



YOUR

An update on the European Union's
PEACE and INTERREG Programmes

Autumn 2020

EU!



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The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland. The Body was established on 2 December 1999, under the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Ireland (8 March 1999), which created the implementing bodies.

The Special EU Programmes Body's principal function is to provide the Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat functions for the PEACE IV and INTERREG VA Territorial Co-operation Programmes (2014-2020). It also has a signposting and supporting role for projects wanting to engage with the INTERREG VB Transnational and INTERREG VC Inter-regional Programmes.

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Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Your EU!

I had hoped that this edition would have seen a return to a more normal environment, but unfortunately that is not the case and the impact of the pandemic continues to dictate a substantial element of our daily lives, both at work and at home.

I am however, extraordinarily impressed by how our PEACE IV and INTERREG VA funded projects continue to find new and innovative ways to deliver upon their outputs. All projects are still very much active. We have not lost a single one since the pandemic began and that is a testament to their dedication! This has not been without its challenges, but is something worth celebrating, even in the midst of all the uncertainty and hardship.

I am delighted to share some really exciting and positive news in this edition. During September we launched a new funding call under the PEACE IV Programme's Building Positive Relations objective. Known as 'Building Community Cohesion through Social Innovation', this new €1m call will help local communities, across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, to better understand (as well as equip them with the skills to develop) social economies, entrepreneurship and innovation. You can read more about it on page 10 or

Over the last few months I have also had the pleasure of taking part in some (socially distanced) project launches, including the €6.3m Black Mountain Shared Space in West

Belfast, which will allow sustainable and meaningful contact between local communities in that area, who are currently divided by significant physical barriers. We are also extremely proud of the €6m Our Generation project, which will support approximately 35,000 children, young people and adults suffering from the effects of transgenerational trauma. This project was launched very recently and the absence of the young people who would have attended (had it not been for COVID-19 restrictions) was keenly felt. You can read more about these projects on pages 4 and 18.

It has also been an exceptionally busy time with PEACE IV projects drawing to a close. It's hard to believe that some are already at this stage but I was pleasantly surprised not only at the innovative ways these projects found to deliver upon their key outputs during the pandemic, but how they managed to showcase the positive impact of their work.

Some examples include the production of project closure videos, such as Causeway Coast and Glen Borough Council's £3.8m Local Authority Action Plan (which you can read about on page 6) and the Theatre Peace Building Academy project, which held an international online conference, broadcast live from the Playhouse in Derry-Londonderry. You can read more about it on page 14.

The development of the PEACE PLUS Programme (2021-2027) is at an exciting stage of assigning outputs, indicators and budgets to the themes



which form the framework. The statutory consultation is due to take place later this year.

We look forward to obtaining your feedback on the structure of the new programme.

We will also continue to support all of our funded projects at this very difficult time and should you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

I do hope you enjoy reading some of these positive stories. Please stay safe and well.

Gina McIntyre
Chief Executive, SEUPB

€6.3m Shared Community Facility for West Belfast Announced

A new, €6.3m shared community space on the former Finlay's factory site in West Belfast was recently announced.

Funded through the EU's PEACE IV Programme, the new facility will be known as the Black Mountain Shared Space project and will be delivered by lead partner Belfast City Council, in association with project partners Black Mountain Shared Space and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive; as well as the Northside Partnership, as an associate partner.

The new building will deliver cross-community facilities, joint programming and outreach, with the aim of removing physical barriers in the area. It will be operated by Black Mountain Shared Space, an organisation which has been in operation since 2010.

Welcoming the project Lord Mayor of Belfast City Council, Alderman Frank McCoubrey, said: "This brilliant new facility will remove barriers and help create connections between communities in the Ballygomartin and Springfield areas of the city. The Belfast Agenda, the city's long-term community plan, includes aspirations to develop our neighbourhoods, improve community relations and create a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all. This project will certainly make a significant contribution towards those aims."

Also reflecting on the announcement was the Minister for the Department of Communities Northern Ireland,



Celebrating the launch of the Black Mountain Shared Space project are (l-r): Gerard Murray, Director of Regeneration for Belfast, Department for Communities NI; Finola Moylette, Department of Rural and Community Development Ireland; Lord Mayor Alderman, Frank McCoubrey, Belfast City Council; Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB; and Paul Millar, Chairman of Black Mountain Shared Space.

Carál Ní Chuilín, who said: "Located at the foot of the Black Mountain this project will result in the transformation of a previously vacant site into a state-of-the-art shared space facility for the whole community. It will be a great asset as a hub for community development to help build relationships and contribute to the health and well-being of its users."

Heather Humphreys TD, Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands in Ireland, said: "I want to congratulate Belfast City Council and the project partners. The sharing of knowledge and support between these organisations has created a lasting

legacy and I am pleased to see these organisations working together on a cross-border basis, for the benefit of the wider community in developing approximately 1.5 hectares of this 4.43 hectare site. Additionally, it will see the continuation and strengthening of cross-border relationships."

To hear more from some of the people helping to deliver this project

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Communities, Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Ireland.

Life's a Beach with Cross-Border Environmental Project

The System for Bathing Water Quality Monitoring (SWIM) project aims to develop a system for the prediction of bathing water quality and install real-time signage on beaches across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Funded just over €1m, through the EU's INTERREG VA Programme, this innovative project will enable short-term pollution to be predicted and the information disseminated to the public through a range of media channels including an app; automatic localised text alerts; web up-dates; and electronic signage at beach entry points.

The project combines the expertise of lead partner University College Dublin (UCD), alongside Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute (AFBI); Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA).

Over the past few months the project has been busy not only with the important scientific work but with the promotion of it. The team are currently working on a series of four animation videos to help bring the project to a public audience. Among them will be a scientist immersed in bathing water sampling and a water-focussed character that will don his wet weather gear and chase storms.

Another promotional focus is the 'stories from the beach' series, where beach goers and swimmers take centre stage. One of these groups is



The Menopausal Mermaids are just one of the groups helping to support and promote the SWIM project.

the Menopausal Mermaids, set up by Nicole Morelli, 50, from Portstewart, County Antrim. Nicole came up with the idea after experiencing health issues from a hip replacement and osteoarthritis. What started as casual sea swimming with a friend soon became the Menopausal Mermaids Sea Swimming Group. Since November 2018, the group has grown with over 80 WhatsApp members and 200 Facebook members. On average they receive four new requests every week.

Speaking about the group Nicole said: "Over recent months, although distanced in the sea, it hasn't hindered our enjoyment and shared experiences. Many members swear by the health benefits for both body and mind and not just during testing COVID times, but also for those on their own journeys. There are many personal stories of dealing with illness, tackling mental health issues, overcoming grief and loss or just bonding through friendships. The group includes younger members to empty nesters, those suffering bereavement,

depression, anxiety or other health issues."

The Menopausal Mermaids have been helping to promote the SWIM project, most recently having featured in a promotional video. To watch

New electronic signage information boards are planned for all SWIM beaches, with the new larger style board just installed at Ballyholme Beach, County Down. These large format boards bring clarity from a distance, preventing beach users from missing vital information. Ballyholme is just one of six cross-border beaches in Northern Ireland and three in Ireland where bathing water quality sampling is taking place.

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland.

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council Celebrate Closure of PEACE IV Action Plan with Special Legacy Video

To officially mark the end of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's £3.8m, PEACE IV funded Local Authority Action Plan a special legacy video has been produced, capturing programme activities over the past two years and documenting participants' stories.

Released on International Peace Day (21 September) the film documents the journey of participants and beneficiaries across the Action Plan's three core themes: Children and Young People, Shared Spaces and Services and Building Positive Relations. You can view the video by

Among numerous outputs the Action Plan helped to: provide 34 upgrades to existing community facilities throughout the Borough; facilitate the participation of over 200 people in the Shared Spaces and Services Programme; engage approximately 1,140 Children and Young People in a

range of leadership, activity-based and visual arts programme; and deliver a range of programmes that helped build good relations and community capacity through the Community and Cultural Institutions Programme.

Marking the closure of the project First Minister Arlene Foster said: "We congratulate all involved with this fantastic programme. It has delivered to our children and young people, created and promoted shared spaces, and worked to build positive relations. We don't underestimate the challenges faced to complete this programme in such challenging times."

The deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill said: "The video is a perfect way of capturing all that has been achieved. It shows the significant impact it has had on individuals and communities, and it's fitting that it is being launched on International Peace Day. I would encourage people to watch the video, and to hear its message about working together.

By doing so we can help bring about a united community where everyone is respected."

Also commenting on the video was Heather Humphreys TD, Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development, and the Islands in Ireland, who noted: "The PEACE IV legacy video, highlighting the programme's influence across the Borough, is a remarkable way of celebrating International Peace Day. I am sure the improvements made to the 34 community facilities will encourage greater use of these safe, neutral spaces which will be further utilised to ensure that cross-community engagements continue into the future."

Speaking of the importance of the funding Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB said: "The funding provided the opportunity to create new, courageous and forward-thinking partnerships between different sections of the community in order to promote cultural diversity and meaningful reconciliation. As we face the current struggles posed by COVID-19, this recording is a reminder that our communities are working together and provides great hope that these relationships will continue to grow, helping us all move towards a more cohesive and peaceful society."

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department for Rural and Community Development, Ireland.



Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's special PEACE IV legacy video captures the programme activities over the projects lifetime, documenting participants' stories.

Vital Cross-Border Health-Care Trials Continue

The €8.84m, INTERREG VA funded, Cross-Border Healthcare Intervention Trials in Ireland Network (CHITIN) project is a unique partnership between the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland and the Health Research Board in Ireland.

Together, this partnership has been working to deliver 11 Healthcare Intervention Trials (HITs), which will help prevent and cure illness and promote improved health and well-being. The partnership has also been providing specialist training and development programmes for cross-border area health and social care (HSC) providers.

A HIT can: investigate if a new intervention is safe; determine if it is better than current practice; or direct resources to improve and protect people's health and reduce health inequality. The HITs within CHITIN include:

- ▶ Walking to improve the physical health and well-being of people with serious mental illness;
- ▶ Peer-led walking to address increased physical inactivity in adolescent girls;
- ▶ A web-based intervention to alleviate the symptoms of anxiety and depression and to increase help-seeking among students with mental health problems;
- ▶ Mirror Box Therapy for upper limb rehabilitation in stroke patients;
- ▶ Inhaler compliance assessment for symptomatic uncontrolled asthma patients;

- ▶ Pragmatic pregnancy and post pregnancy lifestyle interventions for women who are considered to have overweight or obesity in pregnancy and pregnant women with gestational diabetes;
- ▶ Medicine management and anticipatory care planning for older people on multiple medicines and/or at risk of functional decline;
- ▶ And a practical lifestyle intervention for healthy neurocognitive ageing in diabetes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges to health research, in particular HITs. A number of CHITIN recruitment sites within health and education (e.g. General Practices, secondary care clinics within HSC Northern Ireland and HSE Ireland, university campuses and post-primary schools) are experiencing new and challenging pressures.

Many of the trial's much-needed participants are amongst those that are vulnerable to COVID-19 such as the elderly, those with underlying health conditions such as Type II or gestational diabetes, and those with mental health disorders.

As a result, it has been necessary for all 11 CHITIN studies to become innovative, to adapt and to modify the approach taken to deliver the research in a COVID-secure way, ensuring the safety of all involved. Such innovation and determination is an encouraging sight, ensuring the continuation of this much needed research.

Learn more about the 11 trails

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department's for Health in Northern Ireland and Ireland.



Pictured in early 2020 are some members of the CHITIN project delivery team.

Helping Communities, Changing Lives with Nine New Iconic Shared Spaces

One of the most visible aspects of the Conflict / Troubles is the high level of segregation, evidenced by peace walls; residential segregation; sectarian graffiti; and public displays of flags and emblems.

Segregation increases social division and tension, inhibiting economic development and the efficient delivery of public services. Communities remain segregated, with many lacking access to a shared environment where they feel safe to meet, socialise and learn from one another. This can create a cycle of mistrust which is passed down from one generation to the next.

One component of the PEACE Programme which has tried to combat this societal and generational issue is the Shared Spaces objective; which aims to create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services at both a local (through local authority action plans) and regional level (through the creation of capital build projects).

Under the last programme (PEACE III) a variety of new, iconic shared spaces were created, such as Girdwood Community Centre in Belfast, The Termon

Complex in Pettigo, County Donegal and the symbolic Peace Bridge in Derry-Londonderry. Today, they are enjoyed by all communities and neighbourhoods.

Based on their usage and opinion polls, these neutral spaces have significantly helped to change attitudes and behaviour, with a corresponding reduction in segregation.

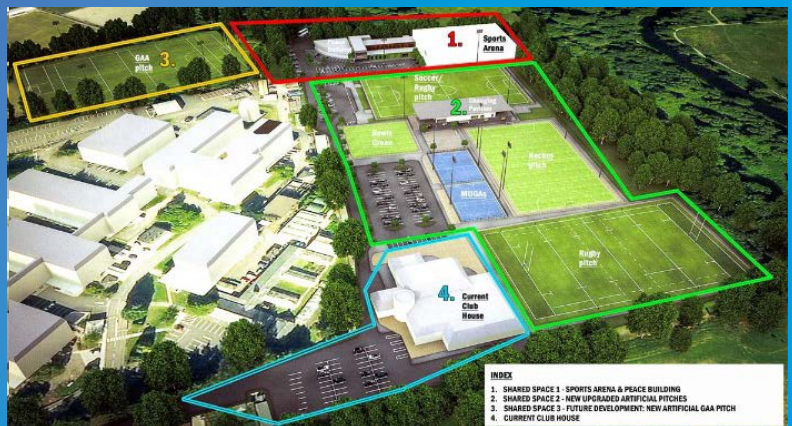
The importance and success of these projects was reflected in the current programmes value. At almost €60m, the Shared Spaces objective of the PEACE IV Programme will allow for the development of nine new, large-scale buildings and refurbishments that will have a transformative effect upon the local areas, as well as having a regional significance. Projects will incorporate high quality design and sustainable development principles, including measures to minimise carbon emissions.

Now more than ever, in the current COVID-19 climate, these shared spaces represent a symbol of hope and positivity for communities affected by job losses, family illness / grief and mental-health struggles.

Below we outline a few of these exciting projects, but for information on all nine

Newforge Community Development Trust (€5.8m)

Located beside the River Lagan and Newforge Lane in South Belfast, the project will develop a 15-acre site which will be available to community groups and youth groups; schools; churches; sports clubs; and local residents on a cross-community basis. Led by Newforge Community Development Trust, the site was exclusively used by members of the RUC Athletic Association and Police Service of Northern Ireland for the past 60 years. The new plans will therefore transform the site as being accessible for all.



Newforge Community Trust Development Site Plan.

Waterside Shared Village (€8m)

To be constructed in the Waterside area of Derry-Londonderry, the new multi-faceted community hub building will be surrounded by a sports complex. Led by Derry City and Strabane District Council, the new shared space will act as an example of good relations & peace and reconciliation development within the local area.



The banner features the WSV logo (a stylized 'S' shape) and the text 'Waterside Shared Village' in blue. Below it, the word 'Peace' is written in large white letters, with the European Union flag and 'EUROPEAN UNION' to its right. Further down, it says 'Northern Ireland - Ireland' and 'European Regional Development Fund'. A photograph of a smiling man and woman is on the right. At the bottom, a white box contains the text: 'The new €8m Waterside Shared Village project will act as an example of good relations & peace and reconciliation development within the local area.' Logos for various community organizations are also present.

Connecting Pomeroy (€5.9m)

Based in County Tyrone, the project will encourage greater levels of cross-community contact within the local area, and is underpinned by three core elements: enhancement of the look and feel of the centre of the village; creation of a suite of new community facilities; and improved outdoor and tourism opportunities through the development of a 'magic forest'. Supporting the capital investment is a three-year engagement programme to generate contact across the community, particularly among children and young people, encouraging respect and understanding.



The village of Pomeroy, in County Tyrone, where the Connecting Pomeroy project will encourage greater levels of cross-community contact.

The Monaghan Peace Campus (€9.5m)

Based in Monaghan Town, at the former site of the Council's machinery yard, construction has already begun on this four-storey development; which will incorporate community space, a youth facility, a new town library and a cultural heritage area.

Match-funding for these projects has been provided by the Department for Communities, Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Ireland.



Artist's impression of the Monaghan Peace Campus.

PEACE IV 'Building Community Cohesion through Social Innovation' Funding Call Announced

On Monday 7 September the SEUPB announced a new, €1m funding call under the PEACE IV Programme's Building Positive Relations objective to help build the capacity of local communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, to develop social economies, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Called 'Building Community Cohesion through Social Innovation', the call will fund a single cross-border project that will support community-led approaches to social innovation and peace building.

The successful applicant will be expected to engage with a large range of individuals in meaningful peace and reconciliation activity; as well as include a pathway/outreach programme that creates sustained contact between people from different backgrounds.

In addition, the successful applicant will ensure a specific focus on the needs of minority groups, as well as groups who have been traditionally marginalised by society; creating opportunities for a greater degree of participation and integration within larger community life.

The call will be open for 10 weeks, closing Monday 16 November 2020 at 3pm.

Underlining the importance of the call, Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB, said: "This is a highly significant funding call which offers a tremendous opportunity



Paul Boylan, Programme Manager of the SEUPB, welcomes viewers to the live stream workshop on the 9 September.

to assist local communities in developing the skills they need to drive forward innovative solutions to local issues. The funding on offer will both complement, and build upon, the social economy and entrepreneurship models of community development, with the additional important benefit of creating a more cohesive society by bringing local communities together with a shared aim of improving their area."

A live stream workshop outlining the call took place on Wednesday 9 September from 10am – 12 noon.

It was hosted by SEUPB Programme Manager Paul Boylan, who discussed the call's aim in-depth, with contributions from Andrew Forde, The Department for Rural and Community Development, Ireland; Linsey Farrell, The Executive Office Northern Ireland; and guest speaker Deirdre Mortell, CEO of Rethink Ireland.

Filed versions of these presentations, as well as

additional information on the call, are available

Match-funding for the call has been provided by The Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Ireland.



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The new call will help build the capacity of local communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, to develop social economies, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Happy Birthday Interreg!

In September Interreg celebrated turning 30!

Interreg is the EU's flagship scheme for cooperation across borders at both a regional and national level, for the benefit of all EU citizens.

Launched in 1990, it has proven that borders are not barriers, bringing Europeans closer together by helping to tackle common challenges and creating new opportunities for cooperation across borders.

There are numerous programmes in operation across Europe but the SEUPB has been overseeing the INTERREG Programme.

Since 1991, the INTERREG Programme has contributed approximately €1.13 billion to the region. This funding has been used to finance thousands of projects that have supported cross-border cooperation, creating a more prosperous and sustainable region.

The current €283m INTERREG VA Programme provides an opportunity for continued EU assistance, with funded projects operating within the themes of Healthcare; Sustainable Transport; The Environment and Research & Innovation.

Throughout the month of September the SEUPB featured a project-a-day across its social media channels,

which included both past and present examples such as the INTERREG IVA Social Farming Across-Borders project, which helped increase awareness of the opportunities that social farming offers.

To see the full 30 projects visit the SEUPB's Twitter channel



The INTERREG IVA Social Farming Across-Borders project helped increase awareness of the opportunities that social farming offers.



Celebrating Culture and Good Relations with PEACE IV Project

The €670k Promoting Reconciliation and Integration through Safe Mediation (PRISM) project have been busy delivering a suite of group activities since commencing in 2018.

PRISM is helping to implement an integration and good relations programme to approximately 910 participants from the Catholic; Protestant; Refugee; Asylum Seekers and Vulnerable Migrant communities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

Participants engage in user 'contact models' that explore perceived tension points, identify commonalities and develop integration pathways to ensure the continuation of peace-building activities and multi-cultural promotion, as well as the enhancement of local diversity.

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 the project was delivering 10-week programmes across Newry; Craigavon; Magherafelt; Derry-Londonderry; Antrim and Belfast North, West, South and East. Classes ranged from reflexology; massage; Thai Chi; floristry; visual arts; zumba classes; poetry reading; and decoupage arts.

One of the participants from the group in Newry enjoyed the PRISM programme so much they implemented, on behalf of Newry Interchurches Forum, another 10-week programme with similar activities including two-day trips to Newcastle and Darkley House, County Armagh.



Some of the participants and artists at the Newry Celebration event on 7 October 2019, to mark the completion of the 10-week programme.

Speaking about her participation in the PRISM project Marie Farry, from the Newry Interchurches Forum, said: "I actually remember one lady on the course saying that our Monday nights were the highlight of her week. She couldn't wait to meet up with the other participants to learn first-hand about other cultures and to increase her own knowledge. She enjoyed practising greetings in all the languages of the group and she loved the idea that we had all ages on the course, from three years old up to 83 years old!"

PRISM have since taken their workshops online and have been supporting groups through well-being phone calls, facilitated by project partners. Additionally the project arranged, with the help of local artists, to deliver arts and crafts packages to participants' homes.

PRISM is led by the British Red Cross, with project partners ArtsExtra, Corrymeela and the Irish Red Cross.

Match-funding for this project has been provided by The Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department for Rural and Community Development, Ireland.



Dancers and a singer performing at the North West Belfast celebration event in the New Life Centre, Belfast on 16 January 2020.

A Young Participant's View of the PEACE IV M-Power Project

The €3.5m, PEACE IV funded YMCA M-Power (Meaningful Cross-Community Youth Empowerment) project is helping to deliver a youth-focused programme, which has been achieving positive results and creating real change for up to 800 young people aged 14 - 25 years old across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.

M-Power has been working with young participants who have deep social and emotional needs; are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour, violence or dissident activity; and those who are struggling within education, training or employment.

In addition, it has also been working with young participants who are suffering, or at risk of mental ill health; those with physical disabilities; those with autism and high functioning autism; and approximately around 4% of beneficiaries are from ethnic minorities.

Like many other children and young projects, M-Power had to develop and implement COVID-friendly practices to ensure the continuation of support to its



The new North Down group, who met face-to-face in September. The group will spend six months together working on different programmes and activities.

young participants.

In September, it began rolling out new socially distanced group activities and to help promote awareness and participation in these, the project began sharing the stories of past participants such as Kamill. He describes his participation in the course below:

“If you get picked for this programme you are so lucky and might not know it yet, but trust me you will realise this soon!

M-Power offers two qualifications that are like GCSE'S and you are guaranteed to pass them with no sweat, no stress and especially no pressure from teachers that don't understand how you feel.

Gina and Aoileann are some of the nicest people you will ever meet. They are not just good mentors, but also a good friend. You can talk to them about anything and with time, you will build a relationship that will make you happy and you look forward to seeing and working with them.

The work you will be doing is nothing too challenging and you will be discussing every question. That helps a lot, to understand it and educate yourself on the topic. Apart from work there is also plenty of trips. Last year we went to We Are Vertigo and go-karting! We also went on a residential course, which included loads of fun activities.

It's a day a week to do this program and you will be looking forward to that day everyday! We did two-three hours of work a day, but in between breaks and after lunch, you will have free time with the whole group. This could include playing games; cooking, baking; making things; or also challenges that always have a prize.

Gina and Aoileann will always have good intentions towards you and want the best for you and your future, so listen to them and you will benefit so much. You won't regret it.”

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Economy, Northern Ireland and the Department for Children and Youth Affairs, Ireland.



Participant Kamil Kozlowski.

Reflecting on the Vital Work of the Theatre Peace Building Academy

The €859k, PEACE IV funded, Theatre Peace Building Academy drew to a close recently hosting a special international, peace-building conference exploring the power of socially engaged art in conflict / post conflict societies, which was broadcast live from the Playhouse Derry-Londonderry.

The Playhouse was established in 1992 with the aim of using the arts to educate, entertain and to promote community dialogue. Over the past 28 years it has championed, and been at the forefront of using the arts to promote peace and reconciliation.

The Playhouse Theatre and Peace Building Academy project aimed to use theatre and art as a reflection tool, actively encouraging dialogue on the consequences of the conflict; as well as affording participants with the opportunity to build techniques to engage with painful memories.

The project drew upon both local and international artists with extensive experience in the use of drama and art to help heal divided communities emerging out of conflict. The Playhouse worked in partnership with Holywell Trust, Thomas D'Arcy McGee Foundation and Queens University Belfast.

The Art in Place of Conflict conference took place on Thursday 17 September and included discussions around the work produced as part of the project, with contributions from Jo Egan, Conan McIvor, Pamela Brown and Ailin Conant.



Snippet from the live performance of *Anything Can Happen 1972*, as part of the project's official closure event

As well as hosting the conference, the Playhouse decided to mark the closure by broadcasting the *Anything Can Happen 1972* production live. Penned by Damian Gorman the play focused on the thoughts and feelings of those who lived through the Troubles. As part of the live performance the theatre specifically asked for contributions from anyone who had been affected by the Troubles. People were encouraged to send objects or photographs of significance or importance, to be placed on the 130 empty chairs in the theatre.

Celebrating the vital work of the project was Heather Humphreys TD, Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands in Ireland, who said: "I want to congratulate everyone involved in this cross-border, cross-community project, which provides a unique insight into the legacy of the troubles. This initiative adapted the traumatic events of the conflict into theatre, poetry and film. It has facilitated the bringing together of people of different backgrounds, whilst enabling them to

reflect on the past in a safe way."

Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB, congratulated the project on its hard work and outlined its importance in line with the PEACE IV Programme stating: "I would like to thank all of those involved in the delivery of this project, including the artists, directors, performers and support staff. I know that each and every performance was the culmination of a lot of hard work, dedication and commitment."

"The result has been truly inspiring as the project has helped to meet many of the core peace and reconciliation objectives of the EU's PEACE IV Programme and has encouraged healing and reconciliation between many different people from different communities, on both sides of the border."

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Executive Office, in Northern Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development, Ireland.

All's SWELL with Cross-Border Water Quality Project

Despite the restrictions of COVID-19 phase two of the €35m SWELL project (Shared Waters Enhancement and Loughs Legacy) has been progressing well.

Funded through the INTERREG VA Programme, the second phase of this project will help improve water quality in the shared transitional waters of Carlingford Lough and Lough Foyle through the upgrade of wastewater assets, on both sides of the border.

NI Water (supported by their SWELL consultants, McAdam Design) hit the ground running in June 2019 with their capital upgrades at Newpoint Wastewater Pumping Station (Newry); Warrenpoint Wastewater Treatment Works; Donemana Wastewater Treatment Works and Strabane Wastewater Treatment Works.

By mid-March 2020, the upgrades at Newpoint, Warrenpoint and Donemana were around 80% complete, and with construction work completed at Strabane, the contract team had moved to performance trials.

In a bid to progress to full handover at the Strabane site, the contractor produced



Strabane Wastewater Treatment Works, which has seen an upgrade of the existing treatment facility to include: installation of a new inlet works, pumping station and fine screening equipment to protect the water environment.

a special training video on the operation and maintenance of equipment. This clever intervention meant that the SWELL upgrade at Strabane continued uninterrupted.

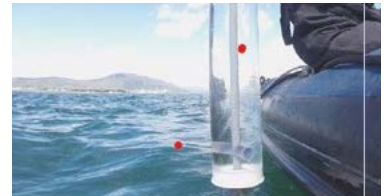
With robust COVID-19 safety measures in place, construction work recommenced at the Newpoint, Warrenpoint and Donemana sites in May 2020. Contract teams are on track to have the upgraded wastewater assets fully commissioned by the end of 2020 at these sites.

Meanwhile, project partner Irish Water has submitted planning applications for their three projects in County Donegal, within the Lough Foyle catchment; Lifford, Carrigans and Killea.

In Lifford, a major new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) will be constructed. At the Carrigans site, Irish Water will convert the existing septic tank to a new storm tank and will build a pumping station to transfer wastewater via a new 3500m-long pipeline to the nearby St. Johnston WwTP.

At Killea a new WwTP will be constructed on the site of the existing treatment plant. Irish Water is currently at an advanced stage of all associated land and wayleave requirements as part of the delivery of these essential projects. Irish Water has one other upgrade within the Carlingford Lough catchment in Omeath County Louth, and this project will involve wastewater network improvements.

As well as the eight wastewater infrastructure upgrades, the SWELL project also involves catchment studies



4,000 water samples were collected from the Carlingford Lough and Lough Foyle catchments as part of SWELL's modelling work.

and ecosystem modelling, within the Carlingford Lough drainage basin (within Newry, Mourne & Down and Louth council areas) and the Lough Foyle drainage basin (comprising Derry City & Strabane and Donegal council areas).

As part of the pre-improvement sampling programme SWELL partners, AFBI and Loughs Agency, collected over 4,000 samples from the Carlingford Lough and Lough Foyle catchments.

The sample breakdown incorporates 23 freshwater sites and 11 marine sites within Carlingford Lough and the Carlingford catchment, and 48 freshwater sites and 14 marine sites within the Foyle catchment and Lough Foyle.

This high frequency sub catchment sampling programme has been developed in order to calibrate and validate the modelling framework being developed as part of SWELL.

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Ireland.

A Positive Future for Northern Ireland's Renewable Energy Sector with INTERREG VA Project

The €9.4m, INTERREG VA, Bryden Centre project has been making significant progress over the last couple of years within the renewable energy sector.

The project has created a cross-border research centre for renewable energy projects. This research aims to exploit the abundant natural resources across the coasts and lands of Western Scotland, Northern Ireland and Donegal for the generation of clean and sustainable energy.

Lead partner Queen's University Belfast; the University of the Highlands and Islands; Ulster University; Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the Agriculture, Food and Biosciences Institute are working in partnership to train the next generation of energy research leaders and support inter-regional economic growth.

A large cohort of researchers and PhD students are investigating a diverse range of renewable energy related challenges. Research is focusing on:

- ▶ Harnessing the power of the sea (tidal and wave energy);
- ▶ Cultivating the power of land and turning organic waste into biofuels and chemical feedstocks;
- ▶ Ensuring the environment is protected when renewable energy systems are installed;
- ▶ Enabling the integration of renewable energy generation into energy transport networks and energy storage systems.



Delegates enjoying the Engineering & Energy Transition conference, which was held in February.

The project recently produced a report, in conjunction with the Centre for Advanced Sustainable Energy (CASE), which was drafted in response to the policy paper *Rebuilding a stronger economy - the medium-term recovery towards a more competitive, inclusive and greener economy* that was published in June 2020, from the Department for Economy Northern Ireland.

Entitled, *Clean Energy – A Positive Future for Northern Ireland Building on Our Strengths*; the report features valuable contributions from numerous industry partners, with a focus on the immediate steps that can be taken to provide a green and sustainable response to the COVID-19 economic challenge in Northern Ireland.

The report can be downloaded

In September, there was further promising news for the renewable energy sector when Hydrogen-based solutions developer, Clean Power Hydrogen (CPH2) and sustainable energy provider, B9

Energy, joined forces to manufacture and distribute CPH2's Membrane-Free Electrolyser™ in Northern Ireland.

Announced by Northern Ireland's Economy Minister, Diane Dodds, the agreement will contribute towards the green hydrogen economy in Northern Ireland and support the Government's decarbonisation efforts.

This partnership was originally facilitated through Bryden Centre researchers at the project's conference *Engineering the Energy Transition*, held in February 2020. The conference was indeed a major success for the project, with 114 leading academics, industry professionals and senior civil servants spending two days learning from a diverse range of speakers from across Europe.

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Economy, Northern Ireland, the Scottish Government and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Ireland.

Building Positive Relations Throughout Fermanagh and Omagh

Back in the summer of 2017 Fermanagh and Omagh District Council were among the first of the 17 cross-border councils, funded under the PEACE IV Programme, to launch its Local Authority Action Plan.

The £2.8m plan is supporting 16 locally-based projects and initiatives that are helping to promote positive relations between people from different communities and backgrounds.

The cross-community Twinning Programme is one of such projects, proving a real success for the 18 participating sports clubs. Encompassing sports such as football; gymnastics; boxing and gaelic games, the Twinning Programme has offered clubs the opportunity to form new relationships and enhance community cohesion.

Another project which brought communities together was Railways to the West. Over 100 young people and 80 adults took part in a range of events and activities that focused on recalling the rich history and heritage of the Great Northern Railway. The railway passed through villages in Mid and West Tyrone, as well as Omagh as part of its journey from Portadown to Derry - Londonderry until its closure in 1965.

As part of the history and heritage programme, young children aged 7-12 from the Carrickmore; Sixmilecross; Beragh and Omagh areas enjoyed a number of day trips which included the



Participants on the Community Dialogue Circles Programme, who attended a Best Practice Visit to The Glenree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation.

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum's Model Railway Day and a journey to Coleraine by train from Derry – Londonderry. Adults meanwhile, had the opportunity to participate in railway-themed events including a project that captured memories and stories from those who travelled, worked on, or had fond memories of the Derry Road line.

A short film was created which can be viewed

More recently, as part of the Community Dialogue Circles Programme, a publication was produced which focused on the people affected by the border road closures of the past. Called A Record of Dialogue the publication captures the real-life experiences and the impact of the physical divide between County Fermanagh and the Border Region of Ireland.

Conducted by four facilitators, it included 30 dialogue sessions, as well as a series of individual sessions in areas along the Fermanagh

border including Derrylin; Lisnaskea; Kinawley; Cashel and Kiltyclougher. In total, the facilitators guided over 100 hours of structured dialogue with 62 participants from both communities.

For further information on this programme and the publication please contact Deborah McCartan: deborah.mccartan@fermanaghomagham.com.

Match-funding for the Action Plan has been provided by the Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department for Rural and Community Development, Ireland.



Young children enjoying the Model Railway Day at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum as part of the Railways to the West project.

Mental Well-Being Project Set to Benefit Local Communities

A new peace-building project, aiming to tackle mental health and well-being in children and young people (on both sides of the border) recently launched during a special live-stream event in September.

Called Our Generation, the cross-border project will be delivered through education, youth and community settings across the Five Urban Village Areas of Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Northern Ireland; with the aim of building positive relations and emotional resilience in communities impacted by four decades of the Troubles and the legacy of the conflict across the island of Ireland.

It aims to benefit 36,000 children and young people including the provision of peer support and the development of skills and confidence to improve well-being within their communities.

Led by Action Mental Health, the project is being delivered in partnership with seven organisations: Donegal Youth Service; Co-Operation Ireland; Youth Action NI; YouthWork Ireland; PlayBoard NI and Ulster University.

Speakers at the event included Junior Minister Declan Kearney, The Executive Office Northern Ireland; David Babington, CEO Action Mental Health; and Siobhan O'Neil, Interim Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland.

Speaking at the event, Junior Minister Kearney said: "Poor mental health is a barrier preventing our young people



Pictured at the special live-stream event are (l-r): David Babington, CEO Action Mental Health; Junior Minister Declan Kearney, the Executive Office Northern Ireland; Professor Siobhán O'Neill, Interim Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland; Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB; Carol Scullion, Project Manager Action Mental Health; and Rosaline Keenan, Senior Manager Service Reform (Progressing Mental Health Services) at the HSE, Ireland.

and communities from thriving in a post-conflict society. Too many families are struggling or have already lost loved ones. This project will help to support tens of thousands of children and young people, working with them and with existing community programmes in a co-design process."

Also sending her support ahead of the event was Heather Humphreys, Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Community and Rural Development and the Islands in Ireland, who reflected: "I want to congratulate the seven regional organisations involved in this cross-border partnership. It's great to see these organisations working collectively and collaborating in the area of mental health recovery. I am confident that this EU, PEACE IV funded project will assist large numbers of children and young people, as well as their families, on both sides of the border."

Welcoming the project, Gina McIntyre, CEO of the SEUPB said: "Unfortunately one of the enduring legacies of the Conflict/Troubles is intergenerational trauma, which is passed from one generation to the next; preventing young people from reaching their full potential and creating long-lasting mental health problems."

"This project will help to change this by building emotional resilience and improving the mental health of tens of thousands of young people. Designed by, and for them, the project will also encourage greater levels of cross-community contact and intercultural awareness, which will help to build a more peaceful and cohesive society."

Match-funding for this project has been provided by the Executive Office, Northern Ireland and the Department for Rural and Community Development, Ireland.

Regional Innovation Systems, the Focus for Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme Conference



2020 NPA Annual Conference

INNOVATION FOR SMART AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

In light of the travel restrictions resulting from COVID-19 the annual Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA) conference was held online, on 23 September. Broadcast live from Oulu (Finland), the conference focused on innovation for smart and resilient communities – exploring different regional innovation systems and how they contribute to greener and smarter solutions for more resilient communities in the Northern Periphery and Arctic regions.

Over the past seven years, the NPA programme has supported nearly 60 projects, many of which involve partners from Northern Ireland and Ireland; of which eight were

dedicated to increasing innovation and transfer of new technology to SMEs. This conference provided the perfect occasion to showcase the programme's achievements in this area.

NPA regions are characterised by the presence of innovative clusters and good private-public-research cooperation experiences, with universities strongly integrated in the regional innovation system. In addition, some regions have a specific Arctic expertise in connection to cold climate and threats coming from climate change.

Reflecting on the very successful online event, Kirsti Mijnhijmer, Head of Secretariat (NPA), said: "You never know how people will

receive such a first online annual conference, but literally within minutes after closing the event, we started receiving emails with positive reactions."

"I am very pleased that we were able to reimagine our conference as an attractive online event within the timetable originally planned, largely without technical issues. To my delight, we even managed to make it interactive and have meaningful discussions during the breakout sessions about innovation in the NPA area from many different angles. These discussions are very relevant, because innovation is a theme going forward into the next programme, the NPA 2021-2027."

Programme Summaries and SEUPB Contacts

PEACE IV

The €270m PEACE Programme 2014-2020 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.

The Programme's key objectives are:

- Shared Education
- Children & Young People
- Shared Spaces & Services
- Building Positive Relations

The eligible area for the Programme is Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland (counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo).

For further information on the PEACE IV Programme contact:

Joint Secretariat Omagh,
Tel: +44 (0) 28 8225 5750
E: omagh@seupb.eu or Belfast,
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E: info@seupb.eu

INTERREG VA

The €283m INTERREG Programme 2014-2020 has been designed to address many of the developmental problems which are exacerbated by the existence of borders, in order to build upon opportunities for enhanced economic and social development across the region.

The Programme's key priorities are:

- Research & Innovation
- Environment
- Sustainable Transport
- Health

The targeted eligible area is Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland (Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan, and Sligo) and Western Scotland (Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute, Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire mainland, and South Ayrshire).

For further information on the INTERREG VA Programme contact:

Joint Secretariat,
Monaghan.
Tel: + 353 (0)47 77003
E: monaghan@seupb.eu or

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INTERREG VB Transnational Programmes

The SEUPB has a role supporting the development of projects submitted to any of the INTERREG VB/VC Programmes.

These programmes are:

The Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Programme

This €56million ERDF programme aims to help peripheral and remote communities in the northern regions of Europe to develop their economic, social and environmental potential. The programme area involves parts of Finland, Ireland, Sweden, Scotland, Northern Ireland in cooperation with the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland and Norway. SEUPB is the Regional Contact Point for Northern Ireland.

The North West Europe Programme

This €370 million ERDF programme aims to help make this new region more competitive, environmentally friendly and cohesive by improving access to more and better jobs, enhancing the environmental qualities of the region, improving accessibility and ensuring that cities and rural areas are attractive and sustainable. The programme area is France, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland Luxembourg, Belgium, and Switzerland. The SEUPB works in an advisory and signposting role.

The Atlantic Area Programme

The programme aims to achieve progress on transnational co-operation that is geared

towards cohesive, sustainable and balanced territorial development of the Atlantic Area and its maritime heritage. The programme region covers all of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and those regions within Portugal, Spain, France and the UK that border the Atlantic Ocean. The SEUPB works in an advisory and signposting role.

INTERREG EUROPE Programme

The €359 million ERDF INTERREG VC Inter-regional Programme is aimed at local and regional authorities. It focuses on the identification, analysis and dissemination of good practices by public authorities in order to improve the effectiveness of regional and local policies. Co-operation projects are eligible across all 28 EU states, plus Norway and Switzerland.

For further information on VB and VC Programmes, contact:

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