continue to support the *Creating Shared Space* type projects. It was also suggested that those projects that had received steering committee approval in PEACE III but were not funded due to lack of funds, should be invited to re-submit to PEACE IV. It was also suggested that future projects in this area should have a strong focus on young people. A specific project idea was received relating to the co-location of justice system providers in a 'justice centre'. Another very specific suggestion relates the development of a world class 'Regional Trauma Centre' aimed at tackling issues of conflict related trauma on a holistic, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach.

Many of the local authority based partnerships put forward suggestions for projects aimed at the regeneration of areas of physical deprivation in both rural and urban settings. An important component of this included the development of regeneration at interface areas, including continuing the work to open up barriers between communities and eventually remove these barriers. A particular suggested approach to this included the proposal to develop community hubs – i.e. locally based knowledge centres which would provide communities with opportunities to share resources and learning and address prevalent social and economic issues in a more joined-up, collaborative approach.

There were many suggestions related to the development of education, training and development projects for young people. In particular, the projects suggested should be aimed at the NEETs group and address the needs of those in disadvantaged areas. This includes suggestions for the development of intermediate labour markets (ILMs) as part of a strategy to build skills, confidence and capacity to engage in young people.

Many of the submissions referred to the need for projects that involved working with the formal educational sector to develop integrated and / or shared approaches to education. Examples of good practice are in existence throughout the region and the submissions suggested that these should be used as a platform on which to build.

Finally, a large number of submissions contained suggestions for projects and initiatives that would be aimed at promoting the appreciation of the Irish language as a tool for building understanding and reconciliation between communities.

3.3 Delivery Mechanisms

Q.7.a Bearing in mind the specific objectives of the PEACE Programme what delivery mechanisms do you consider to be appropriate to implement the PEACE IV Programme?

There was very broad support across all of the submissions for a continuation of the approach to programme delivery in PEACE III for the new programme period. In particular there was strong support for the continuation of the local authority based partnership structures combined with a range of region wide project implementation and delivery mechanisms. It is suggested that the new programme should seek to align the Peace Partnership structures with the new boundaries envisaged under RPA. It is also suggested that these structures need to be 'proofed' for both equality and rural representation in order to ensure that they are truly representative.

In the Border Region of Ireland, it is suggested that the recent changes in the role of local authorities should be taken into account in designing approaches for future programme delivery, In particular, the role of the emerging Social and Economic Committee structures should be considered.

Some submissions also pointed to the need to take advantage of the experience and track record of existing practice driven community partnerships. These groups and institutions that have a proven track record of engaging with and delivering positive outcomes should be involved in the formulation and implementation of future PEACE programmes – these groups are aware of the lessons learned in the past, have experience of the specific challenges associated with this type of work, and have the partnership arrangements in place to begin work immediately.

There was universal agreement on the need to reduce the amount of time it takes to approve project applications. This process should be benchmarked against best practice elsewhere in Europe and assessment and approval times should be reduced to the European average of 20 to 26 weeks. This will require a review of the role of accountable departments in the approval and decision making process. It was generally agreed that there should be a single decision making process involving all key parties. There was also general agreement that it is necessary to reduce the administrative burden on grant recipients.

There were suggestions that local based implementation structures provided the potential for duplication and an argument could be made for region wide programme delivery structures. This could be addressed also by better communication and coordination between the partnership groups and greater communication and coordination with other service providers, both statutory and voluntary.

Some submissions suggested that in order to ensure greater participation by those communities and groups who have not engaged with the Programme in the past, there was a need to review the manner in which calls for applications are publicised. It is important that every effort is made to achieve a widespread inclusiveness in the programme.

There was also general support for the role played by the Consortium of CRC and Pobal in the implementation and delivery of theme 1.2 in the Programme. The specialist knowledge of the Consortium in this sensitive area of Programme activity was seen as being particularly beneficial.

In general it was suggested that whatever delivery mechanisms are put in place, it will be important to ensure complementarity with other actors working across the region. In particular, close coordination and co-operation with statutory service providers and key policy implementers is necessary, including creating transparent structures for co-operation with other funding organisations.

Q.7.b What are your views on using the Community Led Local Development approach and / or Joint Action Plans? (as outlined in Appendix 4 of the Consultation Information Document)

Given the success of the existing partnership structures in programme delivery and implementation, there was an in principle support for examining the potential that CLLDs could offer.

In general, Joint Action Plans, as described in the consultation document were seen as having interesting and useful characteristics. It was felt however that this approach would be more suited to capital build projects, where specific quantifiable milestones and outputs could be documented. The nature of the work of the PEACE Programme on the whole does not lend itself to this approach. Much of the progress is incremental and not easily quantified.

Part 4: General Questions Applicable to Both Programmes

Question 8: Please provide suggestions on how the assessment and approval process could be improved in the new programming period to ensure the timely approval of projects.

There was widespread dissatisfaction expressed about the time taken in assessing applications in the current programming period. Numerous respondents noted the various impacts on the lengthy processing times including:

- Difficult for operational and staff planning within an organisation;
- Difficult to secure and maintain commitments for match funding (this is a particular issue raised by Scottish respondents);
- Discourages the involvement of other funders in co-funding arrangements;
- Delays in project commencement with corresponding pressure to meet expenditure targets;
- Delays in commencement may result in budget revisions being required which then triggers a further assessment process.

The most frequent and strongly expressed views from respondents concerned the time taken to assess applications /decision making, and in particular the role of economic appraisals / Accountable Departments and the dual nature of the decision make process.

However there were comments and suggestions about each stage of the process. The comments have been grouped under the following headings:

- Calls for applications
- Assessment and steering committees
- Economic appraisals
- The role of the accountable department
- Other comments

Calls for Applications and application forms

- Programmes should establish a clear timetable of calls at the outset based on themes, with agreed decision dates. The Big Lottery was referenced as one programme that uses this system.
- Applicants would benefit from more pre-application support, especially around the formation of partnerships.
- Thematic based workshops would be useful.
- Attendance at pre-application workshops should be compulsory.
- Clear guidelines should be established at the beginning of the call and these should not be changed.
- Increased efforts are needed to encourage new applicants, perhaps into partnerships with experience partners.
- The impact assessment toolkit for cross-border co-operation can assist applicants in preparing applications.
- All calls in the INTERREG Programme should be open to Scotland.
- The SEUPB needs a higher profile in Scotland and provide more support to applicants.
- The two stage process used in the most recent INTERREG call was welcomed. Respondents noted that if intensive support is provided at the second stage this will drive up the quality and fit with the Programme and some respondents suggested that technical assistance should be available at this stage.
- The two stage process should be extended to the Peace Programme, or there should be use of an expression of interest form.
- A number of respondents thought that the assessment of Stage 1, in the latest INTERREG call, was too quick leading to a perception of lack of rigour.

Assessment and Steering Committee

- There should be improved communication between the assessor and the applicant, one suggestion is that the project assessment would benefit from a face to face interview with the assessor.
- Assessments need to be quicker with clear deadlines for responses.
- Consideration should be given to allowing projects to present their project directly to the Steering Committee; this was considered more satisfactory than numerous written questions.
- There is no weighting given to projects being brought forward as part of a wider strategy or programme.

- It is important the Steering Committees have technical competence, the appointment criteria should be reviewed accordingly.
- The decision making process should be fully transparent. There is a need to ensure that the system is objective and free of political interference.
- Competent organisations with a good track record should be fast tracked through assessment.
- There should be cap on the level of funding to any one project to ensure that a higher number of projects can get approval.
- Projects should be awarded a Letter of Offer for the full duration of the Programme rather than phases; this would reduce the need for a number of applications and assessment.
- Levels of assessment and corresponding times for decisions making should be more proportionate to the grant being requested.
- Suggestions were given to increased weighting scores for various attributes including: the quality of the partnership being proposed, and for those providing their own match funding.

Economic appraisals

- The economic approval process is not suitable to measure peace outcomes.
- The economic approval gives undue emphasis to economic impacts and not peace and cross-border co-operation impacts.
- Economists do not have the knowledge or understanding of peace approaches;
- The economic appraisal process (and consultants) is very Northern Ireland centred, with insufficient focus on impacts across other jurisdictions.
- The economic appraisals are not proportionate to the level of funding being requested, a simple solution would be raising the limits that trigger an economic appraisal.
- The economic appraisal process generates multiple comments which add little value to the overall process.
- Consultation with other statutory agencies during the economic appraisal process often leads to personal views rather than corporate views being expressed, and gives agencies an effective veto on projects.
- More attention need to given to developing a procurement strategy for the Programmes, perhaps Central Procurement Directorate have a role in this regard.
- The needs for VFM assessments for individual projects components further delay the process.

Role of Accountable Departments

- Many respondents stated the need for a single decision making process, which is inclusive of government departments.
- Where government departments are providing match funding they need to be involved much earlier in the system i.e. at project application stage, this should help to prevent rejections at a later stage,
- Applicants have no opportunity to input directly into the Accountable Department decision making process, this part of the process needs more transparency
- Departmental assessment should not be focussed on single jurisdiction issues but should respect the cross-border nature of the Programme.

Others Comments

- The establishment of a tri-partite management group involving all three jurisdictions (Department of Finance and Personnel / Department of Public Expenditure and Reform /Scottish Government) would provide a useful oversight to the implementation of the programme.
- Risk based verification a good development but the time taken between verification and payment is too long.
- Development of Centre of Procurement Expertise (COPE) for the Border Region of Ireland.
- Pre-contract checks should be built into the application process so that Letters of Offer can be issued more quickly.

Question 9a: Please provide suggestions on the arrangements for match funding. Should the current arrangements to source match funding continue, or should some or all of match funding be provided by the applicant (public or private)?

Respondents held a diversity of views in relation to match funding, with different views being expressed for the two programmes.

In relation to the PEACE programme, the majority of respondents favoured a continuation of the existing arrangements for match funding i.e. provided centrally by government departments. It was noted that it is difficult for small organisations in the community and voluntary sector to source their own match funding. It was stated that even local authorities

in NI and Ireland would have real difficulty in providing match funding given their current budget pressures. It was noted that local authorities already make a major contribution to the programme in terms of staff time and absorbing budget risk. An alternative approach was proposed by the Rural Community Network proposed that consideration be given to a tiered approach, with larger projects having to source their own match funding.

In relation to the INTERREG programme there was a greater diversity of views, with some respondents echoing those expressed about the PEACE programme in relation to the benefits of match funding being provided centrally, whilst others noted the advantages of applicants providing their own match funding. This was particularly the case (but not exclusively) for Scottish respondents who have experience of providing match funding. The benefits stated included building a greater sense of ownership of the project by the applicant. In addition, most respondents who proposed this, also noted that it may result in what was considered as a beneficial reduction of the influence of the Accountable Departments in the decision making process, and may speed up overall processing times. This was linked to an expressed concern that match funding is currently giving accountable departments a veto over the approval of projects. It was suggested there was a need for greater guidance on the role of Accountable Departments in this respect.

Quite a number of respondents called for a more flexible approach in relation to match funding in the INTERREG programme including. Some of the suggestions included a range of partner contributions from 0% to 25%, with larger projects providing a higher level of match funding, with the remainder being provided centrally.

Other suggestions included the provision of private match funding and inclusion of contributions in kind. It was noted that the inclusion of private match funding may encourage the participation of private companies (and may assist them in meeting their corporate social responsibility clauses). The community led local development approach may facilitate the leverage of match funding at local level.

A small number of respondents suggested other modifications to the existing system. It was suggested that match funding be provided from one central department (i.e. "pooled centrally") rather than from a range of departments as is currently the case. Another suggested was that match funding should have been secured and be "on the table" at the time of application. A refinement of this proposal was that confirmation of match funding would be required for a project to move from Stage 1 to Stage 2 (in the latest INTERREG call).

Another proposal that a “gap funding” approach should be used to calculate the level of grant assistance with no predetermined intervention rate, this would maximise the provision of match funding, and decrease grant rates.

Question 9b: What are your views on the use of financial instruments in the INTERREG and /or PEACE programmes?

Fewer respondents replied to the question of financial engineering instruments (FEIs), with a number noting that they lacked the detailed information required to understand fully the implications of financial instruments. However generally the responses indicated that FEIs were not appropriate to the PEACE programme, and concern was expressed that they may add to complexity. Some respondents note the importance of 100% grant funding to support innovative actions within the PEACE Programme (WAVE Trauma Centre). Though a very limited number of respondents (e.g. Craigavon Borough Council and YESIP) indicated that FEIs, if properly structured may a role in supporting the social economy and the third sector. One respondent (Derry City Council) raised the possibility of FEIs being used for city based regeneration and a number of ideas were presented in this regard.

Of those who did respond to this question, there was general concern that FEIs may add complexity to the programme, with a view that they would take a long time to get suitable instruments established. A number of respondents indicated that the establishment issues would be even more complex in a cross-border programme. Other experiences includes that FEIs were over regulated and complex to administer.

In relation to the INTERREG Programme there was greater diversity of views. Whilst most comments were still very cautious, some respondents noted positive experience from elsewhere e.g. West of Scotland Loan Fund. It was noted this fund had a role in supporting targeting sectors but it took a considerable length of time to put this in place. Another fund mentioned was Micro-Finance Ireland. A small number of respondents noted that FEIs may be useful for supporting social enterprises and SMEs. One respondent suggested that these ideas should be explored with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and suggested that these instruments may be appropriate within the INTERREG Programme, where there is a clear demand and where projects can generate a reasonable rate of return.

Question 10a: What are your views on these proposals to reduce the administrative burden on beneficiaries in the new programming period?

Many respondents took the opportunity of this question to make broader comments on the administration of the Programmes.

A consistent theme expressed was that current experience of the programmes was characterised by onerous bureaucracy and micro management. There was a strong view that the bureaucracy was disproportionate, and that there was “gold plating” of the regulations. The level of compliance was considered greater than other Programmes (Scottish Europa) and the use of penalties was disproportionate.

A number of respondents mentioned their experience of a sense of “suspicion” and “mis-trust” between the SEUPB and projects, rather a sense of partnership and trust. Some respondents noted this was in their view at variance to the ethos of the PEACE programme.

It was noted that where public bodies were in receipt of grant aid, that the financial controls used within these organizations to manage millions of public money were not recognised by the Peace Programme, who insisted in separate procedures.

The introduction of flat rates for overheads and standard unit costs in the current programme was widely welcomed as a move in the right direction and should be continued and applied more widely.

There was generally a broad welcome for the simplifications being proposed (i.e. units costs, lump sums and flat rate financing). However there were a number of interesting notes of caution raised in this regard:

- The unit cost approach may become very output focussed, with lack of regard for “process”. These process elements are of particular concern to the PEACE programme (Newtownabbey Borough Council)
- Staff costs of 15% of other direct costs may be too limiting for the PEACE programme where many projects are staff intensive (Newtownabbey Borough Council and Sligo County Council)
- The proposed level of overheads (20%) may be too low for the PEACE Programme. A figure 25% was suggested (Pobal)
- It can be problematic to cascade down flat rates to sub projects

- Standard scales of unit costs may be difficult to implement across two jurisdictions with different costs structures
- Simplification proposals would need to be clearly explained to applicants at the time of application.

Question 10b: Please provide additional suggestions on how to reduce the administrative burden.

There was a wide range of other suggestions covering general approaches to very specific issues.

Results focussed

It was stated by a number of respondents that there is need for a stronger focus on outcomes and not finance. Contracts should be become output focussed rather than input focussed. In addition it was noted that SEUPB needs to develop and build a stronger partnership with projects and be prepared to invest more staff time to focus on outputs not audit. There may be merit in more independent evaluations of outcomes. There was insufficient evidence of adherence to the principles of the “Concordat” between the community and voluntary sector and the NI public sector (Rural Community Network).

Audit assurance

The financial control procedures should be able to take more assurance from those bodies that fall under NIAO and have their own internal audit functions (Lisburn / Castlereagh Peace Partnership). Another respondent noted that the current audit arrangements are at variance with the NIAO recommendations regarding commensurate risk. Another respondent noted the DSD approach to high, medium and low risk projects and suggested a similar approach to inform verification.

Small groups

Several respondents noted the importance of small groups to the PEACE programme. These groups require additional support to meet the administrative requirements. However some respondents noted it was not necessary for every group to hold a Letter of Offer, and there could be greater use of community facilitators and a resource allocation model, so that small groups have no financial or employment issues to address. (Monaghan County Council/ Pobal).

Electronic document retention

A significant number of respondents expressed their frustration about the lack of acceptance of electronic documentation. Electronic accounting systems are now widespread in larger organisations however the programmes still require paper documents.

Procurement

Procurement rules are seen as inflexible and overly complex. This is made more complicated within INTERREG where different rules apply in different jurisdictions. A number of respondents noted that programme procurement rules were at variance to accepted local authority practices. Respondents also noted that the involvement of CPD (Central Procurement Directorate) tended to slow down procurement. An increase in procurement thresholds was also suggested.

Training and support

Respondents suggested improves communication between projects and the SEUPB, and requested additional support and training to meet the requirements of the Programme. There should be more pre-application support with open days and seminars. In addition, during implementation Lead Partners require more training and support to meet their responsibilities. SEUPB Case Officers should be present at more project events to gain a better understanding of the projects. There is also a role for the sharing of good administrative practice between Lead Partners. The SEUPB should also ensure consistency of approach, both over time and between different units within the organisation. It would be beneficial to have more opportunity for structured feedback to improve programme systems.

Specific suggestions

- More attention needs to be given to the design of forms to make them user friendly – the use of specialised external design input was suggested
- The Systems 2007 database is not useful for projects; it is input only with limited reporting for projects
- Standard travel and subsistence policy across the programme, as opposed to current policy that different policies are used by different partners within the same project
- More flexibility is required in budget management to facilitate easier transfers between budget lines
- The SEUPB could delegate responsibility to other implementation agents
- Shorten and simplify post project evaluations
- Remove requirement for hospitality forms

- Make BACS payments mandatory for all project partners
- EU funding is more suited to larger and more strategic projects, where the administrative burden is proportionately less
- The joint delivery of the two programmes may reduce the overall administrative costs
- When a partner is involved in more than one project, reduce the requirement to supply all the same information on multiple occasions.

Question 11: Please describe any actions that the programmes could take in relation to promoting equal opportunities including the integration of a gender perspective and the prevention of discrimination during programme preparation and implementation?

A minority of respondents completed this question. The responses that were received were generally supportive of the equality approaches that the programmes have had to date but noted some suggestions for improvements.

It was considered desirable that projects should actively support equality. However some respondents considered that there is some evidence of a compliance culture (“ticking boxes”, “doing the minimum”) rather than integrating equality into the project cycle. The need for more training was identified by a number of respondents. It was suggested that applicants and lead partners should receive specialised support (training and tool kits) in the area of equality. It was stated that Lead Partners need training in anti –racism and anti-sectarianism. It is noted there was wealth of experience and best practice within individual projects but that there was no mechanism to share this experience across the programme to benefit other projects. This experience was a major untapped resource in the Programme. It was also suggested that SEUPB staff receive disability awareness training.

It was suggested that equality training become mandatory for all members of committees (Monitoring Committees, Steering Committees, selection panels etc). Some respondents suggested gender quotas on Partnership Boards, and minimum representation from minority groups. The work of the “equality working group” (of the Programme Monitoring Committee) also needs support.

There were also suggestions in relation to monitoring with outcomes, including the use of NGOs with the required expertise to equality proof outcomes, and the ongoing monitoring of beneficiaries by gender.

In relation to accessibility these were suggestions to improve translator services and ensure all projects were accessible to those with a sensory impairment. A number of respondents made suggestions around particular equality groupings or other interest groups. These are listed below:

- The Programme should have greater emphasis on language equality. It was noted that the Irish language can be used to promote gender equality. It was suggested that both programmes should proactively assist in the development and promotion of the Irish language.
- There was a need for a specific funding measure to enhance women's role in peace building, reconciliation and community life. There should be due regard for UN resolution 1325 and CEDAW. Funding should be allocated to address the under representation of women in public and political life.
- It was suggested there was a under representation of former security forces and their families in the programmes.
- It was suggested there was a need for full and proper investigation to identify under representation of groups and sectors, and the reasons underpinning this. This respondent also noted the importance that all applications are assessed on objective quality criteria.
- A respondent noted that equality was not the same as equity, and that funding must be allocated on the basis of the quality of the application and not a "carve up" along sectarian lines.

Q12: Please describe any actions that the programmes could take to protect and improve the environment during both programme preparation and implementation?

A small number of respondents answered this question.

It was noted that the current assessment of environment projects works reasonably well. However there was a need for further training of Lead Partners and more support and toolkits made available to Lead Partners during project implementation. The EU Biodiversity

Strategy was noted, and that projects could make a contribution to this strategy, but at least projects should not result in a loss of biodiversity.

It was suggested that rural proofing be incorporated into project assessment. There were a number of other specific suggestions:

- “Green purchasing” principles should be incorporated into all procurement;
- Environmental sustainability should have a higher profile in capital build projects;
- The central database should be further developed particularly in relation to reporting;
- There should be more use of video conferencing.

Questions 13 and 14: Additional Comments

There were a small number of additional comments, many of which have been incorporated into answers elsewhere. However two additional comments are noted here:

- The eligible area has a very extensive coast line; this should be reflected in the strong maritime theme to the INTERREG Programme.
- There is need for more extensive sharing of best practice and experience across the Programme.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - List of Consultation Events

Date	Event
Tuesday 4 September 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Templepatrick
Tuesday 11 September 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Londonderry/Derry
Tuesday 18 September 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Belfast
Friday 21 September 2012	Presentation to BMW Regional Assembly North / South Sub Committee
Monday 24 September 2012	Consultation workshop for Members of the Programme Development Steering Group
Tuesday 25 September 2012	Consultation workshop COMET INTERREG Partnership
Tuesday 2 October 2012	Presentation to PEACE III Cluster Managers and Chairs
Thursday 4 October 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Inverness
Friday 5 October 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Glasgow
Monday 8 October 2012	Consultation workshop for North Down / Ards / Down PEACE cluster
Thursday 11 October 2012	Consultation workshop East Border Region INTERREG partnership
Tuesday 23 October 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Donegal Town
Thursday 25 October 2012	Public Consultation Workshop, Armagh
Wednesday 31 October 2012	Presentation to Magherafelt PEACE Cluster
Wednesday 31 October 2012	Presentation to the Border Regional Authority

Thursday 1 November 2012	Consultation workshop for Monaghan / Louth / Armagh PEACE Clusters
Friday 2 November 2012	Consultation workshop for ICBAN Cross-border Group
Thursday 8 November 2012	Presentation to Nelson Drive Community Association
Friday 9 November 2012	Presentation to Commission for Victims and Survivors

Appendix 2 - List of Consultation Respondents

Consultation Respondents:

Please note that 173 responses were received. Some organisations submitted more than one response but their organisation is only listed once.

1. Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
2. Agryll & Bute Council
3. Aisling Ghéar Theatre Company
4. Alliance Party
5. Amharclann Ghaoth Dobhair - Theatre
6. An Gaeláras
7. Anonymous
8. Ards Borough Council
9. Ards Borough Council
10. Armagh City & District Council
11. Ballymena Borough Council
12. Banbridge District Council
13. Belfast City Council/COMET
14. BMW Regional Assembly
15. Border Regional Authority
16. Cairde Teo
17. Carlingford Marine Enterprises Ltd
18. Carntogher Community Association
19. Carrickfergus Borough Council
20. Carrickfergus Borough Council
21. Castlereagh Borough Council
22. Cavan Community Forum
23. Cavan County Council
24. Cavan County Enterprise Board & Cavan Innovation Technology Centre
25. Cavan PEACE III Partnership
26. CAWT
27. Centre for Rural Health, University of Aberdeen
28. Centre for Cross border Studies
29. Ceoltóirí Luraigh
30. Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge
31. Club Óige Luraigh
32. Co. Monaghan Community Network
33. Coiste na nIarchimi
34. Collective response from five Cross-border Groups
35. Coleraine Borough Council
36. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
37. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
38. Comhaltas Uladh

39. Commission for Victims and Survivors for NI
40. Community Relations Council
41. Conradh na Gaeilge
42. Co-operation Ireland
43. County Leitrim PEACE Partnership
44. Craigavon Borough Council
45. Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich
46. Democratic Unionist Party
47. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
48. Department for Employment and Learning
49. Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
50. Department of Children and Youth Affairs
51. Department of the Environment – Northern Ireland Environment Agency
52. Department for Regional Development
53. Department for Social Development
54. Department of Health and Children
55. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
56. Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
57. Department of Justice
58. Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
59. Derry City Council & Derry-Londonderry Strategy Board
60. Derry City Council Sports Development
61. Development Consultant
62. Diversity Challenges, AFTERMATH project
63. Donegal Community Workers Cooperative
64. Donegal County Council
65. Down District Council
66. DULRA - environmental consultancy
67. Duncairn Community Partnership
68. Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
69. Dundalk Town Council
70. Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council, PEACE response
71. Early Years
72. East Border Region
73. ERNACT EEIG
74. FASA
75. Fermanagh District Council
76. Foras na Gaeilge
77. Gael Linn
78. Gaelscoil na gCeithre Máistrí
79. Gaelscoil Neachtain Dún Geimhin
80. Geological Survey of Northern Ireland
81. Glór Dhún Geimhin
82. Glór Leim an mhadiadh
83. Glór na Móna
84. Glór na nGael
85. GRADAM an Iúir
86. Groundwork Northern Ireland

87. IBEC-CBI
88. ICBAN Cross-border Group
89. Individual Response
90. Individual Response
91. International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD)
92. International School for Peace Studies
93. Iontaobhas na Gaeilge
94. Irish Exporters Association
95. La Nua
96. Leitrim County Council
97. Limavady Borough Council
98. Lisburn-Castlereagh PEACE III Partnership
99. Louth County Council
100. Maritime & Coastguard Agency
101. Monaghan County Council
102. Naíscoil an Chaistil
103. Naiscoil Charn Tochair
104. Naíscoil Dhún Pádraig
105. Naíscoil Mhachaire Rátha
106. Netwell Centre
107. Newry & Mourne District Council
108. Newtownabbey Borough Council and CAN PEACE III Partnership
109. Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
110. Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)
111. North Ayrshire Council
112. North Down, Ards & Down PEACE III Partnership
113. North East Partnership
114. North East PEACE III Partnership Coleraine Borough Council
115. North West PEACE III Partnership
116. North West Region Cross border Group
117. North-East PEACE III Partnership
118. Northern Ireland Biodiversity Group
119. Northern Ireland Environment Link
120. Northern Ireland Phoenix Organisation
121. Northern Ireland Rural Development Council
122. Ógras
123. Ógras Oirialla
124. Omagh District Council
125. Opportunity Youth
126. Optimum
127. Pobal
128. Pobal an Chaistil
129. Raidió Fáilte/Líonra Uladh
130. RNIB Northern Ireland
131. RSPB Northern Ireland
132. Rural Community Network
133. SAILWEST Scottish Partners
134. Scotland Europa

135. Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
136. Sinn Fein
137. Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Committee
138. SOLACE Northern Ireland
139. South Ayrshire Council
140. South West PEACE III Partnership
141. Springboard Opportunities Ltd
142. Strabane District Council
143. Tar Abhaile
144. The County Enterprise Boards
145. The Fermanagh Trust
146. The Highland Council
147. The Training for Women Network (TWN)
148. Ulster Unionist Party and Jim Nicholson MEP
149. Ulster Wildlife Trust
150. ULTACH Trust
151. University of the Highlands & Islands
152. University of Ulster
153. Visit Scotland
154. WALK
155. WAVE Trauma Centre
156. West of Scotland Colleges Partnership
157. West of Scotland European Forum
158. Women into Politics
159. Women Leading the Way
160. YESIP
161. Young Enterprise Northern Ireland
162. Youth Initiatives
163. Youth Work Ireland-Monaghan
164. YouthLink NI
165. YouthNet

Appendix 3 – List of Project Ideas Submitted for INTERREG V

No	Thematic Concentration	Investment Priority	Project Ideas
1.	Research and innovation	<p>(a) enhancing research and innovation infrastructure (R&I) and capacities to develop R&I excellence and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest;</p> <p>(b) promoting business R&I investment, product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation and public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation</p> <p>(c) supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production in Key Enabling Technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Geographical mapping • Continuation of the INIS Hydro and Tallus projects • Geographical exploration for geo-thermal energy • Urban Geoscience • Basin analysis for underground storage of CO2 • Cross-border innovation partnerships for research and development in areas such as: marine innovation, medical technologies, renewable energy, creative industries) • Multi-sector integrated approach to research and innovation (use of e / telehealth solutions)
2.	Information and communication technologies	<p>(a) extending broadband deployment and the roll-out of high-speed networks</p> <p>(b) developing ICT products and services, e-commerce and enhancing demand for ICT</p> <p>(c) strengthening ICT applications for e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion and ehealth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border ICT telemedicine programme • Extension of the fibre optic cable (building on project Kelvin) • Developing rural broadband • Community Planning data hub • Extending and embedding shift to health ICT services, health robotics and telemonitoring
3.	Competitiveness of	<p>(a) promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border micro business collaboration • Support for export development for SMEs and

	SMEs	<p>of new firms</p> <p>(b) developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for internationalisation</p>	<p>micro businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration of urban and rural centres • Cross-border enterprise zone • South Tyrone Strategic Economic Corridor
4.	Shift towards a low carbon economy	<p>(a) promoting the production and distribution of renewable energy sources</p> <p>(b) promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in SMEs</p> <p>(c) supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures and in the housing sector</p> <p>(d) developing smart distribution systems at low voltage levels</p> <p>(e) promoting low-carbon strategies for urban areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of the electricity network in the North West • Refurbishment of homes and decarbonising, regionalising and localising supplies of electricity and heat • Transforming energy performance • Carbon capture and storage • Sustainable energy • Developing renewable energy hubs (Killybegs) • Renewable and waste MBT • Gas to the West • Projects using renewable in local communities • Multi-sector integrated approach to research and strategic planning of energy efficiency approaches to new and existing healthcare facilities to effect reduction in carbon emissions and costs can be redirected to patient care
5.	Climate change adaptation and risk prevention and management	<p>(a) supporting dedicated investment for adaptation to climate change</p> <p>(b) promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key species and climate space • Flood alleviation projects • Energy potential of water • Mitigating measures and research for the adverse impact of weather on the heritage sector

6.	Environmental protection and resource efficiency	<p>(a) addressing the significant needs for investment in the waste sector to meet the requirements of the environmental acquis</p> <p>(b) addressing the significant needs for investment in the water sector to meet the requirements of the environmental acquis;</p> <p>(c) protecting, promoting and developing cultural heritage;</p> <p>(d) protecting biodiversity, soil protection and promoting ecosystem services including NATURA 200015 and green infrastructures;</p> <p>(e) action to improve the urban environment, including regeneration of brownfield sites and reduction of air pollution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border habitat mapping and management of habitat management plans • Restoration of cross-border peatland sites • Management and Removal of Invasive Species • Catchment management plans • Cross-border river basin management projects • Cross-border water schemes • Projects to improve the quality of European habitats and species (freshwater and marine) • Investments to protect, promote and develop cultural heritage • Ulster Canal Restoration • Development of Native Oyster Fishery • MSC Certification for marine work • Tracking Systems for Native Oyster Fishery • Aquaculture in Lough Foyle • Belfast-Dublin greenway (for renewable energy) • Cross-border environmental programme
7.	Sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures	<p>(a) supporting a multimodal Single European Transport Area by investing in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) network;</p> <p>(b) enhancing regional mobility through connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T infrastructure;</p> <p>(c) developing environment-friendly and low-carbon transport systems and promoting sustainable urban mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects to enhance key TEN-T networks. • Refurbishment of cross-border train service • Sustainable transport between islands in Western Scotland • Further development of the Belfast – Londonderry train link

		(d) developing comprehensive, high quality and interoperable railway system	
8.	Employment and supporting labour mobility	<p>(a) development of business incubators and investment support for self employment and business creation;</p> <p>(b) local development initiatives and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create new jobs, where such actions are outside the scope of ESF Regulation</p> <p>(c) integrating cross-border labour markets including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives and joint training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border youth employment programme • Development of new workspaces for start ups
9.	Social inclusion and combating poverty	<p>(a) investing in health and social infrastructure which contribute to national, regional and local development, reducing inequalities in terms of health status, and transition from institutional to community-based services;</p> <p>(b) support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities</p> <p>(c) support for social enterprises</p> <p>(d) Promoting gender equality and equal opportunities across-borders, as well as promoting social inclusion across-borders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic and strategic interagency cross-border partnerships targeting health inequalities and health improvement outcomes in children's services, disability, mental health, population health and primary care and older people • Cross-border social enterprise programme • Cross-border eldercare programme • Broadband for rural communities • Cross-border Irish language network • Social Economy projects
10.	Education, skills and lifelong learning	<p>a) investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure</p> <p>b) developing and implementing joint education and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education partnerships • Capital build to carry out educational programmes and eco-schools programmes • Professional training across the public sector • Further sensory engagement projects

		schemes	
11.	Institutional capacity building and efficient public administrations	<p>a) enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration by strengthening of institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to implementation of the ERDF, and in support of actions in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administration supported by the ESF</p> <p>b) promoting legal and administrative co-operation and co-operation between citizens and institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public sector efficiency through shared services • Emergency Planning • Data Capture Projects • Joint Spatial plans

Appendix 4 – List of Project Ideas Submitted for Peace V

No	Thematic Concentration	Investment Priority	Project Ideas
3.	Competitiveness of SMEs	<p>(a) promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms</p> <p>(b) developing new business models for SMEs, in particular for internationalisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The exploitation of new products and services through peer mentoring and buddying between small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) • Promoting entrepreneurship in schools and colleges • Projects that involve private sector businesses acting in an advisory yet commercial capacity
8.	Employment and supporting labour mobility	<p>(a) development of business incubators and investment support for self employment and business creation;</p> <p>(b) local development initiatives and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create new jobs, where such actions are outside the scope of ESF Regulation</p> <p>(c) integrating cross-border labour markets including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives and joint training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation and sustainability of small and medium sized enterprises in areas requiring regeneration; including using micro incubators and investment support for self-employment • Social enterprises that target young people and women • Work placement schemes for youth which may be cross-border
9.	Social inclusion and combating poverty	<p>(a) investing in health and social infrastructure which contribute to national, regional and local development, reducing inequalities in terms of health status, and transition from institutional to community-based services;</p> <p>(b) support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating and promoting use of shared public space • Community policing projects • UN 1325 related project activities to increase participation by women in decision making • Develop a world renowned Regional Trauma Centre aimed at tackling issues of conflict related trauma on a holistic, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach

		<p>(c) support for social enterprises</p> <p>(d) Promoting gender equality and equal opportunities across-borders, as well as promoting social inclusion across-borders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International exchanges of experience • Continue to support services for victims and survivors • Development of community hubs • Regeneration and transformation of interface communities • Promotion of inclusive cultural expression and celebration • Developing and delivering integrated interface regeneration strategies • Strategic projects aimed at sports development and health promotion • Specific projects aimed at promoting appreciation of the Irish Language as a tool for building understanding and reconciliation between communities • Development of “justice centre” • Workshops, seminars, debates and conferences to deepen understanding of issues relating to sectarianism, racism, diversity, conflict resolution and mediation • Programmes of events and activities targeting various groups to build positive relations and raise awareness through innovative sport and recreation, arts and drama and community engagement programmes • Investment in labour market activation and skills enhancement programmes (border towns, villages etc.) and unemployed persons, particularly youth unemployment • Cross-community, cross-border and intergenerational activities to build positive relations e.g. community gardens, storytelling projects, school projects, music projects etc.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage private sector involvement • Work with members of ‘blue light services’ on both sides of the border – addressing the impact of the conflict • Locally focused area based peace plans –involve local groups and communities taking control of the issues impacting within their areas and developing immediate and strategic plans to address these issue • Development of community assets – there are a number of local community assets which have the potential to support communities address social and economic issues prevalent within their neighbourhoods • Sustaining existing grassroots peace processes - it is important that local peace initiatives are not made redundant and/or taken for granted. • Projects aiming to reduce social exclusion in rural areas • Charities targeting socially excluded groups and addressing consequential needs • Intergenerational projects which incorporate expertise of older members of society and young people.
10.	Education, skills and lifelong learning	<p>a) investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure</p> <p>b) developing and implementing joint education and training schemes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions aimed at young children and their parents • Engaging young people most at risk – tackle low educational attainment in young protestant males • Education Programme with schools and opportunities for collaboration and shared programmes between schools • Youth leadership programme • Development of education, training and development projects for young people

			<p>especially in disadvantaged areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in people programme • Provision of intermediate labour markets (ILMs) • Training and capacity building on racism, sectarianism, diversity and conflict resolution • Training and empowerment programmes at youth and adult level • Capture the learning – future programmes should contain mechanisms which allow for groups to document, present and critique their processes • Schemes and courses focusing on vocational and employability skills
11.	Institutional capacity building and efficient public administrations	<p>a) enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration by strengthening of institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to implementation of the ERDF, and in support of actions in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administration supported by the ESF</p> <p>b) promoting legal and administrative co-operation and co-operation between citizens and institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional capacity building programmes – support groups engaged in PEACE • Single identity capacity building programmes which engages those loyalist and republican identities not currently participating • Capital legacy programmes which provide a physical legacy for the programme but which have wrap-around programmes of activity