



Northern Ireland
Executive

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Special EU Programmes Body
Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE
Special EU Skemes Boadie

THE STORY AND IMPACT OF EU PEACE AND INTERREG FUNDING: *PAST AND FUTURE*



PEACEPLUS

Northern Ireland - Ireland

Co-funded by the



European Union



UK Government



***“Actions have
built or re-built
relationships
between ordinary
people at the
local level.”***

ELISA FERREIRA
EUROPEAN
COMMISSIONER
FOR COHESION
AND REFORM

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Foreword

Welcome to the launch of the PEACEPLUS Programme.

It has been almost 25 years since the establishment of the Special EU Programmes Body, and 2023 marked a significant milestone with the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday / Belfast Agreement from which the (SEUPB) was created. While we celebrate the launch of PEACEPLUS, it is important to acknowledge and recognise the work which has been undertaken in the previous four PEACE programmes, as well as the INTERREG A and Transnational Programmes.

The new PEACEPLUS Programme will continue to provide vital investment to Northern Ireland and the cross-border region. This investment will protect and preserve the hard-won peace and provide opportunities for building prosperity in the years ahead.

Building on the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG A funding streams, this ambitious cross-border funding programme will stand on the shoulders of the many achievements of projects supported by the SEUPB, some of which are showcased in this report.

The European Union alongside the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have provided practical support for the Peace Process in Northern Ireland and the six border counties for over three decades.

This investment has yielded €3.39 billion, which funded over 23,000 projects, and touched the lives of over two million citizens.

One of the many drivers to success has always been a partnership approach and at a grass roots level, empowered communities drove peacebuilding and socio-economic renewal of their areas.

It is important to recognise the contribution that people at all levels in our society have made over the years, taking risks for peace, creating new relationships and building trust; we will all be forever grateful for their contributions.


Looking back over the legacy of the previous Programmes, this booklet highlights the significant achievements and the numerous impacts projects have made.

I would personally like to thank the European Commission, the Government of Ireland, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the respective Departments, and the support we have received from the NI Executive. Also, thanks to our stakeholders and all the participants and beneficiaries over the past three decades.

I would also like to thank past and present members of the Programme Monitoring Committees, and staff of the SEUPB, who ensured the successful delivery of all the Programmes. It is a testimony to everyone involved that so many people participated in helping us design the content of PEACEPLUS.

It is a personal and professional privilege to lead the SEUPB as this exciting new Programme is rolled out, none of which would be possible without my dedicated team at the SEUPB. I am looking forward to seeing the impact of PEACEPLUS over the coming years.

Gina McIntyre
Chief Executive Officer



“The lasting benefits of the Programmes are the connections made between communities, across borders and across Europe, all of this has resulted in borders within the mind being opened.”

GINA MCINTYRE

About the Special EU Programmes Body

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is one of the cross-border bodies set up under the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement – the agreement between the Government of Ireland and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which was signed on Good Friday, 8 March 1999, and led to the establishment of the North South Bodies.

The SEUPB has the statutory remit for managing EU funding programmes between Northern Ireland and the six border counties in Ireland.

We facilitate the positive impact that European Regional Development Funding can have on the lives of people living across Northern Ireland, the border counties of Ireland and, since 2007, Western Scotland.

We have managed the many iterations of the PEACE and INTERREG Programmes, as well as involvement in Transnational Programmes. All of these have the overarching objective of taking opportunities from the cessation of violence in the region.



PEACEPLUS

PEACEPLUS is a new Programme funded in partnership by the European Union, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of Ireland, and the Northern Ireland administration. It is designed to support peace and prosperity across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland and builds upon the work of the previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.



It includes a focus on peacebuilding activity and how our actions can contribute in positive ways to building the economy and increasing prosperity, as well as helping us adjust to new challenges.

The overall objective of the PEACEPLUS Programme will be to build peace and prosperity and ensure that this Programme will leave a lasting and tangible legacy across Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland. The Programme's strategy will take the opportunities and address the needs arising from the peace process to boost economic growth, stimulate social and economic regeneration and promote social inclusion, particularly for those at the margins of economic and social life.

The Programme will help address many longstanding social and economic challenges that continue to impact communities, particularly those in rural border areas, as well as ongoing challenges that exist in urban settings.

The PEACEPLUS Programme has been developed through extensive research, review and public engagement.

A Stakeholder Engagement exercise took place in 2019/2020, and the SEUPB held a range of public events, including specific events with young people. Survey submissions and a PEACEPLUS public consultation in 2021 followed this. There has also been ongoing engagement and meetings with governments, north and south.

The PEACEPLUS Programme has been divided into six themes – each aims to address longstanding social, environmental and economic challenges that have and continue to impact our community. Within each theme, several investment areas will have a more specific focus and target organisations such as local authorities or community groups.

PEACEPLUS Programme

Thematic Areas



Investment Areas



The Legacy of the PEACE I Programme (1995 to 1999)

Development of the PEACE I Programme

The PEACE I Programme was established to make a positive response to the opportunities presented by developments in the Northern Ireland peace process during 1994, especially the announcements of cessation of violence by the main republican and loyalist paramilitary organisations. The aim was to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by directly funding projects to:

Boost growth and employment, including the redirection of redundant skills, reinforcing the efforts for long-term unemployment, those affected by conflict, the young and encouraging greater participation by women in the labour market.

Stimulate economic development investment, including directly funding the development of the small business sector.

Promote urban and rural regeneration, including tackling the social, economic, and environmental needs in the most deprived areas, particularly those people and areas most affected by the conflict.

Develop cross-border co-operation.

Encourage social inclusion through grass-roots and cross-community work, drawing on the fields of culture, arts, sports and leisure and encouraging action to address difficulties faced by vulnerable groups, including children and young people, victims and survivors, and ex-prisoners.

Spread over three tranches, PEACE I offered an entirely unique proposition because it delivered a very deliberate ‘bottom up’ approach in showing the EU’s support for and commitment to the peace process in Northern Ireland and the border counties. It utilised a grass-roots approach in its design and implementation.

Examples of some impacts of the PEACE I Programme

- Providing resources to meet socio-economic needs.
- Boosting employment in the community and voluntary sector.
- Developing local communities through the establishment of community groups/ organisations.
- Significantly increasing cross-community and cross-border activity and projects.
- Embedding cross-community and cross-border activity as the normal approach when establishing groups.
- Enabling groups to interact based on a shared or common understanding of need.
- Facilitating positive contributions to promoting reconciliation and peacebuilding.
- Providing a forum for discussion for political, statutory and community representatives who might not otherwise have met.
- Increasing awareness of the need for reconciliation and respect for differences.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

TOTAL FUNDING AWARDED

€667M*



NUMBER OF PROJECTS

15,016

13% Proportion of projects stating they had created new cross-border linkages or networks



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

868,162

51,121 Participants engaging in cross-border activities for the first time



TARGET GROUPS

include long-term unemployed, women, children and young people, prisoners/ex-prisoners, victims and survivors, people living in urban and rural deprived areas, and those most affected by the conflict.

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS



EMPLOYMENT PROJECTS

Net jobs created:

7,000 – 8,000

Feasibility studies/
seeding grant:

413



CAPITAL COST PROJECTS

Number of roads improved:

48

Square metres of new buildings:

157,611

Square metres of sites improved:

240,941

Square metres of buildings upgraded:

136,765



GUIDANCE/COUNSELLING PROJECTS

Guidance/counselling sessions created (hours):

261,662



TRAINING PROJECTS

Total number of training participants recorded:

42,540

Total qualifications recorded:

31,220



TOURISM PROJECTS

Number of tourism facilities created:

1,579

Number of tourism facilities upgraded:

571



CHILDCARE PROJECTS

New accredited day care places provided:

48,787

New pre-school education places provided:

7,205

* Total Funding Awarded €667m (EU Contribution €500m and National Contributions €167m).

The Legacy of the PEACE II Programme (2000 to 2006)

Evolution of the PEACE II Programme

The PEACE II Programme built on the success of the PEACE I Programme, maintaining momentum for peacebuilding in the region in the context prevailing economic and social needs of Northern Ireland. It covered 2000–2004 and was extended to 2005–2006. PEACE II focused on targeting social needs, creating new cross-community linkages, strengthening existing relations, and extending the promotion of reconciliation and respect for difference in a post-conflict area. It promoted reconciliation and reinforced progress towards a peaceful and stable society, echoing PEACE I. Its objectives were to address the legacy of the conflict and take on the opportunities arising from peace.

PEACE II had five priorities including,

- Economic renewal
- Social integration
- Locally based regeneration and development
- Outward and forward-looking region development
- Cross-border co-operation

Examples of some impacts of the PEACE II Programme

- Facilitating the development of services, infrastructure, training, and engagement in areas affected by the conflict that would not have happened or not happened as quickly.
- Taking investment risks to develop sectors particularly affected by the conflict, such as Research and Development and ICT, which would not have been made by the public or private sector.
- Supporting the most marginalised sections of society by developing activities for old and vulnerable people, the disabled, victims of domestic violence and the young unemployed.
- Enhancing skills to attain jobs or enter further education or training.
- Contributing towards building peace and reconciliation between the two main communities.
- Developing new ways of working together, including establishing new alliances and partnerships between communities and groups at project level.
- Building and enhancing organisational and community capacity for new and existing groups, increasing the skills of project participants, and establishing relationships and networks that can be utilised for future development.
- Bringing people together from divided communities impacted on parents, staff and children in terms of attitude and a sense of security.
- Promoting and mainstreaming innovation through social economy and entrepreneurship projects that would not have been funded under another government initiative.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

TOTAL FUNDING AWARDED

€994.5M*



NUMBER OF
PROJECTS

7,103



NUMBER OF
PARTICIPANTS

868,420



TARGET
GROUPS

identified in terms of distinctiveness, include victims of conflict; ex-prisoners and displaced people; and local communities. Target areas included: Cross-border: Disadvantaged areas experiencing high levels of violence.

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS



RECONCILIATION
PROJECTS

42,540

Participating

1,638

Groups focused
on Reconciliation



EMPLOYMENT
PROJECTS

77,652

individuals entering or progressing
in employment, education and
training.

6,148

jobs created, including significant
increases in the areas of business
competitiveness and development,
tourism, rural community
development, local economic
initiatives, and cross-border
activities.



CROSS-BORDER PROJECTS

161,599 participating in cross-border
activities including those involved
in the development of border region
SMEs and social economy enterprises,
community-based organisations
leading projects on reconciliation
and cultural understanding and
cross-border projects focusing on
skills, learning and training.



TRAINING
PROJECTS

100,767

Individuals gaining qualifications,
some examples of which are
Early Years Care, ICT Skills,
Human Resources, Tourism, Food
Production, Trauma Counselling,
Farming and Community Leadership.



BUSINESS/ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

10,248

Businesses assisted in
competitiveness, training, business
development, networking and cross-
border/international trading etc.

* Total funding awarded €994.5m (€609m from the EU Contribution and €385.5m from National Contributions).

The Legacy of the PEACE III Programme (2007 to 2013)

Evolution of the PEACE III Programme

PEACE III had a renewed emphasis on reconciliation reflecting research and discussion from the previous programming period, and addressing issues of sectarianism and racism. PEACE III also sought to introduce more streamlined delivery mechanisms. It promoted reconciliation and reinforced progress towards a peaceful and stable society by directly funding projects to reconcile communities and contribute to a shared society. Cross-Cutting Themes across all priorities included Cross-Border Co-operation, Equality of Opportunity, Sustainable Development, Impact on Poverty, and Partnership. PEACE III placed a strong emphasis on promoting cross-community relations and understanding.

PEACE III Themes and Priorities included:

1. Reconciling Communities

Building positive relations at the local and regional level – involvement of local authorities.

Acknowledging and dealing with the past – victims and survivors.

2. Contributing to a Shared Society

Creating shared public spaces.

Key institutional capacities developed for a shared society.

Examples of some impacts of the PEACE III Programme

- Giving people, communities, and voluntary organisations an active role in decision-making facilitated the participation and integration of marginalised and minority groups in society.
- Capacity-building activity rippled throughout Partnerships and their projects and included teachers, public sector workers, people in the workplace and young leaders. This resulted in many local people being equipped to be influential peace builders.
- There was a noticeable advance in cross-border and cross-community co-operation.
- Projects continued to support and develop strategic alliances and partnerships, including within schools, youth, and sports organisations, and continued to address issues of equality, diversity, active citizenship and good relations within local communities.
- Projects funded under Creating Shared Public Space tackled problems of separation of communities. They addressed the underlying issues of sectarianism, racism, and prejudice by developing physical environments that are open and welcoming to all.
- Opportunities were created for interaction and economic development that had a transformative effect on local communities affected by the conflict.
- Progress was made to reduce barriers, remove paramilitary murals, and reduce inter-community tensions and conflict in communities at the interface.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

TOTAL FUNDING AWARDED

€333M*



LEAD PARTNERS
220

SUB-PARTNERS
58



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
431,775



TARGET GROUPS

include victims of the conflict; displaced persons; people who have been excluded or marginalised; former members of the security and ancillary services; ex-prisoners and their families; public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS



189,007

People attended

8,393

events that address sectarianism and racism or deal with conflict resolution.



6,999

People in receipt of trauma counselling.



44,037

People attended

1,887

events assisting victims and survivors.



25,429

People attended

2,184

conflict resolution workshops.



2,754

Participants in

63

interface areas engaged in initiatives which are addressing barriers (physical and non-physical) to acknowledge and deal with the past.



136,166

Users of

18

shared public environments which were created or improved through cross-community regeneration projects.



27,383

people benefited from shared services addressed the issues of segregation, sectarianism and racism and focused on sectors such as education, community health, employability, environmental protection.



117

jobs created / safeguarded through these shared public environments created.



7

pilot projects of cross-border co-operation between public sector bodies.

* Total funding awarded €333m (€225m from the EU Contribution and €108m match funding from the Irish Government and NI Executive).

The Legacy of the PEACE IV Programme (2014 to 2020)

Evolution of the PEACE IV Programme

The PEACE IV Programme represents the continued commitment to supporting the peace process across the eligible areas. It is designed to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society by promoting reconciliation, social inclusion, and social and economic stability in the region. Objectives and actions reflect the desired positive change and the identified needs of the region.

- Participating in **shared education** initiatives to promote good relations and enhance children's skills and attitudes to contribute to a cohesive society.
- Supporting **children and young people** to form positive and effective relationships with others of different backgrounds contributing to building a cohesive society.
- Creating new **shared spaces and services** to create a more cohesive society.
- **Building positive relations** between divided communities at a local and a regional level to develop and deepen reconciliation between divided communities.

Examples of some of the impacts of the PEACE IV Projects

Shared Education Projects

- **Educational benefits** included access to a wider education/curriculum experience and facilitating the sharing of ideas and good practices between education providers.
- **Societal benefits** included equipping educational providers and children with the skills and attitudes to promote a culture of tolerance and mutual understanding.

Children and Young People (14-24) Projects

There is clear evidence of the positive distance travelled across good relations, personal development and citizenship outcome indicators. Young people enhanced their capacity to form positive relationships with those from different backgrounds.

Children and Young People Projects (0-24)

- Significant interest from participants engaging with those from other backgrounds suggests a positive and sustainable output.
- Positive attitudinal change was evident, with young people reporting that they felt relationships had improved between Protestants and Catholics and that they would continue to improve.

Shared Spaces and Services Projects

- Direct engagement with communities addressed the lack of cross-community engagement and facilitated interactions that have engendered attitudinal changes.

Victims and Survivors Projects

- The infrastructure was provided to shift VSS's delivery model from a less personal, means-tested approach to an individual and victim-centred model, with tailored support.
- The activity undertaken to address the legacy of the past, including through inter-generational research, will contribute directly to promoting peace and reconciliation.

Building Positive Relations Projects

- There is an increase in tolerance, community cohesion, and positive attitudinal changes between protestant and catholic participants. Relationships formed and building the capacity of local leaders indicate the legacy and sustainability of the projects.

PROGRAMME DETAILS

TOTAL FUNDING AWARDED

€270M*



PROJECT PARTNERS
621



NUMBER OF PROJECTS
96



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
OVER 306,468
(project still in delivery)



TARGET GROUPS*

include children and young people aged including those hardest to reach and from disadvantaged backgrounds, victims of the conflict, people who have been excluded or marginalised, ex-prisoners and their families, public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS



492

schools involved in shared education.



2,417

teachers trained with the capacity to facilitate shared education. (Project still in delivery).



121,974

participants in shared education classrooms. (Project still in delivery).



17

local initiatives that facilitate sustained usage on a shared basis of public areas/buildings.



17

local action plans that result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities.



7

capital developments to create new shared spaces.



7,861

young people aged 14-24 years who are most marginalised and disadvantaged completing approved programmes that develop their soft skills and a respect for diversity.



3,956

individuals in receipt of advocacy support.

* Total funding awarded €270m (€229.10m from the EU Contribution and €41m match funding from the Irish Government and NI Executive).



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

HELEN KELLER

PEACE

PROJECT INSIGHTS

PEACE I Project Insight

Women Active in the Community

The Women’s Regional Development Agency (WRDA) applied to run a Community Facilitators’ programme to train women in local community groups to develop their personal leadership and facilitation skills to take leadership roles and act as a resource for their communities. As a direct result of the increase in skills and confidence, several women either found employment or went on to seek further training and education. All the women involved were active in their local communities and were also brought in contact with women working in different communities. This included women from communities such as Roden Street, Lenadoon and Beechmount (West Belfast); and Ardoyne, Mount Vernon and Tiger’s Bay (North Belfast).

PEACE II Project Insight

Conflict Trauma Resource Centre Legacy Project

The Legacy Project delivered workshops, training courses and one-to-one sessions for individuals traumatised because of the conflict. This increased their self-esteem and confidence and enabled them to deal with anxiety and trauma experienced in the past. Support included training, re-skilling, support to access labour market services, therapy and trauma training, conflict awareness, conflict resolution programmes, mediation, advice and counselling. The work led to a positive effect on the families and communities of the participants. A direct impact of the project was the establishment of cross-community relationships enhancing collaboration between diverse communities to contribute to peace and reconciliation. The training courses and workshops enabled skills to be developed, leading to improved employability. Cultural and attitudinal change within the community was observed, along with a greater understanding of the legacy of the conflict and the opportunities arising from peace.



Peace III Project Insights The Peace Bridge

A new iconic foot and cycle bridge, joining the city physically and promoting interaction and engagement among communities, addressing the sense of division and isolation from both communities. It also brought the former Ebrington military barracks back into public use creating a new shared space. The Peace Bridge attracts one million visitors each year, created jobs and economic regeneration.

Reconciling Communities through Regeneration

This strategic regional programme focused on improving tolerance and acted as a catalyst for reducing sectarianism and racism by involving local community and statutory agencies in regenerating 10 local areas and in the process eliminated and reduced displays of sectarian and racial aggression.

PEACE IV Programme Project Insight The Journeys Project

The ‘wrap around’ programme model offers marginalised young people an opportunity to increase personal and social capabilities and wellbeing, engage positively with people of diverse backgrounds and circumstances, and contribute positively to communities through active citizenship. Activities include thematic workshops, residentials and events, community-based projects and providing an accredited qualification – OCN Level II Good Relations / Diversity and Personal Success & Wellbeing. Over four years, the initiative brought about positive change for over 800 young people. *“I’m like a different person after being on Journeys. I feel more confident, I have new friends, and I have a plan for my future. Before I was lost, now I am happy, and my life is just starting.”* Journeys Participant.

The Legacy of the INTERREG A Programmes (2000-2020)

The EU cross-border INTERREG Programme was first introduced in 1991 and was devised as the European Community's response to the implications of the single market. It recognised the relatively disadvantaged situation of Border Regions throughout the European Community and proposed a mechanism of support for such areas.

Since 1991, the INTERREG A Programmes have brought approximately €1.13 billion into the region. This funding has funded thousands of projects that support strategic cross-border co-operation to create a more prosperous and sustainable region.

INTERREG IA and IIA

Funding first became available in 1991 with the **INTERREG A** Programme, aimed at assisting the economies of border areas and encouraging cross-border co-operation. Its activities were mostly aimed at economic development, with themes covering tourism, the environment, agriculture, and broader regional development. These themes broadly continued with INTERREG II in 1994-1999, with increased funding for human resource development. The first two iterations saw €412 million spent in the region. Both Programmes were managed centrally by the Department of Finance in Dublin and the Department of Finance and Personnel in Belfast.



The Legacy of INTERREG IIIA

The SEUPB's involvement with the Programme began with INTERREG IIIA. The funding period for INTERREG IIIA was 2000-2006. It was designed to support cross-border co-operation, social cohesion and economic development between regions of the EU.

It had a total value of €183m, and funded 420 projects. Priorities included:

- Enhancing the capacity at local level for the development and implementation of local development strategies that would focus on promoting economic and social cohesion.
- Improving the physical environment and spatial cohesion of the eligible area.
- Promoting actions which improve the quality of life of the population of the eligible area and which are inclusive and participative in nature and operation.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



**2,650 FTE
NEW JOBS**

created or safeguarded throughout the Programme in areas such as business development, tourism, and rural business assistance, cross-border business clusters as well as those created by participation in skills training, re-skilling programmes and sectorial initiatives.



102

Rural businesses/
enterprises created.



**23,667
PEOPLE**

trained in management and enterprise training, and 6,700 participants in training and education initiatives from cross-border ICT awareness seminars, conferences and courses delivered.



**20,562
INDIVIDUALS**

from 2,366 groups involved in community development through capacity building projects.



**59 CROSS-
BORDER**

health and social care
networks developed.



1,835

health and social care and
other professionals trained.

The Legacy of INTERREG IVA

Building on the successes and lessons of previous INTERREG Programmes, the INTERREG IVA Programme supported strategic co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region. In particular, the Programme focused on developing a dynamic economy, supporting infrastructure and promoting innovative ways of addressing specific regional problems.

Previous INTERREG Programmes operated on a Northern Ireland/Ireland cross-border basis. Following a re-definition of maritime borders by the European Union, a distinctive aspect of this Programme was the inclusion of Western Scotland. This gave an opportunity to promote co-operation between Scotland/Ireland/Northern Ireland, as well as maintaining and enhancing the Northern Ireland/Ireland co-operation.

INTERREG IVA had a total value of €256m, and funded 88 projects.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

 **3,552 BUSINESSES**

assisted to help promote innovation and creative activities including the development of new and innovative products and business processes, expertise sharing, skills sales, marketing, strategy development, staff training, mentoring and the development of educational/business skills.

 **954 NEW JOBS**

created as a result of this support offered to businesses.

 **33 NETWORKING PROJECTS**

supported which focused on encouraging strategic co-ordination of small firms to raise competitiveness, market access and enhance reputation and credibility within and outside the region.

 **121,741 BENEFICIARIES**

of this supported cross-border collaboration which included support in the areas of health, rural development, life sciences, enterprise and tourism.

 **17 RESEARCH PROJECTS**

completed that helped to improve the evidence base and quality of comparable information available when making policy and design decisions for cross-border collaboration.

The Legacy of INTERREG VA

The current INTERREG VA Programme (2014-2020) has been designed to promote greater levels of economic, social and territorial cohesion across the Programme area. The Programme has a total value of €283m which includes contributions from the European Union, the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

By the end of 2021, 33 INTERREG VA projects (including Technical Assistance) had been approved. It has funded many different projects which work on a cross-border basis - in Northern Ireland, the border counties of Ireland and Western Scotland.

These projects have been working hard to protect our shared environment, improve people's health and wellbeing, reduce carbon emissions and make businesses better. There are four key objectives funded under INTERREG VA Programme. These are:

- Research & Innovation
- Environment
- Sustainable Transport
- Health & Social Care

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



**153
ENTERPRISES**

working with research institutions and over 460 enterprises receiving one-to-one innovation advice.



**OVER 7500
HECTARES**

of threatened habitat have been protected, and nine management plans have been developed for designated protected areas.



**5549
PATIENTS**

have availed of e-health interventions which will support independent living in caring communities.



**2 CROSS-BORDER
GREENWAYS**

are currently under construction, while a cross-border multi-modal transport hub has been completed.



**73 CROSS-
BORDER**

electric vehicle charging points funded and in place.

The Legacy of Northern Ireland's Involvement in the Transnational Programmes

Transnational Programmes such as the Atlantic Area, Northern Periphery & Arctic and North West Europe Programmes bring together regions from different EU and neighbouring countries with a similar geography, culture and challenges.

The Programmes raise each region's capacity to develop solutions, through transnational co-operation and ultimately to reduce regional disparities.

Between 2007 and 2014, the SEUPB supported more than 50 organisations in Northern Ireland to become actively involved in over 40 projects under the four transnational and inter-regional programmes available to the region.

This support has continued into the current funding period (from 2014 to date) with 68 Northern Irish partners approved under the programmes with an additional €15.67 million of ERDF committed to these partners.

“Working cross-border brings considerable added value to the overall process of peacebuilding and reconciliation. It provides an opportunity to address a range of problems and challenges that are a direct legacy of the conflict such as the breakdown of relationships and trust, social and economic decline, and the isolation and marginalisation of communities in border areas.”

THE CENTRE FOR CROSS
BORDER STUDIES AND THE
EURO INSTITUTE



Impacts and outputs are as wide-ranging as the projects themselves. Tourism projects have created new marketing links and products, and have engaged with territories both east and west which would never have been available.

Energy projects have developed new guidelines, papers, reports and learning projects in wind, solar and hydrogen technologies. Manufacturing companies were selected to participate in pilot test programmes across partner regions with a diverse range of manufacturing sectors covered and different challenges faced.

From blue-growth and green-mobility, to remote area connectivity, ageing populations and migration, Interreg transnational co-operation is fostering strong partnerships where national, regional & local authorities, academia, NGOs, and private sector enterprises work together to tackle today's complex challenges.

These multi-sector alliances build on regional strengths and address real challenges facing real places and people across Europe.



“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.”

HENRY FORD

INTERREG

PROJECT INSIGHTS

Transnational Programme Project Insight **SECURE**

SECURE has helped to foster energy-secure communities through the promotion of energy efficiency solutions. It did so by implementing innovative energy solutions for housing and public infrastructures in seven regions across the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme area (Donegal County; Leitrim County; Derry City and Strabane; Nova Scotia; North Karelia; Faroe Islands; and Vasternorrland County). Partners have studied effective technologies and good practice approaches that promoted the increased use of energy efficiency and renewable energy resources. In total, each region established a Smart Energy Community in a village, rural area or neighbourhood.

INTERREG IIIA Project Insight **East Border Region Partnership**

The key objective of East Border Region Tourism Partnership was to identify cross-border tourism priorities which would advance the economic potential of tourism throughout the region as a whole. The East Border Region, despite its natural assets, was underperforming as a tourism destination with the border being recognised as the main barrier. The implementation of this project has had a major impact on the region in terms of integrating tourism activity, identifying gaps and addressing issues of duplication. It represents an effective model of cross border collaboration for the economic benefit of the region. The project undertook to develop the tourism product and to promote tourism throughout the East Border Region across themes such as activity based tourism, Christian heritage, village enhancement, walking and cycling, events and festivals.



INTERREG IVA Project Insight **B.I.G. Border Innovation Gateway**

This pilot pre-incubation initiative aimed to catalyse a step change in creating high technology, high-growth businesses in the East Border Region. Targeting 61 entrepreneurs with knowledge-based ideas like engineering, ICT, software, creative and digital media, the initiative educated potential entrepreneurs to help develop their business concepts. It helped them make a more informed choice when considering the idea of enterprise creation, particularly their suitability to run their own business. An example of the direct impact of one participant was the establishment of a new consultancy service that runs and advises on pharmaceutical and veterinary clinical trials. The company also developed a global market, securing contracts worldwide.

INTERREG VA Project Insight **The Changing Lives Initiative**

This early intervention programme supported 2,004 families with kids experiencing behaviours consistent with ADHD through providing Information and Awareness Sessions, a Screening Programme and a parent-training programme. The impact on families and children was tangible, with changed behaviour patterns reported in children regarding reduced frequency, intensity, duration, and severity of problems. There was also a positive impact on daily family dynamics and social and emotional well-being, reducing the risk of their exclusion from school. Parents also reported the positive benefit of establishing support networks with families in similar situations and felt less overwhelmed, more in control and more optimistic about their child's future.

“The North and Border Region has benefitted hugely from Peace funding since 1995. It has given much needed support, provided a transformative impact for our citizens and most importantly on a cross border basis.”

**CONOR MURPHY
MINISTER FOR FINANCE 2021**

Links

The Special EU Programmes Body

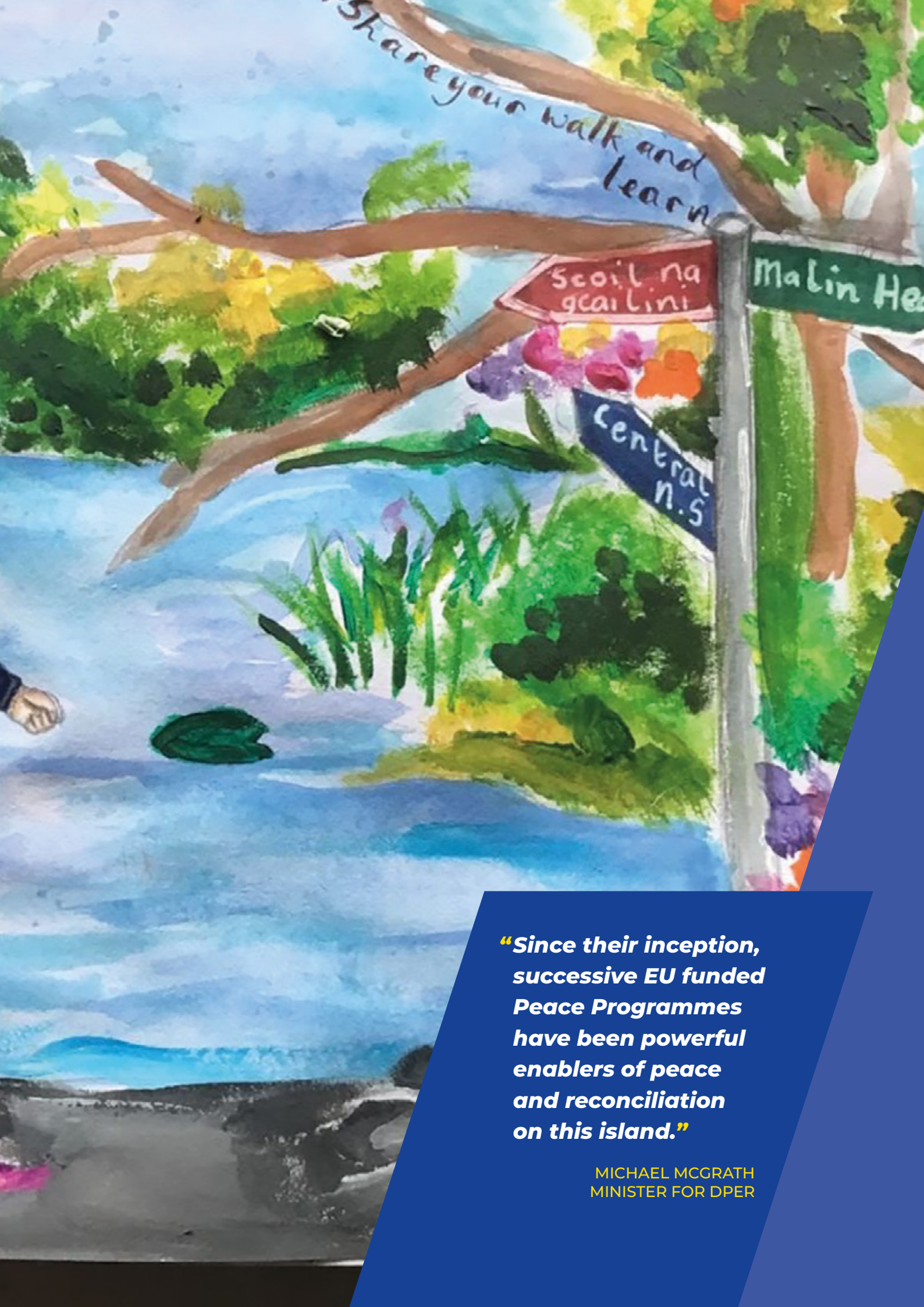
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The Peace Programmes Learning Platform

peaceplatform.seupb.eu/en

The PEACEPLUS Support Portal

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“Since their inception, successive EU funded Peace Programmes have been powerful enablers of peace and reconciliation on this island.”

**MICHAEL MCGRATH
MINISTER FOR DPER**



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