

BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONS - PEACE ACTION PLAN

1. The Peace Programme

The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation is a unique Structural Funds programme aimed at reinforcing progress towards a peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It represents the European Union's commitment to supporting the peace process across the region and was initially launched in 1995.

The PEACE IV Programme 2014-2020 represents a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) investment of €229m and will provide support to projects that contribute towards the promotion of greater levels of peace and reconciliation. The Programme will also place a strong emphasis on promoting cross-community relationships and understanding in order to create a more cohesive society.

The core objectives of PEACE IV will be to support actions that will develop and deepen reconciliation between divided communities; increase tolerance and respect, promote increased community cohesion and contact, enhance cross-border cooperation and address the legacy of the past

2. Summary of call

The PEACE IV Programme is making a call for applications from Local Authorities to develop PEACE Action Plans in respect of three thematic areas:

1. Enhancing the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society.
2. The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared space and services; existing civic spaces developed and managed in a manner that respects the rights, equality and diversity of all. The change will be reflected in how parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other related issues impact on the public space. This will involve changes in both attitudes and behaviour and a corresponding

reduction in segregation.

3. The promotion of positive relations characterised by respect, and where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

A total of €81.2 million (ERDF: €69 million) has been allocated to Local Authorities for the 2014 - 2020 period to deliver their operations which will contain projects under the themes of:

- Children and Young People;
- Shared Spaces and Services; and
- Building Positive Relations

Pre- determined indicative Budget allocations have been made available to each Local Authority as outlined in Section 8.

There will be a rolling call for submission of applications between March and June 2016:

- Opening Date: 3 March 2016
- Closing Date(s): **30 March 2016 (15:00); 17 May 2016 (15:00) and 21 June 2016 (15:00)**
- Anticipated Steering Committee Date(s): 11 May 2016; 28 June 2016 and 2 August 2016. *(Please note that Steering Committee dates may be subject to change)*

The result indicators:

- **Children and Young People:**

The result indicators at programme level for the children and young people theme are:

- An increase in the percentage of 16 year olds who socialize or play sport with people from a different religious community 'very often' from 43% to 50%, 'sometimes' 24% to 28%.
- An increase in the percentage of 16 year olds who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were 5 years ago from 45% to 50%.
- An increase in the percentage of 16 year olds who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years' time from 38% to 45%.

- **Shared Spaces and Services:**

Three indicators have been identified:

- The percentage of people who would define the neighbourhood where they live as neutral; from 64%: always or most of the time to 68% and from 22%: sometimes to 26%.
- The percentage of people who would prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only their own religion; from 20% to 16%.
- The percentage of people who prefer to live in a mixed religion environment; from 71% to 75%.

- **Building Positive Relations:**

Three indicators have been identified that will indicate a moving towards increased good relations and respect:

- An increase in the percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were 5 years ago from 45% to 52%.
- An increase in the percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years' time from 40% to 48%.
- An increase in the percentage of people who know quite a bit about the culture of some minority ethnic communities from 30% to 38%.

The total output indicators across the entire theme (to be achieved by 2021):

- **Children and Young People:**

- **Indicator ID 2.1** – 21,000 participants' aged 0-24 completing approved programmes that develop their soft skills and a respect for diversity. (The interim target for 2018 is 5,000 participants.)

- **Shared Spaces and Services:**

- **Indicator ID 3.2** – 17 local initiatives that facilitate the sustained usage on a shared basis of public areas/buildings.

- **Building Positive Relations:**

- **Indicator ID 4.1** – 17 Local Action Plans that result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities.

3. Essential information

The call for applications should be read in conjunction with the following:

- A Local Authority Partnership Guide to Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans
- Cooperation Programme and associated Citizens' Summary
- The Programme Rules
- Guide for Applicants
- European Commission Guidance for the Simplified Cost Options (including unit costs)

Please consult these documents before completing the application form as they contain essential information to assist you in making the best application possible.

Applicants may also find it useful to consult the 'Impact Assessment Toolkit for Cross Border Cooperation'. This toolkit has been developed by the Centre for Cross Border Studies, as part of an INTERREG IVA funded project and is intended to be a practical guide to assist with planning cross-border projects. A copy of the toolkit can be downloaded from our website: www.seupb.eu

4. Project Selection Criteria

The '*results orientation*' of the PEACE IV Programme will require focused Action Plans based on

- Children and Young People;
- Shared Spaces and Services;
- Building Positive Relations.

The key principles in relation to assessment and selection criteria are as follows:

- All projects must positively support the core aims and objectives of the PEACE Programme as it seeks to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society through the promotion of reconciliation amongst all communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.
- Projects must positively support actions to improve relationships between communities by addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance.

- All projects will be required to be strictly non-party political. Projects must take care to ensure party political neutrality in the manner which they go about their business.
- All operations will be selected following a robust and objective assessment process.

The following selection criteria will be used:

(a) Each operation will have to demonstrate how they contribute to the results and outputs of the themes.

- Particular focus will be given to the direct contribution to peace and reconciliation.
- Projects will have to demonstrate that they are creating opportunities for sustained meaningful and purposeful contact between people and groups of different backgrounds and in so doing contribute to the result and outputs of the call.

(b) Quality of the project design

- Projects will have to demonstrate a direct link between their proposed activities and the proposed impact of the project.
- Particular attention will be given to measures to ensure the inclusion of the marginalised or other target groups.

(c) Quality of the project team, partnership and implementation arrangements;

- Projects will have to demonstrate that the project team have the right skills and experience to lead the project, and that the project structures will be able to deliver on the peace and reconciliation outputs.

(d) Value for money;

(e) Quality of cross community and cross-border co-operation with demonstrable added value;

- Cross border co-operation will be encouraged through the development of appropriate partnerships and implementation arrangements where these add value to the delivery of the Programme. In all cases including those projects implemented on a single jurisdiction basis, the project will have to demonstrate how they will effectively ensure participation from all communities in their activities.

(f) Contribution towards sustainable development;

- Projects will be encouraged to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

(g) Contribution towards equality.

- Projects will be encouraged to consider how their activity can be designed to positively contribute towards this horizontal principle.

5. Eligible Region

The eligible area for the PEACE IV Programme is:

- Northern Ireland;
- The Border Region of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo).

6. What are “PEACE Action Plans” going to achieve?

The involvement of local authorities in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland has been an effective mechanism in delivering significant elements of the PEACE III Programme and following public consultation it has been decided that they should be provided with an opportunity to implement PEACE IV in each of their respective geographical areas.

The PEACE Action Plan will be a targeted and locally-based response to the needs that have been identified in the PEACE IV Co-operation Programme.

The reforms in both jurisdictions have resulted in restructuring and change, and involve enhanced responsibilities for local authorities. In this context of change, it is appropriate that the new councils in Northern Ireland and the restructured councils in the Border Region of Ireland will take on the implementation of important elements of the PEACE IV Programme.

All councils wishing to participate in PEACE IV are required to identify the relevant Peace IV issues in their area and allow people to have a say in the way in which their plan is developed and implemented. To this end they will work in partnership with statutory representatives, the private sector, trade unions, local government elected representatives and the voluntary and community sector. This will result in effective partnerships with the capacity to address reconciliation, cultural diversity, conflict transformation and equality. The programme will result in development of strong local civic leadership. PEACE IV activity in each Local Authority area should be distinct and additional in nature.

The PEACE IV Programme will build upon the experience of previous programmes by tackling the remaining challenges that exist in building positive relationships and developing shared spaces. Action Plans should evidence commitment to tackling real and complex issues, such as racism and sectarianism, which prevent the benefits of a united and shared community from being realised.

As was the case with PEACE III, the new PEACE IV Programme will embed the concept of reconciliation into the objectives and desired results of the Programme. There will be a strong emphasis on promoting cross-community relations and understanding.

Four specific objectives have been identified for PEACE IV. These themes are:

- *Shared Education;*
- *Children and Young People;*
- *Shared Spaces and Services;*
- *Building Positive Relations*

Local authorities are invited to develop an Action Plan which addresses three of these with a total programme budget allocation as follows, Each Local Authority has been given details of the indicative budget allocation applicable to their area, see section 8:

<u>Specific Objective</u>	<u>Budget Allocation (ERDF)</u>
<u>Children & Young People</u>	€14,500,000*
<u>Shared Spaces & Services</u>	€24,500,000
<u>Building Positive Relations</u>	€30,000,000

**This figure is subject to revision following the outcome of an evaluation of the other activities within the children and young people theme.*

7. Anticipated Actions

It is anticipated that the Programme will fund the following types of actions:

- Children and Young People:
 - Inclusive local community youth initiatives involving sport, arts, culture, language and the environment that promote positive relations through addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance;

- Age appropriate actions that address sectarianism and racism;
 - Youth centred initiatives that address anti-social behaviour;
 - Creation of opportunities for young people from different tradition, cultural background or political opinion to meet and develop positive relationships;
 - Youth leadership and citizenship programmes that build capacity for a shared society;
 - Short-term diversionary activities at times of high community tension such as residential or sporting activity, where these form part of a longer term relationship building programme.
- **Shared Spaces and Services:**
 - Support for local initiatives with the aim of making public space in cities, towns and villages more inclusive, this will often involve addressing sensitive topics around parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other issues which serve to intimidate and make some members of society, whether based on religion, race or other factors feel unwelcome in some areas;
 - Dialogue, reconciliation and capacity building between interface communities, leading to the creation of shared vision and conditions where communities feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of interface barriers;
 - Developing the shared aspects of existing neighbourhoods, public spaces and buildings;
 - Public/Community partnerships and facilitation for programme activities for shared space;
 - Protocol development programmes to facilitate greater collaboration between people and places;
 - Regeneration activities to remove/replace sectarian graffiti, flags and emblems;
 - **Building Positive Relations**
 - The development of strong inclusive civic leadership, including increasing the capacity of marginalised groups to participate in peace and reconciliation activities;
 - Conflict resolution and mediation at a local level;

- Sport, arts, culture including Irish and Ulster Scots language and environment projects e.g. the enhancement of existing urban infrastructure or natural spaces that promote positive relations through addressing issues of trust, prejudice and intolerance;
- Projects to facilitate personal interaction between residents and groups from divided neighbourhoods;
- Events linked to the decade of commemorations that explore history in a sensitive manner and build mutual understanding.

Target groups

- Local Plans will engage and include target groups in reconciliation activities, including cross border initiatives.

Local plans will support actions to facilitate the full participation of women in local initiatives, including leadership, and should also include targeting those groups particularly impacted by the legacy of the troubles/ conflict such as victims and survivors and those communities with low social capital, and those identifiable groups and networks dealing with legacy issues such as young and older people, women, the faith community, victims and survivors, those suffering from physical or mental disability arising from the legacy of violence, ex-prisoners and former members of the security forces.

8. Budget and co-financing rate

A total of €81.2 million (ERDF: €69 million) has been allocated to the Councils for the 2014 – 2020 period to deliver their operations which will contain projects under the themes of: Children and Young People; Shared Spaces and Services; and Building Positive Relations.

Local Authorities in Northern Ireland are to use an exchange rate of £1 = €1.31 in compiling stage one applications.

The total indicative budget allocation (ERDF & Match) (in Euro) per Local Authority and per Theme is as follows:

Local Authority Area	Peace Action Plan	Children and Young People (aged 0-24)	Shared Space	Building Positive Relations
	Total (ERDF + Match)	Total (ERDF + Match)	Total (ERDF + Match)	Total (ERDF + Match)
Antrim and Newtownabbey	3,863,288	811,864	1,371,754	1,679,672
Ards and North Down	3,933,916	826,706	1,396,832	1,710,380
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	6,116,245	1,285,318	2,171,720	2,659,207
Belfast	17,212,572	3,617,191	6,111,738	7,483,644
Causeway Coast and Glens	4,502,085	946,105	1,598,573	1,957,406
Derry City and Strabane	7,964,209	1,673,664	2,827,885	3,462,661
Fermanagh and Omagh	3,357,781	705,632	1,192,261	1,459,888
Lisburn and Castlereagh	2,993,260	629,028	1,062,829	1,301,404
Mid and East Antrim	3,697,120	776,944	1,312,752	1,607,426
Mid Ulster	3,953,614	830,845	1,403,826	1,718,944
Newry, Mourne and Down	5,610,615	1,179,060	1,992,185	2,439,371
Louth	3,507,153	736,970	1,245,273	1,524,909
Leitrim	1,882,318	395,538	668,349	818,431
Sligo	860,865	180,897	305,665	374,304
Cavan	3,128,825	657,471	1,110,942	1,360,412
Donegal	5,552,691	1,166,807	1,971,576	2,414,308
Monaghan	3,039,912	638,787	1,079,372	1,321,753

Please note, the above allocations are indicative allocations only and the actual allocations for each Local Authority will be based on the actions proposed and evidence of need presented in the Action Plan.

The level of grant aid may need to be adjusted to take due account of state aid and/or anticipated future revenue streams. Please consult the Programme rules for further details.

Grants and payments may take any of the following forms:

- (a) Reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred and paid;
- (b) Standard scales of unit costs;
- (c) Flat-rate financing, available for overhead costs or salary costs.

The above options may be combined only where each option covers different categories of costs or where they are used for different projects forming a part of an operation or for successive phases of an operation.

A successful project, where there are cross-border partners, will be issued with a Letter of Offer in Euro. A successful project that has Northern Ireland partner(s) only, may request a Letter of Offer in Sterling.

8.1 Simplified Cost Options (SCO)

In order to simplify the administration of grant aid, the SEUPB would propose to use simplified costs options for the administration of this theme. Simplified costs will be established and agreed at Stage 2 of the application process in consultation with the successful applicant and in accordance with the European Commission's guidance. It is envisaged that the relevant simplified cost options will include both flat rates and unit costs, as outlined in the Programme Rules.

8.2 Flat Rates

The following flat rates, which require no justification, are mandatory in this area of the programme:

- Direct salary costs (lead beneficiary) – 12% of other direct costs (all costs less direct salary costs and office and administration costs of the lead beneficiary); and
- Office and administration costs (lead beneficiary) – 15% of direct salary costs (lead beneficiary).

8.3 Unit Costs

The use of unit costs, where applicable, is desirable in this area of the programme and, accordingly, applicants are encouraged to present unit costs. Where applicants take this opportunity, unit costs are to be presented and evidenced in accordance with the European Commission's guidance for the preparation on unit costs.

Unit costs must be:

- Fair – based on reality, not excessive or extreme
- Equitable – it does not favour some beneficiaries or projects over others
- Verifiable – determination of flat rates, standard scales of unit costs or lump sums should be based on documentary evidence which can be verified.

Applicants must document as a minimum:

- The description of the calculation method, including key steps of the calculation
- The sources of data used for the analysis and the calculations, including an assessment of the relevance of the data to the project(s), and an assessment of the quality of the data
- The calculation itself to determine the value of the Simplified Cost Option (unit cost).

The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) specifies that the following may be used in evidence to support Simplified Cost Options:

- 'Statistical' data or other objective information
- The verified historical data of individual beneficiaries
- The application of the usual cost accounting practices of individual beneficiaries.

When providing calculations of unit costs, applicants must provide accounting data over at least three years so as to identify any potential exceptional circumstance which would have affected costs in a specific year as well as the tendencies in the cost amounts.

9. Application process

A two stage process will be in place for this call as detailed in the Guide for Applicants. Full details of the assessment process, including admissibility criteria is also available in the Guide for Applicants.

Completed applications should be submitted to applications@seupb.eu or SEUPB, EU House, 11 Kevlin Rd, Omagh, Co Tyrone BT78 1LB.

10. Contact Us

For general enquiries about this call please contact the SEUPB on: Tel: + 44 28 8225 5750.

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