

# European Priorities 2014-15 Implementation Report



Winning in Europe



**Northern Ireland  
Executive**

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# **EUROPEAN PRIORITIES 2014-15**

## **IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

**Covering the period 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015**

### **Background**

The Executive's 2014-15 European Priorities have been drawn together using the balanced scorecard methodology.

After consideration of Programme for Government commitments and the European Commission's Work Programme, the three thematic groups working under the Barroso Task Force Working Group, developed a balanced scorecard for the following broad sectoral areas:

- Economy;
- Environment and Climate Change; and
- Social.

The 2014-15 Statement of European Priorities detailed strategic, cross-cutting objectives to focus our European engagement for the year ahead. An overarching European Priorities scorecard provided a high level focus on Ministerial objectives to get more out of European engagement, while the three thematic groups also developed cross-sectoral priorities relating to the economy, environment and climate change, and social matters.

These objectives were translated into the 169 individual targets that constitute the 'European Priorities 2014-15 Implementation Plan'.

### **Summary**

Departments have assessed progress by adopting the Programme for Government (PfG) methodology which assigns a 'Green', 'Green/Amber', 'Amber' or 'Red' rating, depending on the degree to which the target has been met or has encountered differing degrees of delay or difficulty (Table 1).

**Table 1: Progress Summary**

Definition of RAG ratings and associated target numbers			
Green	Green/Amber	Amber	Red
<b>154 (91%) Achieved</b>	<b>8 (5%) Substantively Achieved – outstanding progress will be delivered beyond the time period of this report</b>	<b>2 (1%) Substantively Achieved – outstanding progress will not be pursued</b>	<b>5 (3%) Not Achieved</b>

The Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating for each target was assigned by the relevant lead department.

Departments report that 91% of all targets were fully achieved with 6% being substantively achieved. Only 3% of targets are rated as being unachieved.

A full list of the targets and their ratings is provided (Appendix 1), along with more detailed commentary on each target considered to have encountered a substantive delay or difficulty (Appendix 2). A definition for each of the RAG ratings as used within the PfG monitoring system is provided for reference (Appendix 3).

### **Successes during the period**

In May, more than 200 delegates attended a Horizon 2020 seminar at Titanic Belfast organised by Invest Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland European Regional Forum (NIERF) which is jointly chaired by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and Belfast City Council. The opening remarks were provided by Enterprise, Trade and Investment Minister, Arlene Foster with a keynote address from Dimitri Corpakis, Head of Unit, the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation. Luis Cuervo Spottorno from Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry provided an overview of the new Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME) programme.

The Minister for Regional Development hosted a visit to Northern Ireland by Professor Peter Balazs, the European Co-ordinator for the North Sea – Mediterranean (NSM) Corridor on 1 July. The visit included a working lunch in Parliament Buildings as well as site visits to projects with the potential for EU funding in the future. The visit, coupled with official engagement at subsequent Corridor meeting's hosted by Professor Balazs, resulted in the inclusion of the proposed York Street Interchange and Belfast Multi-modal Hub Works projects in the Commission's NSM Corridor Work Plan which was released in December 2014.

Northern Ireland's Framework for Smart Specialisation, an ex ante condition for structural funding was agreed by the European Commission in September 2014. Northern Ireland, through DETI, continues to participate in a €3m FP7 research project on Smart Specialisation involving 9 other EU regions along with 11 universities. As part of the project DETI, organised a 2 day workshop for project participants in Belfast. The project is due to be completed in summer 2016.

In September, notification was received confirming the success of the €3.5m REMEDIATE project. This Horizon 2020 project, is supported by DOE, and led by Queens University Belfast in collaboration with Dublin City University, the Geological Survey of Ireland and T.E. Laboratories of Carlow.

Also in September 2014 the Arts Council of Northern Ireland was awarded funding from Creative Europe as part of a consortium application as a Large Co-operation Project. 'CORNERS' is a €2.5million project which received 50% support or €1.28million from the Culture Sub-programme. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland's total CORNERS budget is £208k with £123k own funding and £85k from the Creative Europe Programme. CORNERS is a platform for artists and audiences. The objective is to enable exchange across geographical, political and economic divisions. More than 50 artists and researchers and 30 organisations are part of CORNERS, involving 11 partners from 9 countries who are jointly leading the project which will run until 2018. The Lead Partner of the project is Intercult in Sweden. The other countries involved are: Poland, Slovenia, UK, Kosovo, Spain, Italy, Croatia and Serbia.

The University of Ulster also received 50% support from Creative Europe for their Large Co-operation Project 'Ceramics and its Dimensions.' This €3.9m project - which will run until November 2018 - brings together museums, universities and companies to investigate the cultural, academic and industrial elements of ceramics. 16 partners are involved from: Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, and the UK.

A State Aid awareness seminar was held on 16 September at Titanic Belfast. There were 130 delegates, 80 of whom were from the private sector, Invest NI, Intertradelreland, Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB), Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and all 26 Councils. 50 attendees were staff from 9 NICS Departments.

The Department for Regional Development (DRD) hosted a Brussels Business Week from 23-26 September at the ONIEB offices and other locations across Brussels. Officials from the Department met with representatives from DG MOVE, Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA), DG COMP, UK Rep and European Cyclists' Federation to discuss a range of transport related issues.

After their meeting in Brussels in December 2013, the Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator (Myria Vassiliadou) accepted an invitation to visit the Minister of Justice on 8 October 2014. Minister Ford hosted an event for Ms Vassiliadou, bringing together government and civil society stakeholders on the issue of human trafficking. The visit provided the opportunity for Northern Ireland to forge new working relationships and develop communications channels with colleagues across the EU so we can all play our part in helping inform a pan-European response to human trafficking.

On 9 October 2014, more than 150 delegates from across Europe attended an Open Days event, hosted at ONIEB by Invest NI in conjunction with five other European regions and European Commission officials. The event explored the importance of a cluster approach and innovative ways towards enhanced regional competitiveness.

During October 2014 the Department of the Environment appointed a Northern Ireland Contact Point (NICP) for climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials, which includes Societal Challenge 5.

DSD became a member of the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) network and attended two CEV conferences / seminars (in Turin on 12 October 2014 and Madrid on 12 March 2015). In addition to networking opportunities afforded by membership, the outputs resulting from membership to date have included;

- Commitment in principle by CEV Secretariat to promote and participate in a major - Volunteering Conference in Northern Ireland being proposed for autumn 2015; -
- Exploratory discussions with CEV Board members and Secretariat on the possibility of Belfast / NI submitting a proposal to become the European City of Volunteering;
- Formal linkages established with Erasmus+/ European Volunteering Service (EVS) delivery agencies which has resulted in direct contact between British Council and key NI Volunteering stakeholders.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland appointed an EU Engagement Officer in November 2014 to manage the Creative Europe Desk UK – Northern Ireland, which officially launched in December 2014. Creative Europe Desk UK is led by the British Council and the British Film Institute, with support from the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the European Commission.

From 1 January 2015 the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) in England, Northern Ireland and Wales (ENIW) has joined up with Innovate UK - the UK's innovation agency, to enhance the support available to local businesses.

This development means that for the first time, innovation-orientated UK businesses can access a full suite of innovation and internationalisation support services from a single source. Included is help in applying for European and UK funding for Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) as well as access to a wide range of information and support. The EEN will provide a "one stop shop" for innovation support and will work closely with the other UK national agencies including UKTI, the Business Growth Service (Growth Accelerator and Manufacturing Advisory Service), and the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) to provide a full and comprehensive range of support services to help UK businesses grow and thrive. The value of the contract to Northern Ireland is €673k in the first two years (jointly funded by Innovate UK and the European Commission) and EEN services in Northern Ireland will continue to be led by Invest NI.

At an Invest NI seminar in January 2015, 120 business people heard about the latest Horizon 2020 initiative, the Fast Track to Innovation (FTI) programme from Ms Catherine Pouret, Project Officer for the EU Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME). The €100 million pilot programme is particularly focused on innovative projects that can demonstrate their impact on European society and have the potential for wide and fast market take-up. The seminar was also a chance to hear details about Eurostars, a funding opportunity for SMEs that are keen to collaborate with businesses from other EU countries on innovation or research and development.

A new Northern Ireland Horizon 2020 Strategy has been agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive Sub-Committee on the Economy in February 2015 with a target of €145m. Latest data from the early Horizon 2020 competitions show that up until 30 September 2014, Northern Ireland researchers had won €11.25m. An Action Plan to secure €175m in collaborative NI/ROI projects has also been produced and agreed by the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC).

In February DRD met with the Commission in Brussels following the announcement that funding had been successfully secured through the TEN-T Programme towards study costs for the Belfast Multi-Modal Transport Hub project. At the meeting DRD outlined how it will manage and report on the delivery of the project.

On 10 February DFP officials chaired a meeting in Copenhagen, of the Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme Monitoring Committee to take funding decisions on projects submitted in response to the first call to the 2014-20 programme. Of the 13 projects declared successful, 8 included Northern Ireland partners.

On the 25 March Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNi) also hosted '*Youth Work+ Employability - a European issue and a European perspective*', an interactive seminar designed to illustrate and explore the contribution of youth work to young people's employability. The seminar included an Erasmus+ capacity building dimension, with 8 contributors attending from Belgium, Estonia, Germany and Ireland. Fifty-six people from 25 organisations across the voluntary, community, statutory and business sectors took part.

In the education sector, the NI drawdown in terms of funding for the non-formal education sector has consistently exceeded the 'Barnett Formula' share. The YCNi has played an important role in supporting the non-formal education sector. The YCNi encourages and provides opportunities for youth organisations to engage in Erasmus+ awareness raising and application specific training, which is considered critical in terms of building capacity within the sector. It also provides an Erasmus+ information service, 1-1 application support clinics to youth organisations across NI and continues to produce sector specific materials, tailored to the needs of youth workers and youth organisations in NI.

## OVERARCHING EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

<p><b><u>RESULTS</u></b></p> <p>R1 Deliver the Programme for Government target for increased drawdown of competitive EU funds, including Horizon 2020.</p> <p>R2 Raise the region's positive profile by transferring knowledge and learning through participation in formal and informal European networks and partnerships.</p> <p>R3 Maximise policy engagement with the European Commission, increasing our influence on policy development.</p> <p>R4 Maintain a structured relationship with the European Commission, developing strategic relationships with new Commissioners and Cabinet officials.</p>	<p><b><u>CUSTOMERS</u></b></p> <p>C1 Provide timely and accurate advice to Ministers and the Assembly on European policy and funding programmes.</p> <p>C2 Maximise the good relationships that already exist with the other Devolved Administrations and Ireland, to further our European policy objectives, funding opportunities and influence.</p> <p>C3 Engage purposefully with the region's European Representatives in the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and European Economic and Social Committee.</p> <p>C4 Promote increased participation of civil society in competitive EU funding opportunities.</p>
<p><b><u>BUSINESS PROCESSES</u></b></p> <p>BP1 Influence Whitehall policy formulation on European matters.</p> <p>BP2 Monitor competitive EU funding applications and the development of strategic alliances.</p> <p>BP3 Increase the use of seminars, conferences and workshops as key tools in disseminating knowledge, skills and best practice.</p> <p>BP4 Achieve the targets in the Executive's 2014-15 European Priorities Implementation Plan.</p>	<p><b><u>PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION</u></b></p> <p>PO1 Ensure policy staff have the knowledge and skills to maximise their effectiveness in liaising with Whitehall and the European Commission.</p> <p>PO2 Support the development of staff to exploit the benefits of a structured relationship with the European Commission.</p> <p>PO3 Engage with European Liaison Officers to agree work plans and support the delivery of the Executive's European priorities.</p> <p>PO4 Facilitate Arms Length Bodies, including relevant Third Parties, to effectively participate in and promote competitive EU applications and collaboration opportunities.</p>





**RESULTS**

**EUROPEAN PRIORITIES WITHIN THE RESULTS QUADRANT**

**OVERARCHING Priorities which apply to ALL thematic groups**

<b>R1</b> Deliver the Programme for Government target for increased drawdown of competitive EU funds, including Horizon 2020.	<b>R2</b> Raise the region's positive profile by transferring knowledge and learning through participation in formal and informal European networks and partnerships.	<b>R3</b> Maximise policy engagement with the European Commission, increasing our influence on policy development.	<b>R4</b> Maintain a structured relationship with the European Commission, developing strategic relationships with new Commissioners and Cabinet officials.
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Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
<b>R1.1</b>	Achieve individual departmental projections for 2014-15	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Departments projected a total drawdown of £13m over the 2014/15 financial year. Final figures for the year are not yet available but early calculations indicate that departments have exceeded their projection.
<b>R1.2</b>	Put in place NI Contact Point for Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge5 (SC5) by November 2014	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	NI Contact Point Officer for SC5 appointed October 2014.
<b>R1.3</b>	Invest NI to submit a bid to the COSME programme to deliver the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) in NI by the end of Q1 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Invest NI submitted a joint Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) bid with England and Wales co-ordinated by Innovate UK. This was successful and a new EEN service is in operation since 1 January 2015. The value of the contract is €673k in the first two years (jointly funded by Innovate UK and the European Commission).
<b>R1.4</b>	Invest NI to submit to EASME a bid to participate in a call to "Enhance the Management Capacity of SMEs" pilot programme by the end of Q1 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Invest NI were successful in making a bid to this pilot programme. This is an award that provides the Enterprise Europe Network team within Invest NI training towards the delivery of coaching and mentoring to SMEs with a particular focus on

				companies successful in the SME instrument programme of Horizon 2020.
<b>R1.5</b>	To participate in the development of at least 8 EU funding proposals for submission under LIFE, LIFE IP, Horizon 2020 or INTERREG V funding programmes during 2014-15	<b>DOE / DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	1 LIFE IP, 3 LIFE Traditional, 3 H2020 and 4 INTERREG proposals received support from DOE re the development of (11) projects.
<b>R1.6</b>	Facilitate the drawdown of competitive EU funds by end March 2015	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Departments continue to make good progress in drawing down competitive EU funds. They do this by disseminating information on funding opportunities and partnership calls to relevant stakeholders. They also liaise with their European Commission counterparts to identify new opportunities and programmes in order to maximize our competitive EU drawdown.</p> <p>Final figures for the year are not yet available but early calculations indicate that departments have exceeded their projected drawdown for 2014-15 of £13m.</p> <p>Overall Departments have exceeded the original Programme for Government target of a 20% increase in drawdown of competitive EU funds.</p>
<b>R1.7</b>	EU Capacity Building Fund implemented in 2014-15 and utilised by end of 2015-16 (Subject to funding)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	Due to budgetary constraints it was not possible to allocate funds to the EU Capacity Building Fund. However, the Department remained committed to the overall aims and objectives of the fund and increased support to the Northern Ireland European Regional Forum (NIERF) through the secondment of an OFMDFM official to improve the service NIERF provides to its members.
<b>R1.8</b>	All relevant information in respect of transnational programme calls in 2014-15 appropriate to NI is disseminated promptly to appropriate contacts within SEUPB, and within departments	<b>DFP</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DFP has issued the relevant information on transnational programmes to SEUPB and departmental contacts. Two calls were made to the 2014/20 Northern Periphery and Arctic programme and funding decisions were made on

				the first call on 10 February. The second call was issued 5 January and closed on 10 April 2015.
<b>R1.9</b>	Identify and develop proposals for collaboration under EU Funding calls within deadlines throughout the year	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>OFMDFM carried out on an ongoing basis through the European Centre, NIERF and Social Liaison Officer in Brussels to identify relevant funding calls. Potential opportunities were disseminated as appropriate.</p> <p>NI health sector participated in approximately 20 H2020 funding bids with other EU regions.</p> <p>DRD has liaised with its counterpart DTTaS in relation to the CEF call in September 2014 for TEN-T projects. DRD has also provided support to an application from Gas Networks Ireland, Phoenix and Firmus in this call.</p> <p>DOJ were represented at the Horizon 2020 Secure Societies Information Day in Brussels. Information was sought on new calls and collaborative opportunities discussed with partners from across Europe.</p> <p>Creative Europe Desk (CED) NI has seen over 560 delegates attend a slate of Creative Europe Information Seminars for the MEDIA and Culture sub-programmes, while facilitating over 50 meetings and fielding over 110 enquiries on the Creative Europe programme. CED NI has supported a number of applications to both sub-programmes and will continue to promote the fund to the creative and cultural sectors.</p> <p>DSD monitored the development of the Innovative Urban Action Fund and facilitated meetings between DG Regio and interested parties (Belfast City Council and Queens University) to discuss potential bids.</p>

				<p>The new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) will support the development of the fishing and seafood sectors up to 2020. The bulk of the funding will go towards supporting Common Fisheries Policy reform and measures to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of the industry. Following DARD's negotiations with our UK colleagues the agreed allocation was €14.55m for EMFF Core Funding, €5.87m for data collection and €3.08m for Control and Enforcement. It is anticipated that the scheme will open for applications in autumn 2015. In the agri-food area, the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute participated in 9 funding bids to Horizon 2020.</p> <p>DETI – through its co funding with DEL of 7 Northern Ireland Horizon 2020 Contact Points, supported over 60% of the 292 Northern Ireland Horizon applications submitted in calls up 30th September 2014. Data for the period after 30 September 2014 will not be available until August 2015.</p> <p>DoE through its NCIP for SC5 identifies and develops proposals for calls under H2020 and other officials participate in LIFE potential projects.</p> <p>DE is represented on the National Evaluation Committee for school projects under Key Action 1 and 2 for the 2015 call. DE is considering how schools and groups of schools could be encouraged and supported in applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016.</p> <p>DE Officials liaise regularly with DFP /SEUPB/DES regarding the most suitable working and funding arrangements for the upcoming Peace IV Programme.</p>
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				<p>In 2014/15 DFP circulated 3 calls for Transnational and Interregional to NI Departments and notified SEUPB to circulate relevant information on calls local to universities and council contacts.</p> <p>DEL supported Colleges NI in facilitating the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Celtic Nations Seminar which took place in Dundalk on 24 and 25 March 2015. Ireland, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales were joined by the Netherlands and partnering opportunities in relation to EU programmes were explored particularly in respect of the Interreg V, Erasmus+ and Life+ programmes.</p>
<b>R2.1</b>	<p>Invest NI will encourage participation in 2 events namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Energy Week 23-27 June ; and</li> <li>• European Week of Regions and Cities (OPEN DAYS) – 6-9 Oct 2014</li> </ul>	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Invest NI supported Professor Neil Hewitt (University of Ulster) to participate as a speaker during Sustainable Energy week. Prof Hewitt referred to NI research excellence in Energy Storage and presented a local industrial success story from AES Kilroot.</p> <p>Prof Hewitt also took part in a panel discussion with EU commission officials (DG RTD and DG ENER) and EU potential partners for EU project development on marine energy.</p> <p>On 9 October in Brussels, Invest NI hosted an Open Days event on the theme of cluster approach and innovative ways towards enhanced regional competitiveness. More than 150 delegates attended the workshop which was organised by Invest NI and 5 other European regions and EC officials. Attendees had the opportunity to share best practice on collaborative networks/cluster development and to explore opportunities for development of longer term strategic partnerships.</p>

<b>R2.2</b>	DOE to encourage participation in local Sustainable Energy Week (23-27 June) events	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DOE Director opened the Smart EcoHub Sustainable Building Conference in Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute at Hillsborough on behalf of the Minister. Other DOE officials visited the Carn Hill wind farm and the electricity System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) during energy week.
<b>R2.3</b>	During 2014-15 DHSSPS and HSC to be represented on all EIP-AHA Action Groups and attend at least 75% of meetings	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	DHSSPS/HSC is represented on 4 of the 5 Action Groups and the majority of meetings have been attended or participated in remotely via video-link etc. Representation on the remaining group remains to be finalised following staff changes within the HSC. In the interim reports and documents from this Group are received and shared across the HSC.
<b>R2.4</b>	By 31 March 2015 to have facilitated the sharing of health strategies, policies and areas of best practice across all EIP-AHA Reference Sites	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	There have been 3 meetings of the EIP Reference Site Collaborative Network over the course of the year. A Yammer Site has been developed for the sharing of information and best practice.
<b>R2.5</b>	Participate in 2 or more EU initiatives/events	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DARD official attended “Improving Food Safety and Labelling in the EU: Smarter Rules for a Sustainable Agri-Food Chain” Conference on 10 September in Brussels.  In September 2014, DARD officials from Climate Change Branch provided the EU Nitrates Committee with a presentation on the Greenhouse Gas Implementation partnership.  DARD Veterinary officials hosted a study visit on slaughter hygiene standards and associated official controls 19 to 21 January by five officials from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) of the European Commission.

<b>R2.6</b>	Organise and attend at least 1 Ministerial visit(s) by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Minister attended the European Environment Ministers Council in Brussels during December 2014 and engaged in further side meetings in the Irish Permanent Representation to the EU as well as meeting with the Scottish Environment Minister.
<b>R2.7</b>	Organise and/or attend at least 2 EU events in NI and/or Brussels by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The NICP for SC5 attended a meeting in Brussels in October 2014 of the NICP Network and ROI National Contact Points for Horizon 2020. She also attended the launch in March 2015 of the new Northern Ireland Horizon 2020 Strategy in the European Commission Office in Belfast.
<b>R2.8</b>	Hold, actively contribute to or facilitate at least 2 policy-focused events in Brussels/Europe to showcase best practice and innovative policy from Northern Ireland, relating to Social Cohesion including DSC and/or Together: Building a United Community, by end March 2015	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>OFMDFM Junior Ministers spoke at the #DeleteCyberbullying conference in the Executive's Office in Brussels in June 2014.</p> <p>Annual Convention of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion - 20-21 November 2014, Brussels. The Director of Equality &amp; Strategy Directorate hosted a side event at the annual conference, highlighting the work being taken forward to tackle poverty and social exclusion under the Delivering Social Change framework.</p> <p>Eurochild Annual Conference - 26-28 November 2014, Bucharest. The Director of Programme for Government and Delivering Social Change Division hosted a side event at the Eurochild Annual Conference 2014 which outlined the work being carried out under the Delivering Social Change framework.</p> <p>DHSSPS established and chairs the EIP-AHA Reference Site Collaborative Network (RSCN). All 32 EIP-AHA Reference Sites are members. Regular meetings are organised to share best</p>



				<p>practice and consider issues such as the scaling up of health and care policies and service delivery models. Over the course of the year meetings were held in Athens (May 2014), Montpellier (October 2014) and Brussels (December 2014). Departmental/HSC officials also spoke at eHealth Week in Athens in May 2014, ESN Conference Vienna in October 2014 (DHSSPS), and the European Summit for Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing in Brussels in March 2015.</p> <p>DEL official spoke at DG EMPLOY event on Social Innovation using ESF in Brussels in May 2014.</p> <p>The Justice Minister facilitated a visit by the European Anti-trafficking Co-ordinator in October 2014. Minister Ford hosted an event that brought together governmental and civil society stakeholders to highlight existing best practice.</p> <p>DOJ actively participated in an e-justice workshop in Brussels in March 2015 to ensure NI views were considered by the Commission.</p> <p>DSD officials participated in and contributed to a DETI led Social Enterprise Study visit to Brussels. Exploring the possibility of having an NI representative on the Social Business Initiative (SBI) Experts Panel.</p> <p>DE is represented at events as and when appropriate and will continue to do so.</p>
<b>R2.9</b>	Identify examples of best practice from Northern Ireland and apply for these to be included on SIP/EPIC Knowledge Platforms (once launched) at least twice before March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	Potential best practice examples currently being identified relevant to EPIC Platform. However, as of the end of the reporting period the SIP platform is still yet to be launched by the EU Commission.

<b>R2.10</b>	Reach at least 250 followers on the Google+ page for the European Centre by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>The Delivering Social Change's Communication team is currently rebranding the European Centre. The online presence for the new Centre will be launched early in the 2015-16 financial year.</p> <p>Despite a number of technical problems the page has had over 40,000 views.</p>
<b>R3.1</b>	Organise and attend at least 4 suitable EU events/study visits/seminars by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	7 events were organised and attended by DOE officials.
<b>R3.2</b>	Engage as a partner in 3 of the ESF EC Learning Networks on Active Inclusion; Transnationality; and Career and Age	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Two of the three Learning Networks which the ESF Managing Authority participates on have concluded their activities. The Age and Career network is currently undertaking a final evaluation of their activities. The Learning Network on Transnationality is compiling a final report which will be sent to the Commission. It is anticipated that this report, if adopted by the Commission, will inform the implementation of Transnationality in the ESF Programme 2014 – 2020.</p> <p>The Network on Active Inclusion is still active but will be holding a final event in June. Report and evaluation will follow thereafter.</p>
<b>R3.3</b>	Include Transnationality as an option within the new ESF Programme	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Complete. The new ESF Operating Programme 2014-2020 contains reference to the benefits of Transnationality and offers support for those wishing to participate. The Managing Authority is awaiting the outcome of the Commission's consideration of the report by the Learning Network on Transnationality before commencing the implementation of Transnationality in the new programme.
<b>R3.4</b>	Maximise twinning opportunities and the development of collaborative partnerships amongst EIP Reference Sites	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Three meetings of the Reference Site Collaborative Network took place throughout the year and a number of H2020 bids were

				progressed involving collaborations between Reference Sites.
<b>R3.5</b>	Develop through the EIP Reference Site Collaborative Network a repository of information across EIP-AHA Reference Sites on health and care strategies, plans, projects and evidence bases	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL NOT BE PURSUED</b>	Work was in progress but no longer being pursued because of alternative action by the European Commission.
<b>R3.6</b>	Agree, where there are shared objectives and priorities, an eHealth MOU with at least 1 other EU Region by end March 2015	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	It was anticipated that an MOU would be agreed with the Republic of Ireland during 2014/15 but this has not proven possible.
<b>R3.7</b>	Attend suitable events/study visits/seminars, as appropriate, by end March 2015	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>OFMDFM and DETI Attended relevant seminars and workshops in Brussels during Open Days, October 2014.</p> <p>OFMDFM Social Liaison Officer regularly attends relevant conferences and events in Brussels and relays reports from these to Thematic Group members.</p> <p>DSD became a member of the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) network and attended 2 CEV conferences / seminars. In addition to networking opportunities afforded by membership the outputs resulting from membership to date have included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment in principle by CEV Secretariat to promote and participate in a major Volunteering Conference in N. Ireland being proposed for autumn 2015;</li> <li>• Exploratory discussions with CEV Board members and Secretariat on the possibility of Belfast/NI submitting a proposal to become the European City of Volunteering;</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal linkages established with Erasmus+ / European Volunteering Service (EVS) delivery agencies which has resulted in direct contact between British Council and key NI Volunteering stakeholders;</li> </ul> <p>NI representation at a number of events including Integrated Care Conference, Brussels, April 2014; EU Marketplace, Brussels, September 2014; EIP-AHA/MACVIA-LR Strategy Workshop on Implementing Respiratory ICP at Scale, Montpellier, October 2014; ESN Conference Vienna, October 2014, European Summit for Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing, Brussels, March 2015.</p> <p>DOJ was represented at various funding and policy events throughout the year, at home, in Brussels and in Ireland, including NIERF, NICP Network, Horizon 2020, Irish Government and MEP events.</p> <p><u>Arts Council CORNERS activity:</u> Partners meeting in Zagreb, September 2014. Artists attended projects and expeditions in Stockholm and Italy in November and December 2014. CORNERS was officially launched in Belfast in March 2015 with a live Skype link up with Intercult in Sweden.</p> <p><u>Creative Europe Desk activity:</u> Arts Council's EU Engagement Officer met with Creative Europe Desk, Dublin &amp; Galway in January 2015. In February 2015, Arts Council's EU Engagement Officer attended an EU-wide Creative Europe Desk in Berlin.</p> <p>DE was represented at the Expert Workshop on</p>
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				<p>Quality Assurance in Education held for the DG Education and Culture in December 2014 and February 2015.</p> <p>DRD attended the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Transport Info Days for the 2014 Call for Proposals in Brussels on 9-10 October 2014.</p>
<b>R3.8</b>	Maximise engagement in Erasmus+ via workshops/study visits and relevant publications by end March 2015 (YCNI)	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>The Youth Council for NI (YCNI) hosted 9 events (4 Erasmus+ Information workshops; 2 Erasmus+ Applications Workshops; 2 Erasmus+ 1-1 Applications Clinics). It also hosted a multinational seminar entitled: <i>Youth Work+ Employability - a European issue and a European perspective</i></p> <p>10 International e-bulletins (plus updates) were produced and published on the YCNI website.</p> <p>Additional publications produced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YCNI Erasmus+ Summary Guide;</li> <li>• YCNI Impact &amp; Policies relevant to Erasmus+;</li> <li>• YCNI Erasmus+ Guide on How to Apply; and</li> <li>• Impact of International Youth Work: A YCNI Perspective.</li> </ul> <p>NI is represented by DE and YCNI at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erasmus+ Youth Sector Consultative Group;</li> <li>• Erasmus+ Northern Ireland Country Advisory Group; and</li> <li>• National Evaluation panel (Youth).</li> </ul>
<b>R3.9</b>	Ensure Priorities For Youth (PFY) policy objectives are reflected in Erasmus+ national priorities	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Department of Education and/or the Youth Council for NI represent the DE policy position,

				<p>particularly in relation to Priorities for Youth, through membership of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erasmus+ Youth Sector Consultative Group;</li> <li>• Erasmus+ Northern Ireland Country Advisory Group; and</li> <li>• National Evaluation panel (Youth).</li> </ul>
<b>R4.1</b>	Participate in (i) 2 meetings/attend 2 events with the EU Commission Office in Belfast and (ii) 2 meetings/events at ONIEB by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>DOE's NICP for SC5 attended the launch of H2020 Strategy and attended a further meeting with an official from EC DG Research &amp; Innovation in the EU Belfast office.</p> <p>The DOE Minister &amp; officials attended the Environment Council in Brussels; he also meet with officials from UKRep and IrishRep, the NICP for SC5 attended a H2020 networking event in Brussels.</p>
<b>R4.2</b>	Establish co-operative arrangements with policy development and implementation oversight officials in relevant Member States, regions and cities	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Work is ongoing through the European Centre to identify relevant officials throughout the EU. This work has been further supplemented by the Social Liaison Officer who, since taking up post in mid September 2014, has been developing relationships and contacts with regional representations in Brussels. A database of contacts in regional offices in Brussels will be completed early in the 2015-16 financial new year.</p> <p>This is being taken forward through the EIP-AHA Reference Site Collaborative Network which DHSSPS established and chairs. Membership consists of the 32 EIP-AHA Reference Sites.</p> <p>Cross-border justice policy groups exist. Officials are discussing how best to explore EU funding opportunities within their policy remit.</p> <p>DE has established co-operative working relations</p>

				with DES officials in relation to language policy / strategy being taken forward in both jurisdictions. Hosted visit from EC Agriculture and Rural Development Commissioner Phil Hogan, including policy engagement with Minister and senior officials and assisted Commission Office in arranging meetings with key stakeholders.
<b>R4.3</b>	Facilitate a visit of the European Commission's Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator to Northern Ireland in 2014	<b>DOJ</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator accepted an invitation to visit the Minister of Justice on 8 October 2014. Minister Ford hosted an event that brought together governmental and civil society stakeholders to highlight existing best practice.
<b>R4.4</b>	Secure formal commitment to maintain the NI Task Force in the new Commission	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	A range of actions have been undertaken on this matter throughout the reporting period. At a meeting between the Regional Policy Commissioner and Junior Ministers in March 2015, the Commissioner stated that it was 97% certain that this commitment would be confirmed by President Juncker.

### Additional Priorities for the ECONOMY thematic group

R5	Ensure the Executive's position is fed into EU policies and funding arrangements for agri-food and rural development; including Common Agricultural Policy, Rural Development Programme, animal and plant health, food labelling and promotion and EU dairy policy. <b>(DARD)</b>	R6	Provide and operate an integrated and sustainable transport network through the use of Trans European Networks-Transport (TEN-T) consolidated by EU funds. <b>(DRD)</b>	R7	Fulfil delegated Competent Authority roles in respect of obligations under the EU Trans European Networks - Energy (TEN-E) infrastructure Regulation for energy projects accepted as Projects of Common Interest (PCIs). <b>(DETI, DOE)</b>	R8	Implement the European Employment Services (EURES) reform programme in conjunction with the European Commission and the Department for Work and Pensions. <b>(DEL)</b>	R9	Enhance the skills profile of Northern Ireland's current and future workforce through EU placements. <b>(DEL/DE)</b>
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### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
R5.1	Announce NI decisions on CAP reform by 1 August 2014	DARD	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Decisions on the implementation of CAP Reform were announced on 14 March 2014, 9 April 2014, 15 May 2014, 26 June 2014 and 11 July 2014. They were notified to the EU Commission by 1 August 2014.
R5.2	Commission agreement to the Competitiveness strand of the NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) by March 2015	DARD	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	RDP 2014-2020 was submitted to the Commission for approval on 14 October 2014. The Commission was required to respond within three months of submission. The Commission observation letter on the programme was received on 31 March which was two and half months late. DARD is now working with the Commission to make the necessary amendments to the competitiveness strand of the RDP with approval of the Programme expected in September 2015.
R5.3	To agree a new Nitrates Action Programme 2015-18 for Northern Ireland with DG Environment	DOE/ DARD	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Commission agreement of our next Action Programme for 2015-2018 has been secured. The Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (NI)



				2014 were made on 11 December 2014 and came into operation on 1 January 2015. The Regulations implement the Action Programme for 2015-2018.
<b>R6.1</b>	Ratio of applications to calls is no less than 1:2	<b>DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The CEF call opened in September 2014 and DRD submitted 4 applications for funding.
<b>R6.2</b>	Ratio of successful drawdown to applications no less than 1:3	<b>DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DRD received formal notification in September 2014 it was successful in securing TEN-T funding for the study costs associated with developing a multi-modal transport hub at Great Victoria Street.
<b>R7.1</b>	Co-ordinate handling of NI PCI applications within required timescales/milestones as set out in the UK Manual of Procedures (MoP)	<b>DETI/DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Task complete. In June 2014, DETI, in co-operation with DOE, formally accepted the Competent Authority role in relation to the PCI process for energy projects in NI.
<b>R7.2</b>	Provide and seek responses from developer and other consenting bodies within required timescales/ milestones as set out in the UK Manual of Procedures (MoP)	<b>DETI/DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DETI has worked with DECC and DOE to produce a UK Manual of Procedures to assist PCI developers and this was published on the Department's web-site in June 2014. DETI has liaised with DECC, the Utility Regulator and PCI developers over summer 2014 to assist them with meeting the 18 August 2014 target date for EU Connecting Europe funding submissions. DETI continues to engage with DECC, the Utility Regulator and developers seeking to have their energy projects included in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> PCI list being compiled by the European Commission.
<b>R8.1</b>	To agree and implement funding model for reformed EURES by 1st January 2015	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The reformed EURES and funding model has been implemented by the Department for Employment and Learning from 1 January 2015.
<b>R8.2</b>	To agree with EURES UK, the model for the National Co-ordination Office for reporting on the reformed EURES Services by 1 January 2015	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Department for Work and Pensions has been approved as the National Co-ordination office for EURES UK. In NI DEL EURES has been approved as a partner organisation and a system of reporting and management has been

				implemented from 1 January 2015.
<b>R9.1</b>	Outline a programme for apprentices by March 2015	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>The new apprenticeship strategy, Securing our Success, launched in June 2014, and outlines a new apprenticeship model to be implemented by 2016. The strategy outlines the importance of the broader recognition of awards/qualifications within a wider European qualification framework and a need to provide international placements/exchanges to facilitate professional and personal development. Projects have been established to drive the implementation of the strategy forward, including new partnership arrangements in developing new awards/qualifications and in exploring opportunities to secure bilateral agreements for placements/exchanges with other jurisdictions.</p> <p>An interim Strategic Advisory Forum, comprised of employers, government, trade unions and providers of off-the-job training, has been established to provide oversight of the new apprenticeship model, as articulated in the NI Strategy on Apprenticeships. To ensure different sectors' needs are met, new sectoral partnerships are being piloted. At this point, three have been established in the ICT, engineering and advanced manufacturing, and agri-food sectors, with three others covering construction, life sciences, utilities engineering and accounting under consideration. These new partnership arrangements will consider the European dimension in developing new apprenticeship awards/qualifications and in exploring opportunities to secure international placements/exchanges with other jurisdictions.</p>
<b>R9.2</b>	Increase student inward mobility study placements by 7% within Higher Education	<b>DEL</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	As the academic year is not yet over final confirmed figures are not yet available. However, the HEIs and FECs have provided estimates. It is

				estimated that 558 students came to NI on Erasmus mobility study placements. At this stage this is down 7.7% on last year's figure of 605 and it is unlikely that the target will be met.
<b>R9.3</b>	Increase staff inward mobility by 7% within Higher Education	<b>DEL</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL NOT BE PURSUED</b>	Staff inward mobility figures for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are not yet available so we cannot report the % change at present. The British Council will not have the 2013/14 incoming figures until a few months after the Erasmus Final Report is completed. As a result the 2013/14 incoming numbers (taken as a result of the outgoing Final Reports of other National Agencies) will not be known to us until later this summer and 2014/15 figures won't be known until the following year.
<b>R9.4</b>	Increase student outward mobility by 5% within Higher Education	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	There were 493 Erasmus student outward mobility placements in 2013/14. Provisional figures obtained from the British Council indicate that there has been 596 student Erasmus outward mobility placements in 2014/15. This is an increase of 103 (20.9%).
<b>R9.5</b>	Increase staff outward mobility by 5% within Higher Education	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	There were 40 staff outward mobility placements in 2013/14. Provisional figures obtained from the British Council indicate that there have been 110 staff outward mobility placements in 2014/15. This is an increase of 70 (175%).
<b>R9.6</b>	Increased levels of school take up of Erasmus+ funding	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The British Council carried out promotional work throughout 2014/15 with schools using information workshops. DE informed all schools of deadlines for applications for 2015 Erasmus+ funding through C2K and encouraged schools who wrote to the Department seeking information on defunded programmes to consider applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016. DE is represented on the National Evaluation Committee for school projects under Key Action 1 and 2 for the 2015

				call. DE is considering how schools and groups of schools could be encouraged and supported in applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016.
<b>R9.7</b>	Contribute, through the Council for the Curriculum and Assessment (CCEA) to European Qualifications Framework (EQF) implementation activities	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	CCEA attended the EQF Advisory Group meetings in Brussels on 4-6 June 2014, 1-2 October 2014 and 3-4 February 2015. CCEA also led on the preparation of the UK's bid for funding for EQF implementation activities in 2015 which will include activities to raise awareness of the EQF among key stakeholders. The bid was submitted to the European Commission on 15 December 2014. Key stakeholders in NI have also been kept abreast of progress on implementing the EQF and the other EU Vocational Education and Training (VET) initiatives through updates provided at the NI EU Co-ordination Group for VET which met in June 2014, November 2014 and March 2015.
<b>R9.8</b>	Provide information and support through CCEA to users and potential users of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Throughout the reporting period, CCEA has met with mobility practitioners across NI to provide advice and guidance on incorporating ECVET principles and tools into their mobility projects. CCEA also attended UK ECVET Experts' training sessions in September 2014 and December 2014 which will enhance the support and guidance that they provide.
<b>R9.9</b>	Contribute, through CCEA, to the ongoing development of the European taxonomy of skills/competences, qualifications and occupations (ESCO)	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Throughout the reporting period, CCEA has continued to contribute to the development of ESCO through its attendance and active participation at the UK ESCO Maintenance Committee meetings.



**Additional Priorities for the ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE thematic group**

R10 Support for Third Party organisations participating in competitive EU projects relating to Environment and Climate Change. <b>(DOE)</b>	R11 Input to the UK's contribution to the 2030 Policy Framework for Climate and Energy (effectively the NI 40% renewables target). <b>(DETI)</b>	R12 Ensure NI position within an all-island energy market is fed into any UK position on relevant EU climate change and energy policy. <b>(DETI)</b>	R13 Contribute to UK transposition and implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive. <b>(DETI)</b>	R14 Establish an appropriate resource to specifically target drawdown from Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 funding stream. <b>(DOE)</b>	R15 Ensure the Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 proposals address the key EU priorities including: (i) Ecosystems and (ii) Resource Efficiency. <b>(DARD)</b>
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Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
R10.1	Dissemination of information on current funding calls and partners searches to stakeholders within 5 working days from date of receipt	DOE	ACHIEVED	DOE has achieved 100% success rate in terms of dissemination of information on current funding calls and partner searches within 5 working days of receipt.
R10.2	By 31 March 2015 provide advice and support to at least 4 Third Party organisations on EU funding calls	DOE	ACHIEVED	DOE advice and support provided to 4 LIFE/LIFEIP and 3 potential H2020 projects.
R11.1	20% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2015	DETI	ACHIEVED	12 month rolling average to end December 2014 is 19%. The next set of data produced will cover the six month period to June 2015 and will be published around September 2015.  <a href="http://www.detini.gov.uk/index/what-we-do/deti-stats-index/energy_statistics.htm">http://www.detini.gov.uk/index/what-we-do/deti-stats-index/energy_statistics.htm</a>
R12.1	Commence consultation on draft Contracts for Difference (CfD) contracts and Renewable Obligation Closure Order by March 2015	DETI	ACHIEVED	Two Contracts for Difference (CfD) papers and a NI Renewables Obligation consultation issued March 2015.

<b>R13.1</b>	Complete transposition of Article 14 (10) by end of 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Secondary legislation came into operation on 10 December 2014.
<b>R14.1</b>	Establish a resource to specifically target drawdown from Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 funding stream by November 2014	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DOE appointed a NICP for SC5 in October 2014.
<b>R15.1</b>	Achieve approval of the NIRDP by 31 March 2015	<b>DARD</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	RDP 2014-2020 was submitted to the Commission for approval on 14 October 2014. The Commission was required to respond within three months of submission. The Commission observation letter on the programme was received on 31 March which was two and half months late. DARD is now working with the Commission to make the necessary amendments to the RDP with approval of the Programme expected in September 2015.

#### Additional Priorities for the SOCIAL thematic group

R16 Provide support within Health and Social Care (HSC) Research and Development EU support fund to encourage participation of HSC researchers in funding applications. <b>(DHSSPS)</b>	R17 Promote suitable funding opportunities through ERASMUS+ funds, particularly under the Youth Chapter. <b>(DEL/DE)</b>	R18 Seek suitable funding opportunities through Creative Europe funds. <b>(DCAL)</b>	R19 Seek suitable funding opportunities through Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) funds. <b>(DEL/OFMDFM)</b>
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#### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
<b>R16.1</b>	Make available up to 10 EU support fund awards to HSC researchers for participation in H2020 proposals by end March 2015	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	A total of five EU Project Planning Grants were awarded in 2014/15.

<b>R17.1</b>	Increased levels of school take up of ERASMUS+ funding	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The British Council carried out promotional work throughout 2014/15 with schools using information workshops. DE informed all schools of deadlines for applications for 2015 Erasmus+ funding through C2K and encouraged schools who wrote to the Department seeking information on defunded programmes to consider applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016. DE is represented on the National Evaluation Committee for school projects under Key Action 1 and 2 for the 2015 call. DE is considering how schools and groups of schools could be encouraged and supported in applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016.
<b>R17.2</b>	Sustain levels of youth applications for Erasmus+ funding throughout the year	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	For Erasmus+ Youth Chapter:  Applications received = 55 (11% of UK total); Applications approved = 27 (11% of UK total); Total grant value = €897,222 (9% of UK total). Figures represent 2014 programme year.
<b>R18.1</b>	Target voluntary groups who are in receipt of DEL or ESF supported funding sending information to them on appropriate calls within 3 working days of receipt and updating them at least 3 times a year on developments within the Erasmus+ programme	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Information on relevant funding calls has been disseminated to voluntary groups. An information pamphlet on the new Erasmus+ programme has been issued along with details on briefing events and instructions on how to sign up to Erasmus+ UK newsletter. An internal seminar on Erasmus+ took place on 22 January to equip DEL staff with appropriate knowledge of the programme so that they are now in a position to advise their customers of opportunities available.
<b>R19.1</b>	Establish a dedicated resource to help develop the capacity of organisations in the arts and culture sectors to engage with competitive EU funding streams, including making applications for funding by December 2014	<b>DCAL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Ongoing, recruitment process for a substantive EU officer with responsibility for the Creative Europe Desk is underway. An interim officer is carrying out the duties until the substantive resource is in place.



				<p>In terms of encouraging engagement with the EU amongst the arts and culture sector, there was a Creative Europe Desk presence at the All Ireland Creative Industries conference on 14 May 2014 which stimulated interest in the funding stream amongst the sector and the Arts Council has had a number of follow up queries. On 9 June 2014 the Arts Council attended the launch of the Creative Europe Desk in Ireland in Dublin. This has led to the development of relationships with the ROI and the Arts Council has since been working on a potential collaborative project under the funding stream.</p> <p>The NIERF invited the Arts Council to give a presentation on Creative Europe on 26 June 2014. This was a useful promotional opportunity and facilitated new contacts for the Arts Council particularly with the audio-visual sector.</p> <p>On 27 August 2014, the Creative Europe Desk NI and the Creative Europe Desk Ireland in co-operation with NIERF, hosted a free information seminar and application workshop in Belfast City Hall. The event provided technical assistance, practical advice and networking opportunities for arts and cultural organisations that are developing and planning applications for the Co-operation projects strand of Creative Europe. Over 90 delegates attended and 2 organisations registered for a one to one meeting which is intended for organisations at a relatively advanced stage in the development of a funding application.</p> <p>The following Creative Europe desk activity to promote the programme and encourage funding applications has taken place since November 2014:</p>
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				<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
				13-Nov-14	DCAL EU session for ALBs	Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast
				25-Nov-14	Informal reception for BFI, British Council, ACNI, NI Screen, CED Ireland, CED UK, CED NI	ACNI, Belfast
				26-Nov-14	Creative Europe MEDIA Info Session	The MAC, Belfast
				04-Dec-14	Creative Europe MEDIA Info Session	Millennium Forum, Derry
				12-Dec-14	Official CED NI Launch	QFT, Belfast
				25-Feb-15	Audiences NI Annual Conference	Strand Arts Centre, Belfast
				04-Mar-15	MEDIA Information Seminar (Development/TV)	Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast
				05-Mar-15	MEDIA Information Seminar (Development/TV)	The Playhouse, Derry
				13-Mar-15	Culture Information Seminar	The MAC, Belfast
				14-Mar-15	Culture Information Seminar	Millennium Forum, Derry
				19-Mar-15	Games Development webinar	ACNI, Belfast
				31-Mar-15	Creative Europe	ACNI, Belfast

				<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Information Seminar</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>14-Apr-15</td> <td>Creative Europe Information Seminar</td> <td>ACNI, Belfast</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16-Apr-15</td> <td>Creative Europe presentation to CAL Committee</td> <td>Stormont</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21-Apr-15</td> <td>Creative Europe Information Seminar</td> <td>Derry City Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22-Apr-15</td> <td>Creative Europe Information Seminar</td> <td>ACNI, Belfast</td> </tr> </table>		Information Seminar		14-Apr-15	Creative Europe Information Seminar	ACNI, Belfast	16-Apr-15	Creative Europe presentation to CAL Committee	Stormont	21-Apr-15	Creative Europe Information Seminar	Derry City Council	22-Apr-15	Creative Europe Information Seminar	ACNI, Belfast
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<b>R19.2</b>	Ensure regular monitoring of developments under the PROGRESS axis of EaSI and report on potential opportunities available, as relevant to the social group, within 3 working days (Social Liaison Officer)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	This work was undertaken by the Social Liaison Officer on taking up post in mid September 2014. Calls for 2014 were circulated. The EU Commissions EaSI work plan for 2015 was still to be released as of end of March 2015.															
<b>R19.3</b>	Make people aware of funding opportunities under EaSI programme within 3 working days of receipt	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	No funding opportunities have been identified to circulate. We continue to liaise with our colleagues in the EU Commission and ONIEB on the progress of this programme.															

## CUSTOMERS

### EUROPEAN PRIORITIES WITHIN THE CUSTOMERS QUADRANT

#### OVERARCHING Priorities which apply to ALL thematic groups

<b>C1</b> Provide timely and accurate advice to Ministers and the Assembly on European policy and funding programmes.	<b>C2</b> Maximise the good relationships that already exist with the other Devolved Administrations and Ireland, to further our European policy objectives, funding opportunities and influence.	<b>C3</b> Engage purposefully with the region's European Representatives in the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and European Economic and Social Committee.	<b>C4</b> Promote increased participation of civil society in competitive EU funding opportunities.
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Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
<b>C1.1</b>	To provide updates to the Minister and relevant Committees from E&CC Liaison Officer on a quarterly basis	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	E&CC Liaison Officer and departmental officials briefed the Environment Committee in January 2015. In addition updates provided on a quarterly basis via the ONIEB Directors Report.
<b>C1.2</b>	Provide Departmental Committee with a summary of all EU proposals impacting the Department twice yearly	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Departments engaged with their relevant Assembly Committee's a total of 62 times during the course of the year.
<b>C1.3</b>	Relevant officials to attend BTWG meetings as appropriate, and actions taken promptly as required	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Officials from all departments attended all BTWG meetings throughout the year and have taken the necessary action to ensure an effective approach to European engagement on behalf of the Executive.
<b>C2.1</b>	During 2014-15, explore options for increased engagement with the UK SME envoy, including scope for a NI stakeholder engagement event	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DETI now has regular telecalls with UK SME envoy and other Devolved Administrations to contribute to EU SME envoy network and to share best practice. Roundtable event between UK SME envoy and NI policy makers and SME representative bodies held in Belfast on 10

				November 2014.
<b>C2.2</b>	Liaise with the national agencies for the Erasmus+ programme in the Republic of Ireland to share best practice and gain an insight into differing methods of promotion	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	To date meetings have taken place with HEA and Leargas and the British Council. A DEL official attended the National Agency's learning network and annual conference in November.
<b>C2.3</b>	DOE to attend relevant North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and British Irish Council meetings by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DOE Director attended 2 NSMC meetings between April 2015 and March 2015.
<b>C2.4</b>	Meet on a quarterly basis with representatives from each of the Devolved Administrations and Irish Regional Office to discuss policy development under the social theme (Social Liaison Officer)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Since taking up post in mid September 2014 the Social Liaison Officer meets regularly with counterparts from UK and Irish Permanent Representations and the Devolved Administrations to network, develop relationships and to discuss social policy and competitive funding developments.
<b>C3.1</b>	Initiate at least 1 meeting with relevant Task Force members	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>DETI &amp; Invest NI met with Miek Van Der Wee (DG Competition Task Force member) on 17 September to discuss the changes in the Regional Aid Guidelines from 2014-20 period.</p> <p>DETI has also met with Agnes Lindemanns and Stephen Langley (DG Regio Task Force members).</p> <p>Task Force members were also helpful to DETI (and ONIEB) in organising a work programme of meetings (22-24 September) for the Permanent Secretary with senior representatives of DG COMP, DG Enterprise, DG Connect, DG Regio, DG Research, innovation &amp; Science. The DHSSPS Permanent Secretary also participated in this visit programme.</p> <p>DOJ official met DG Justice Task Force member</p>

				<p>in Brussels in March 2015, to discuss DOJ priorities and justice related European funding.</p> <p>DOE Minister and senior officials met with Commission officials from DG Clima and DG Envi.</p> <p>Previous DSD Minister met with DG Regio member just prior to this reporting period. Follow-up meetings have been between DG Regio and DSD Officials.</p> <p>DE officials have not as yet had the opportunity to meet with the relevant Task Force members. DE officials will meet with Task Force members by the end of 2015-16.</p> <p>Joao Ferreira (DG MOVE) attended DRD's Brussels Business Week in September where he was a guest speaker.</p> <p>DRD officials met with Joao Ferreira (DG MOVE) when he visited Ireland in December 2014.</p> <p>DRD continues to engage positively with representatives from DG Move and the Innovation Networks Executive Agency (INEA) on transport related matters.</p> <p>DEL officials met with the DG EMPLOY Task Force member in Brussels in November 2014 and with the DG EAC Task Force member in Brussels in February 2015.</p> <p>DARD officials held a number of meetings/video-conferences with DG AGRI's taskforce member to negotiate the Rural Development Programme.</p> <p>In November 2014, HOCS and the Director-General of DG REGIO launched the Commission's</p>
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				<p>Task Force report for the period 2007-2013 in ONIEB. All members of the Task Force were invited.</p> <p>Regular and informal contact continues in Brussels between the Chair of the Task Force, Head of Office and policy officials as required.</p>
<b>C3.2</b>	Ensure all Explanatory Memorandums are issued to leads within 2 working days	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DEL continues to ensure that all Explanatory Memorandums, where appropriate, are issued to leads within 2 working days.
<b>C3.3</b>	Attendance at 2 or more meetings with MEPs, DGs, AGRIFISH Council, Expert Group etc	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	First Day Brief provided to NI MEPs in July 2014. DARD Minister in Brussels for AGRIFISH Council in September and December 2014. Ongoing official representations and presentations by staff from the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute at various EU, Council and Committee meetings.
<b>C3.4</b>	Regular engagement with Defra, FSA and DAFM on emerging EU policy and legislation issues	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Engagement with Defra, FSA and DAFM on beef sectoral issues, and Country of Origin Labelling, and with Defra on EU response to Russian trade ban and dairy issues, including school milk.
<b>C3.5</b>	Retain full-time Agriculture Policy Officer post in Brussels Office	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The new Agriculture Policy Officer took up post in Brussels on 2 March 2015.
<b>C3.6</b>	Support UK delegation at EU Third Country Trade Negotiations Groups	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DARD technical veterinary support provided to the UK Export Certification Partnership during EU Trade Negotiations. Main focus being on renegotiations of conditions to export pork to Korea ensuring barriers to trade are not introduced.
<b>C3.7</b>	Inform and provide guidance to trade bodies and stakeholders in ICT, Health and Security sectors in NI about the Pre-commercial Procurement opportunities in	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Invest NI attended 2 international events with an EU innovative procurement theme:

	the Horizon 2020 current two-year Work Programme			<p>1. iHealth Conference – Santiago de Compostela,</p> <p>2. Bridging the Innovation Gap by Innovation Procurement, Brussels,</p> <p>Both events were useful in creating linkages to other EU regions considering applications to H2020 PCP/PPI calls particularly in the field of Connected Health.</p> <p>These links have been disseminated to colleagues in the HSC Board (NI), DHSSPS NI and through the H2020 NI Contact Point for Connected Health.</p> <p>Invest NI continues to work, along with DHSSPS colleagues to promote applications for the relevant calls under the H2020 “Health Demographics, Change and Well-Being” pillar.</p>
<b>C3.8</b>	To complete a scoping study of DEL international activities by March 2015	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The scoping study has been completed.
<b>C3.9</b>	Formally engage at least 6 times with Member State representatives/organisations annually	<b>DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Formal engagements have taken place with DfT, DFP and DTTaS in relation to CEF applications, Corridor Workplans and the INTERREG V programme.
<b>C3.10</b>	Production of Strategic EU Projects Register	<b>DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	A register identifying potential EU Projects, and applications made for funding, has been developed and is maintained by the Department.
<b>C3.11</b>	DOE to attend quarterly meetings of EU Steering Group chaired by DFP.	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	All meetings attended.
<b>C3.12</b>	Through the NIERF, host an event to incorporate elected Members of European Parliament and other key EU bodies by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	On 28 November 2014 a NIERF Plenary with the title: “NI EU Representation: Who, What and Why?” was held in Malone House Belfast. The Plenary was opened by Junior Ministers and included all three NI MEPs as well as Mike Smyth,



				NI Representative on the European Economic and Social Committee and Colette Fitzgerald Head of the EU Commission Office in Belfast and representation from ONIEB.
<b>C3.13</b>	Deliver brief on dossiers of NI interest covering significant issues of importance to relevant parties, updated twice per year	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Dossier issued June 2014 and January 2015. Received by NI MEP's and other relevant parties.
<b>C4.1</b>	FE Colleges are actively engaged in all EU programmes available to them by December 2014	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>All colleges submitted bids to the 2014 call for Erasmus+ applications. In addition, 4 of the 6 colleges submitted applications under the 2014 additional key action 1 (mobility) call which were all successful. Funding for these projects will be available from 1 January 2015.</p> <p>Under the Colleges NI EU project, 3 training workshops were organised in November and December for colleges to provide support and assistance for their applications under Erasmus key action 2 and Interreg V.</p> <p>On 24 and 25 March 2015 the Celtic Nations Conference was held in the Crown Plaza Hotel, Dundalk. This was funded through the Colleges NI EU project and was aimed at promoting partnerships and identifying opportunities between NI, Scotland, Wales and the Netherlands for future collaboration across key EU programmes.</p> <p>An official from Colleges NI has joined the UK ECVET Experts Steering Group to represent the 6 colleges.</p>
<b>C4.2</b>	Primary and post-primary schools to be advised of opportunities in line with British Council promotion of ERASMUS+ by December 2014	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The British Council carried out promotional work throughout 2014/15 with schools using information workshops. DE informed all schools of deadlines for applications for 2015 Erasmus+ funding through C2K and encouraged schools who wrote

				to the Department seeking information on defunded programmes to consider applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016. To date 15 schools here have been successful in applications for Erasmus+ funding (from the 2014 call).
<b>C4.3</b>	At least 6 funding bids submitted in health & social care by March 2015	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	In the region of 20 H2020 funding bids were submitted by the health sector during 2014/15.
<b>C4.4</b>	Organise at least 20 Horizon 2020 workshops by December 2014	<b>DETI/DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	23 events organised since 1 April 2014.
<b>C4.5</b>	Administer joint DEL/DETI HE EU Support Fund to support NICP network and related activities	<b>DETI/DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DEL continues to administer the programme on behalf of both Departments and the Northern Ireland Contact Point network it supports is fully in place.
<b>C4.6</b>	Organise a North/South Horizon 2020 conference under the 'Collaborate to Innovate' brand by end December 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Conference held in Dublin on 3 December. Over 300 delegates attended.
<b>C4.7</b>	Deliver targeted capacity development activities to make a significant impact on the success of potential Horizon 2020 applicants in the NI agri-food sector	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	A range of capacity development activities has been developed and is being delivered. This includes the introduction of a peer-support/mentoring programme, piloting regular 'clinics' at research centres, providing one-to-one support to applicants, facilitating cross-disciplinary meetings and holding brokerage events. Demand led proposal development workshops are also being developed and discussion with applicants is informing the development of further support activities. At EU-level, the DARD-funded NICP (Agri-food) has been developing linkages with the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN) and European Regions for Innovation in Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ERIAFF) network. These linkages and collaborations are serving as an important

				framework on which Horizon 2020 proposals can be developed. This activity has led to the involvement of local SMEs and researchers from the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute and QUB in the ERRIN brokerage event that was held in Brussels in November 2014. Through these linkages, local researchers have been invited to join consortia that submitted bids in the early rounds of Horizon 2020 and important intelligence has been shared. The Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute submitted 9 bids to H2020 and has received letters of offer for the “AquaSpace” and “PIGRISK” projects.
<b>C4.8</b>	By 31 March 2015 DOE to disseminate information on current funding calls within 5 working days of receipt.	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Dissemination of information on current funding calls within 5 working days of receipt.
<b>C4.9</b>	DOE to disseminate partners searches to relevant stakeholders within 5 working days of receipt.	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Dissemination of information on partner searches to relevant stakeholders within 5 working days of receipt.
<b>C4.10</b>	Through the NIERF, host or provide support to at least 1 event each quarter to provide members with advice and guidance in relation to Competitive EU Funds by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>NIERF hosted/supported 9 events throughout the year each providing advice and guidance in relation to Competitive EU Funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 May - Erasmus+ Master Class;</li> <li>• 27 May - How to access European Funding for R&amp;D and Innovation seminar run by InvestNI in co-operation with NIERF;</li> <li>• 26 June - Plenary which included presentations on Erasmus+ Youth Chapter and Creative Europe;</li> <li>• 27 August - Creative Europe Event;</li> <li>• 16 September – RESTART2 event – this was a dissemination event for a project funded by one of the precursors to Erasmus+. As an example of best practice it offered an</li> </ul>

				<p>opportunity for Members to learn about both the possibilities under the new programme as well as the lessons learned;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 October and 16 October - Supported Youth Council NI delivering Erasmus+ Youth Chapter information Sessions;</li> <li>• 28 November - NIERF Plenary "NI EU Representation: Who, What and Why?"; and</li> <li>• 3 March - NIERF Master Class on Support for SMEs.</li> </ul>
<b>C4.11</b>	Issue EU funding newsletter to Justice Network twice yearly	<b>DOJ</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Two EU funding newsletters issued to the Justice Network.
<b>C4.12</b>	Organise an information event (youth and/or Erasmus+ focused) by end March 2015	<b>DSD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Advised that a number of events had been scheduled by the YCNI. Disseminated information on these to third parties.
<b>C4.13</b>	Invite 5 more organisations to join Justice Network	<b>DOJ</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Seven new organisations have joined the Justice Network.
<b>C4.14</b>	Increased levels of school take up of ERASMUS+ funding	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The British Council carried out promotional work throughout 2014/15 with schools using information workshops. DE informed all schools of deadlines for applications for 2015 Erasmus+ funding through C2K and encouraged schools who wrote to the Department seeking information on defunded programmes to consider applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016. DE is represented on the National Evaluation Committee for school projects under Key Action 1 and 2 for the 2015 call. DE is considering how schools and groups of schools could be encouraged and supported in applying for Erasmus+ funding in 2016.
<b>C4.15</b>	Sustain levels of youth applications for Erasmus+ funding	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	For Erasmus+ Youth Chapter:

				Applications received = 55 (11% of UK total); Applications approved = 27 (11% of UK total); Total grant value = €897,222 (9% of UK total). Figures represent 2014 programme year.
<b>C4.16</b>	Organise 5 region wide Erasmus+ focused events for the youth sector by end March 2015 (YCNI)	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Youth Council for NI (YCNI) hosted 9 events (4 Erasmus+ Information workshops; 2 Erasmus+ Applications Workshops; 2 Erasmus+ Applications 1-1 Clinics). It also hosted a multinational seminar entitled: 'Youth Work+ Employability - a European issue and a European perspective'.
<b>C4.17</b>	Produce 6 international e-bulletins for youth sector by end March 2015 (YCNI)	<b>DE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	10 international e-bulletins (plus updates) were produced and published on the YCNI website.  Additional publications produced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YCNI Erasmus+ Summary Guide;</li> <li>• YCNI Impact &amp; Policies relevant to Erasmus+;</li> <li>• YCNI Erasmus+ Guide on How to Apply; and</li> <li>• Impact of International Youth Work: A YCNI Perspective.</li> </ul>

**Additional Priorities for the ECONOMY thematic group**

C5	Raise awareness of revised State Aid rules (for 2014–20) to stakeholders and customers in conjunction with Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Directorate General (DG) Competition. <b>(DETI)</b>
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**Targets**

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
C5.1	1 awareness event to NICS Customers to be held in 2014-15 which includes at least 1 representative from DG Competition	DETI	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	State Aid awareness seminar held on 16 September at Titanic Belfast. There were 130 delegates, 80 of whom were from the private sector, Invest NI, Intertradelreland, SEUPB, NITB and all 26 Councils.

**Additional Priorities for the ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE thematic group**

C6	Work with appropriate stakeholders to build knowledge and capacity to participate in EU competitive programmes. (DOE)	C7	Proactively engage with stakeholders to provide relevant support to encourage engagement with the European Union. (DOE)
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**Targets**

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
C6.1	To host and attend at least 10 workshops by 31 March 2015 to develop customer knowledge and capacity to participate in competitive EU programmes	DOE	ACHIEVED	20 workshops hosted or attended by 31 March 2015.
C7.1	To maintain and enhance the DOE's database of key stakeholders and interested parties by 10% to 330 by 31 March 2015	DOE	ACHIEVED	Network of contacts currently stands at 360.

### Additional Priorities for the SOCIAL thematic group

C8 Publicise the new European Social Fund (ESF) Programme 2014-20 to as wide an audience as possible throughout Northern Ireland. (DEL)	C9 Proactively engage with stakeholders to encourage them to consider suitable opportunities under: the European Social Fund (ESF); European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (including Peace IV and Interreg); and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). (All Departments in Social Group)	C10 Promote and widen the involvement of Third Parties in competitive EU funding via the Northern Ireland European Regional Forum (NIERF). (OFMDFM)
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### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
C8.1	Through road-shows, publicise the new ESF programme in all 11 new Council areas during October and November 2014	DEL	ACHIEVED	Road shows for the new ESF Programme took place as planned.
C9.1	Disseminate relevant information to stakeholders via NIERF to inform of potential opportunities available through relevant structural funds	OFMDFM	ACHIEVED	<p>The NIERF Secretariat has circulated partner searches as well as information on the various information workshops and consultation events relating to the new round of structural funds. This is ongoing, as information becomes available.</p> <p>NIERF has also played a role in advertising DEL's ESF Roadshow to members as well as information relating to PEACE IV and INTERREG programmes on behalf of SEUPB.</p>
C9.2	Regular liaison with DFP European Division and Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB)	ALL DEPTS	ACHIEVED	<p>OFMDFM officials liaise regularly with DFP and SEUPB on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>DHSSPS has been liaising with SEUPB on Interreg VA Operating Plan.</p> <p>DOJ are represented on the European Union Steering Group.</p> <p>DE Officials liaise regularly with DFP and SEUPB regarding Peace IV funding.</p>



				<p>DSD held meetings with DFP on a regular basis. Attend PEACE III Steering Committee, Programme Monitoring Committee and Accountable Department meetings on a regular basis.</p> <p>DoE liaise and met regularly with DFP &amp; SEUPB in respect of European funding programmes, mainly INTERREG V.</p> <p>DCAL discusses the potential for EU structural funds at North South Ministerial Council meetings. This is a standing agenda item and three meetings were held in 2015.</p> <p>DRD liaised with DFP EUD and SEUPB and successfully negotiated the inclusion of a Sustainable Transport Thematic Objective in the INTERREG V Programme.</p> <p>DRD has attended EUSG meetings hosted by DFP EUD during the period.</p> <p>DRD is the Accountable Department for the Enterprise Refurbishment Project funded under INTERREG IV and has met with SEUPB on a regular basis during the period.</p>
<b>C10.1</b>	In association with Belfast City Council, increase membership of NIERF to 120 by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Total number of members and those awaiting formal approval is 150.</p> <p>The Forum no longer makes a distinction between members and non-members in terms of dissemination of information, attendance at events or provision of advice and guidance. As a result there has been less of a focus on registering organisations as 'members'.</p>

<b>C10.2</b>	Share and promote the work of the NIERF and its member organisations via the European Centre Google+ page on a monthly basis	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Google+ page has been used to advertise and promote some of NIERF's activities throughout the year, however the page is currently being redeveloped and will re-launch early in the 2015-16 financial year.
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## **BUSINESS PROCESSES**

### **EUROPEAN PRIORITIES WITHIN THE BUSINESS PROCESSES QUADRANT**

#### **OVERARCHING Priorities which apply to ALL thematic groups**

<b>BP1</b> Influence Whitehall policy formulation on European matters.	<b>BP2</b> Monitor competitive EU funding applications and the development of strategic alliances.	<b>BP3</b> Increase the use of seminars, conferences and workshops as key tools in disseminating knowledge, skills and best practice.	<b>BP4</b> Achieve the targets in the Executive's 2014-15 European Priorities Implementation Plan.
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<b>Target No.</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Lead Dept.</b>	<b>RAG Rating</b>	<b>Explanation for assigned RAG Rating</b>
<b>BP1.1</b>	Input to UK position on EU proposals in relation to State Aid Modernisation and European Structural Funds	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>During Q1 and Q2, DETI has provided NI input to the UK position on the EC's revised General Block Exemption Regulation, de minimis regulation, the Risk Capital Guidelines and the Rescue and Restructuring Guidelines for the 2014-20 period.</p> <p>DETI has also contributed to the Competition element of the UK's Review of the Balance of Competences between the UK and the European Union.</p> <p>DETI has also provided NI input to the UK Partnership Agreement underpinning the EU Structural Funds Operational Programmes for the UK, England and the Devolved Administrations.</p> <p>DETI also continues to provide NI input to UK State Aid Network and the UK ERDF Forum.</p>
<b>BP1.2</b>	Relevant Departments to respond to requests from Whitehall on policy matters relating to Environment and Climate Change policy within required deadlines	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>DETI has worked closely with the Department of Energy and Climate Change on Renewable energy and energy efficiency policy matters.</p> <p>DoE responded to Whitehall requests on issues relating to climate change, air quality and waste</p>

				policy matters.  DARD provides relevant and timely input to Defra on the National Emissions Ceiling Directive.
<b>BP2.1</b>	DOE to maintain and enhance arrangements for the monitoring of funding applications and partnerships across the EU by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Funding applications and partnerships continue to be monitored and reported on.
<b>BP2.2</b>	Deliver a 20% increase in NI partners in relation to Transnational Programmes	<b>DFP / ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	During the period DFP have ensured all calls to Transnational Programmes along with searches for Project Partners have been circulated to relevant bodies. DFP have provided help and guidance as and when required to potential projects and partners. The increase has been calculated using the number of NI partners in 2014/15 and the total number of partners in the overall programming period. This gave us a 22% increase for 2014/15.
<b>BP2.3</b>	Database of appropriate European contacts in the area of social cohesion to be updated and maintained monthly	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Database has been established for European Centre contacts and is being developed on an ongoing basis.  Additional Brussels-based database has been in development since the Social Liaison Officer took up post, in mid September 2014. This Brussels regional database will be released early in the 2015-16 financial year.
<b>BP2.4</b>	Ensure regular contact with NIERF member organisations regarding applications for funding and update database on a monthly basis	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	All NIERF members are formally polled twice each year as well as on other ad hoc occasions throughout the year where appropriate as to applications submitted or planned applications. In addition, a series of one-to-one meetings with members has commenced. Where an actual application or a potential application is identified it is recorded on a database which is updated on at least a monthly basis.

				Due to difficulties in relying on self reporting by members of the forum work is under way to identify avenues for receiving official figures from national agencies.
<b>BP3.1</b>	At least 4 workshops and stakeholder briefings to be held by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Newry & Mourne, Down and Louth County Councils, and colleagues in DSD Resources and Social Policy Group briefed in Q2. Derry Horizon 2020 event held December 2014. LIFE briefing given at 24-25 March Celtic Nations Conference.
<b>BP3.2</b>	Attend/participate in three Brussels/Europe-based information sessions relevant to the scope of the Social Thematic Group by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Attendance and networking at Social Innovation Conference, May 2014.</p> <p>Social Liaison Officer and OFMDFM officials attended several workshops during Open Week in Brussels, 6-9 October.</p> <p>Annual Convention of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion on 20-21 November 2014, Brussels. The Director of Equality &amp; Strategy Directorate hosted a side event at the annual conference, highlighting the work being taken forward to tackle poverty and social exclusion under the Delivering Social Change framework.</p> <p>Eurochild Annual Conference on 26-28 November 2014, Bucharest. The Director of Programme for Government &amp; Delivering Social Change Division hosted a side event at the Eurochild Annual Conference 2014 which outlined the work being carried out under the Delivering Social Change framework.</p> <p>Social Liaison Officer regularly attends relevant conferences and events in Brussels and relays reports from these to Thematic Group members.</p>
<b>BP4.1</b>	To respond within deadline to requests for progress	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Department responded to Executive's targets as

	updates on targets included in the Executive's 2014-2015 European Implementation Plan			requested.
<b>BP4.2</b>	Objectives/targets for 2014-15 are delivered by end March 2015	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	Of the 169 targets, 164 (97%) were achieved or substantively achieved. Only 5 targets (3%) were not achieved.
<b>BP4.3</b>	2015-16 priorities document is completed in line with BTWG timescales	<b>OFMDFM /DEL</b>	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	There have been delays in producing a set of European Priorities for 2015/16. Departments continue to liaise with OFMDFM and plan on producing a set of priorities for Executive approval in autumn 2015.

#### Additional Priorities for the **ECONOMY** thematic group

<b>BP5</b> Establish operational processes which are cognisant of, and compliant with the requirements of the European Commission and relevant external Agencies including the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency	<b>BP6</b> Explore opportunities for support for sustainable economic development of the agri-food sector, including through the European Innovation Partnership (EIP). ( <b>DARD</b> )	<b>BP7</b> Identify potential programmes and partners through the creation of a 'Look Forward Panel' and expansion of promotional activities. ( <b>DRD</b> )	<b>BP8</b> Explore further EU collaborative networking and funding opportunities for the social economy sector, including the potential for a study visit for key stakeholders	<b>BP9</b> Explore opportunities for economic development through innovation linked to the health and social care sector. ( <b>DHSSPS</b> )	<b>BP10</b> Secure Executive agreement for a Horizon 2020 target. ( <b>DETI</b> )	<b>BP11</b> Carry out an assessment of the Competitiveness of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (COSME) funding scheme and agree its application to the Northern
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(INEA). (DRD)			during 2014-15. (DETI, DSD)			Ireland context. (DETI)
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### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
BP5.1	Establish the Assurance Working Group and hold at least 3 seminars annually	DRD	ACHIEVED	Four meetings have taken place during the period with stakeholders including TransportNI, Translink, Phoenix and Firmus Energy.
BP6.1	Finalise proposals for EIP operational groups within the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 by March 2015	DARD	ACHIEVED	Final proposed draft of NIRDP 2014-20, which included the proposals for EIP operational groups was submitted to the Commission for approval on 14 October 2014.
BP7.1	Establish 'Look Forward Panel' and hold at least 2 annual seminars	DRD	ACHIEVED	The Terms of Reference for the Look Forward Panel have been developed.  Meetings have taken place on a one to one basis with stakeholders from TransportNI, Translink and Belfast Port in relation to prospective TEN-T projects.
BP7.2	At least 1 Ministerially hosted promotional event annually	DRD	ACHIEVED	The Minister hosted a visit in July to Northern Ireland by Peter Balazs the European Co-ordinator for the North Sea-Mediterranean Corridor.  The 2014-15 Ministerial event was held on 24 September 2014 at the offices of the NI Executive in Brussels (ONIEB).  The Minister facilitated a number of media events to promote EU Funded projects including the <i>Enterprise Refurbishment Project</i> (INTERREG IV A).
BP8.1	To explore the potential of facilitating a study visit to Brussels with sectoral representatives during 2014-15	DETI	ACHIEVED	Successful study visit by delegation of NI social economy stakeholders took place 31 October – 2 November 2014. DETI, alongside other key

				departments/ stakeholders, currently taking forward a number of follow-up actions to build on this initial engagement and to maximise opportunities for the sector at an EU level.
<b>BP8.2</b>	Complete analysis of Social Economy Enterprises (SEEs) and disseminate information by September 2014	<b>DSD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Mapping of social economy sector completed and research information published. The objectives were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To undertake a mapping exercise of Third Sector activity across Northern Ireland to measure the size and scale of social enterprises and voluntary and community sector.</li> <li>(ii) To assess the contribution of the Third Sector to the NI economy. Discerning between social enterprises and voluntary and community organisations, in terms of its unique value in relation to economic, social and environmental impact.</li> <li>(iii) To assess the potential of voluntary and community organisations to grow into SEEs and also the potential of SEEs to grow into larger, more established social enterprises with export potential.</li> </ul>
<b>BP9.1</b>	During 2014-15 to commence the development of internationally recognised standards which will facilitate the sharing of health and social care information internationally	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Requirements and Proof of Concept phases have been completed. Phase 2 development work on the Application Programming Interface (API) will be taken forward by the HSCB.
<b>BP9.2</b>	By 31 March 2015 to have carried out a Proof of Concept to enhance analytics capability of the HSC	<b>DHSSPS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	A collaboration agreement has been established and signed by the International Healthcare Analytics Capability (IHAC) network members, including the HSC, University of Ulster, Queens University and private sector representatives. The collaboration agreement covers, inter alia, detail



				<p>on terms of reference and governance criteria as well as confirmation on intellectual property associated with the data being used for the sub projects.</p> <p>All software has been loaded onto the necessary computing environment and is in the process of being commissioned. The used case studies will commence when the commissioning has been completed, which is expected before the end of May 2015.</p>
<b>BP10.1</b>	Secure agreement from Executive Sub-Committee on the Economy for a Horizon 2020 drawdown target	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	€145m agreed by Sub-Committee and since agreed by the Executive as part of the Innovation Strategy (September 2014).
<b>BP10.2</b>	Secure agreement from North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) for a target for NI/ROI collaborative success in Horizon 2020	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Agreed at NSMC meeting in March 2015.
<b>BP10.3</b>	Develop a Horizon 2020 strategy by June 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Completed strategy agreed by Executive Sub-Committee on economy.
<b>BP10.4</b>	Complete FP7 benchmarking by October 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Benchmarking figures against the 5 identified Barroso regions have been completed and are included in Executive Sub-Committee paper supporting proposals for the NI target. Further consideration being given to the potential identification of other regions that may be more suitable to benchmark.
<b>BP11.1</b>	Agree areas of COSME to be taken forward by 31st Dec 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>The main benefit for Northern Ireland is likely to be the funding already secured for the Enterprise Europe Network detailed in the summary of success above.</p> <p>Due to the terms and scale associated with the other COSME instruments, opportunities for NI are likely to be limited. However, Invest NI continues to work with British Business Bank (BBB) to</p>

				<p>identify if there is any potential for NI businesses to access some of the loan/equity funding available.</p> <p>As funding calls under COSME emerge DETI will promote these through its own departmental website and also through the EEN.</p>
<b>BP11.2</b>	Complete Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) benchmarking by October 2014	<b>DETI</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<p>A NISRA study into the feasibility of CIP (and other EU elective programmes) benchmarking concluded that there was no comprehensive and reliable EU regional data source available to facilitate such analysis.</p>

**Additional Priorities for the ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE thematic group**

BP12 Identify potential projects and partners for DOE and Third Party organisation participation. (DOE)	BP13 Establish and refine appropriate processes to disseminate policy information emanating from European Union. (DOE)
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Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
BP12.1	By 31 March 2015 the DOE Environment and Marine Group to produce a list of potential areas for EU funded project proposals	DOE	ACHIEVED	List produced by the E&CC Liaison Officer following a series of meetings with DOE officials in January 2015.
BP13.1	DOE Barroso Team web pages to be reviewed and updated by 31 March 2015	DOE	ACHIEVED	Review and update completed by team.
BP13.2	Environment and Climate Change group priorities for 2015-16 are agreed by 31 March 2015	ALL DEPTS	SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT	As outlined in Target BP4.3, there have been delays in producing a set of European Priorities for 2015/16.  A consultation draft of the 2015-16 European Priorities was shared with the Committee for OFMDFM on 25 June 2015.

### Additional Priorities for the SOCIAL thematic group

BP14 Promote and enhance effective technology and knowledge transfer arrangements in the health sector through involvement in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA). (DHSSPS)	BP15 Compare, track and report on funding opportunities and outcomes for relevant competitive funding programmes, including Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and Horizon 2020 Programmes. (All Departments in Social Group)	BP16 Raise awareness of the Delivering Social Change (DSC) framework and Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) in Europe. (OFMDFM)	BP17 Explore benchmarking options to compare drawdown in other regions. (All Departments in Social Group)
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### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
BP14.1	Along with other EU Regions to contribute to the achievement of targets and actions in EIP-AHA action plans	DHSSPS	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	Some slippage in NI contribution to A2 and A3 Actions Groups due to organisational moves within the HSC. A new representative has now been nominated to the A3 Action Group and an A2 representative is expected to be identified in the coming weeks. Contribution to other action plans achieved.
BP14.2	Organise quarterly NI Connected Health Eco-System meetings throughout 2014-15	DHSSPS	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Meetings held quarterly as planned.
BP14.3	Hold, or participate in, at least 2 events to promote interaction between main stakeholders in connected health by end March 2015	DHSSPS	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	High profile NI participation in eHealth Week in Athens in May 2014 and the European Summit for Innovation in Active and Healthy Ageing in Brussels in March 2015.
BP15.1	At least quarterly updates to NIERF members highlighting developments, upcoming events, funding opportunities and success stories for funding drawdown	OFMDFM	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Information is regularly disseminated to members in relation to developments, upcoming events, funding opportunities and success stories.  Updates are circulated following events to notify members when presentations are available.

<b>BP15.2</b>	Social Liaison Officer to report to Social Thematic Group secretariat on new funding opportunities under ERASMUS+, EaSI, Creative Europe and Horizon 2020 within 3 working days of new information being released (Social Liaison Officer)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Social Liaison Officer on taking up post in mid September 2014 provided regular updates to Working Group secretariat as appropriate.
<b>BP15.3</b>	Undertake Commission analysis of competitive funding 2014-20 to identify funding opportunities and explore potential of ERDF – Innovative Actions Programme	<b>DET/DSD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DSD held regular meetings with DG Regio to discuss and receive briefing on the development of the Innovative Urban Action Fund. Facilitated briefings with NI stakeholders and DG Regio.
<b>BP16.1</b>	Relating to R2, hold, actively contribute to or facilitate at least 2 policy-focused events in Brussels/Europe to showcase best practice and innovative policy from Northern Ireland, relating to Delivering Social Change and/or Together: Building a United Community, by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Annual Convention of the Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion - 20-21 November 2014, Brussels. The Director of Equality & Strategy Directorate hosted a side event at the annual conference, highlighting the work being taken forward to tackle poverty and social exclusion under the Delivering Social Change framework.  Eurochild Annual Conference - 26-28 November 2014, Bucharest. The Director of Programme for Government & Delivering Social Change Division hosted a side event at the Eurochild Annual Conference 2014 which outlined the work being carried out under the Delivering Social Change framework.
<b>BP16.2</b>	Identify good news stories and developments relevant to the Delivering Social Change framework and share via the European Centre Google+ page within 2 working days	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Google+ page has been used to advertise and promote issues of relevance to the Delivering Social Change framework throughout the year.
<b>BP17.1</b>	Complete feasibility work in relation to benchmarking by end December 2014	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) completed a scoping exercise on the benchmarking of competitive EU funds. They

				established that the Financial Transparency System (FTS) is unable to provide meaningful comparative data at a regional level. Departments asked to take benchmarking forward on an individual basis.
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## PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION

### EUROPEAN PRIORITIES WITHIN THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION QUADRANT

#### **OVERARCHING** Priorities which apply to ALL thematic groups

<b>PO1</b> Ensure policy staff have the knowledge and skills to maximise their effectiveness in liaising with Whitehall and the European Commission.	<b>PO2</b> Support the development of staff to exploit the benefits of a structured relationship with the European Commission.	<b>PO3</b> Engage with European Liaison Officers to agree work plans and support the delivery of the Executive's European priorities.	<b>PO4</b> Facilitate Arms Length Bodies, including relevant Third Parties, to effectively participate in and promote competitive EU applications and collaboration opportunities.
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**All three thematic groups are of the opinion that the overarching priorities fully cover the work being done within the People and Organisation quadrant and have no additional priorities to add for 2014-15.**

#### Targets

Target No.	Target	Lead Dept.	RAG Rating	Explanation for assigned RAG Rating
<b>PO1.1</b>	Develop a webpage on the DEL intranet by March 2015 to give information and guidance on the current EU structural and competitive funding programmes and the application processes	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Complete. Webpage went live on the DEL intranet in November 2014. We will continue to monitor its content.

<p><b>PO1.2</b></p>	<p>Improve Departmental staff knowledge of relevant EU issues by hosting an internal seminar by December 2014</p>	<p><b>ALL DEPTS</b></p>	<p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p>	<p>DETI - State Aid awareness seminar held on 16<sup>th</sup> September at Titanic Belfast. Attended by approximately 130 delegates 50 of whom were staff from 9 NI Departments.</p> <p>EU information seminar held with DOJ staff in May 2014. Informal information sharing conducted throughout the year.</p> <p>DE held staff seminar on Erasmus+ at the earliest opportunity in February 2015.</p> <p>DSD staff in the Voluntary and Community Unit received a briefing on Erasmus+ from the British Council.</p> <p>DHSSPS had previously organised an EU Seminar in Belfast in January 2014 which was attended by departments, universities and some SMEs. Given our input to this event and the timing no further similar events were planned by DHSSPS in 2014/15.</p> <p>DOE's EU Funding Team hosted an open day for the newly appointed E&amp;CC Liaison Officer to meet with senior departmental staff to discuss EU policy, priorities and funding opportunities.</p> <p>DCAL hosted an EU information seminar in November 2014 which was attended by DCAL staff and its ALBs. Presentations on funding opportunities were made by Creative Europe and Erasmus+.</p> <p>DRD organised a series of workshops to introduce and explore opportunities for EU funding across business areas. This resulted in 4 projects being brought forward for consideration for funding under the CEF 2014 call for funding applications.</p>
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				<p>EU Information seminar held with DEL staff and other interested parties on 22 January 2015. The seminar focussed on the Erasmus+ programme and this element was delivered by the British Council.</p> <p>EPCU and ONIEB held joint briefing with NICS European co-ordinators and others in November 2014 on improving access to EU information and institutions.</p> <p>DARD held a number of staff seminars in 2014 covering various aspects of implementation of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Reform.</p>
<b>PO1.3</b>	Four seminar/conference/workshop(s) to be held for staff on the work of the Barroso Team and potential for EU funded projects by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DOE hosted one to one sessions with the E&CC Liaison Officer in January 2015.
<b>PO1.4</b>	Social Thematic Group to host event to focus on topical thematic issues before end March 2015	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>7 of the 9 events hosted/supported by NIERF focused on issues relevant to the Social Thematic Group.</p> <p>DHSSPS organised an event in January 2014. (See PO1.2)</p> <p>DOJ officials met with Social Liaison Officer in Belfast and Brussels to discuss European social themes relevant to the Department.</p>
<b>PO2.1</b>	To arrange a programme of Economy work related visits/introductions for DETI Permanent Secretary, and DETI Grade 3 & 6 with relevant EU bodies & representatives i.e. DG's, UK Rep, Irish rep, EPC, EESC, Innovate UK and MEP's	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	DETI Permanent Secretary, Grade 3 & Grade 6 undertook a programme of Economy themed work related visits/introductions from 22–24 September 2014.
<b>PO2.2</b>	Attend and contribute to meetings of BTWG, Economy Thematic Group, Finance sub-group and HR sub-group	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Departments attended all relevant BTWG meetings to identify and ensure the most effective



				approach to European engagement on behalf of the Executive and co-ordinate implementation across departments.
<b>PO2.3</b>	Attend minimum of 4 EU events by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The NICP SC5 attended 12 EU events example H2020 SC5 Information day in Dublin hosted by EPA. Examples of other official attendance: - EPD Director attended 2 EU briefings in Dublin with the Italian and Latvian Presidencies, SEUPB Conference, Dundalk, INTERREG Workshop Belfast, LIFE conference Dublin.
<b>PO2.4</b>	Ensure staff actively participate in NIERF plenary sessions and events where suitable throughout the year	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Details on NIERF events were circulated to all Departments to inform and encourage staff attendance at events relevant to their policy areas.  For a list of NIERF events, see target C4.10
<b>PO2.5</b>	Ensure further development of relationships with relevant DG contact points relevant to the social theme by arranging quarterly update meetings (Social Liaison Officer)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Social Liaison Officer, on taking up post in mid September 2014, has developed a network of relevant DG contacts which are renewed on an ongoing basis by a process of regular and appropriate contact.
<b>PO2.6</b>	Develop relationships and build database of key contacts within regional offices across Europe by end March 2015 (Social Liaison Officer)	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The development of a regional contacts database has completed Phase 1 (audit of all regional offices in Brussels) and Phase 2 (incorporation of individual contacts) to be completed early in the 2015-16 financial year.
<b>PO3.1</b>	Agree Economy ELO Workplans component of Responsibility Matrix	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Economy ELO Workplan agreed August 2014 and all objectives were achieved by end of 2014/15.

<b>PO3.2</b>	At least 6 formal engagements annually which include 2 inward engagements and at least 2 events	<b>DRD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<p>Following the Brussels Business Week DRD officials have completed 8 formal engagements.</p> <p>First annual meeting of the Assurance Working group has taken place.</p> <p>Attendance at the INEA Info day in Brussels in relation to the TEN-T call for applications.</p> <p>Ministerial event took place on 24 September.</p> <p>Meeting hosted by the Department with Peter Balazs the work plan co-ordinator for the North Sea-Mediterranean Core Corridor. Subsequently officials attended a number of meetings which developed and agreed the work plan for the corridor.</p>
<b>PO3.3</b>	By 30 September 2014 provide Environment and Climate Change Liaison Officer with work tasks up to 31 March 2015 and suitable induction programme	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Forward work programme agreed with E&CC Liaison Officer.
<b>PO3.4</b>	All department representatives in Social Group to meet with Social Liaison Officer within 6 weeks of appointment	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Liaison Officer took up post in mid September 2014 and met with department representatives of the Social Thematic Group in mid October 2014 to discuss their EU priorities.
<b>PO3.5</b>	Ensure attendance of Liaison Officer at (at least) 2 Social Thematic Groups meetings by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	The Social Liaison Officer took up position in September. However, soon after his appointment the process for reporting progress against EU priorities moved away from thematic groups to an individual departmental basis. As a result the majority of co-ordination within the Social Thematic group was carried out electronically. In the absence of meetings of the group the Liaison Officer met individually with departmental representatives and was in regular contact electronically and by phone throughout the rest of the reporting period.

<b>PO3.6</b>	Provide input to Social Liaison Officer work plan by end September 2014	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Social Group input provided to ONIEB in September 2014.
<b>PO4.1</b>	Organise 1 Pre-commercial Procurement (PCP) session on Horizon 2020 PCP/PPI opportunities	<b>DETI</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Invest NI organised an awareness/workshop on Innovative PCP to all NI Centres of Procurement Excellence (CoPEs), covering both the UK PCP programme, SBRI & H2020. Approximately 20 senior procurement managers from across the NI public sector attended.
<b>PO4.2</b>	Arrange at least 1 information exchange visit with other Member States on animal disease issues.	<b>DARD</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Information exchange visit completed by DARD Programme Manager at EU Commission “BTSF – Better Training for Safe Food” event, discussing Animal Disease Control & Contingency Planning, in Riga, Latvia in September 2014.
<b>PO4.3</b>	Introduction of E&CC Liaison Officer to the relevant ALBs of the E&CC Thematic Group as appropriate by 31 March 2015	<b>DOE</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	E&CC Liaison Officer took part by teleconference of E&CC Thematic Group meeting; he also accompanied DOE officials to an Environment Committee on his role.
<b>PO4.4</b>	At least 1 seminar organised for staff, incorporating the work of the Social Thematic Group, EPCU, ONIEB etc by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	A seminar for OFMDFM staff was held on Stormont Castle on 28 November 2014.
<b>PO4.5</b>	Produce and disseminate at least 1 update bulletin for staff information by end March 2015	<b>OFMDFM</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Information on Ministerial and other visits and Brussels events was included in the OFMDFM monthly update to staff in each month in 2014/15.
<b>PO4.6</b>	Quarterly meetings and regular collaboration with relevant authorities to ascertain level of drawdown of European monies	<b>ALL DEPTS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Regular collaboration established through the Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency.

				<p>DE Officials have quarterly meetings with the British Council. EU drawdown is discussed at these meetings.</p> <p>Regular bilateral meetings with Justice Network members through-out the year.</p> <p>DETI has agreed protocol with BIS to gain access to more comprehensive H2020 drawdown information as &amp; when it is released.</p> <p>DoE regularly meet and collaborate with key organisations e.gs AFBI, Action Renewables and local universities.</p> <p>DCAL, through the Arts Council, liaises with the Creative Europe Desk UK on an ongoing basis to monitor drawdown.</p> <p>DSD receiving information on Erasmus + drawdown in relation to volunteering following calls and awards.</p> <p>DRD continues to liaise, at least quarterly, with finance and funding stakeholders in relation to potential and ongoing projects through its Assurance Working Group.</p> <p>DEL officials engage with the National Agency for Erasmus+ and relevant stakeholders quarterly to monitor drawdown of EU funds.</p> <p>Regular liaison between DARD and AFBI officials to capture level of EU drawdown on Horizon 2020 competitive funds.</p>
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<b>PO4.7</b>	Set up an internal working group to disseminate information about competitive EU funding and encourage promotion amongst relevant stakeholders by September 2014	<b>DEL</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	Complete. An internal EU Priorities working group has been established within DEL. The group met in June 2014, September 2014, December 2014 and February 2015 to discuss the promotion of competitive EU funding within the department and to relevant stakeholders.
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## EUROPEAN PRIORITIES 2014-15 – Commentary on Targets not rated Achieved.

Target No. (Lead Dept)	TITLE	RAG RATING	DEPARTMENTAL NARRATIVE
<b>R1.7 (OFMDFM)</b>	EU Capacity Building Fund implemented in 2014-15 and utilised by end of 2015-16 (Subject to funding)	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	Due to budgetary constraints it was not possible to allocate funds to the Capacity Building Fund. However, the Department remained committed to the overall aims and objectives of the fund and increased support to the Northern Ireland European Regional Forum (NIERF) through the secondment of an OFMDFM official to improve the service NIERF provides to its members. This resulted in an increase in the number of events, a greater number of partner searches and information in relation to opportunities under competitive EU funding programmes being disseminated to NIERF members.
<b>R2.3 (DHSSPS)</b>	During 2014-15 DHSSPS and HSC to be represented on all EIP-AHA Action Groups and attend at least 75% of meetings	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	DHSSPS has been engaging with HSC following staff moves to identify and nominate replacement representatives to 2 of the Action Groups. One vacancy has now been filled and the remaining one is expected to be filled in the coming weeks. In the interim DHSSPS receives reports and documents from this Action Group and circulates to HSC for information/action.
<b>R2.9 (OFMDFM)</b>	Identify examples of best practice from Northern Ireland and apply for these to be included on SIP/EPIC Knowledge Platforms (once launched) at least twice before March 2015	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	As of the end of the reporting period the SIP platform is still yet to be launched by the EU Commission.
<b>R3.5</b>	Develop through the EIP	<b>SUBSTANTIALLY</b>	The creation and management of a repository would require dedicated resources.

<b>(DHSSPS)</b>	Reference Site Collaborative Network a repository of information across EIP-AHA Reference Sites on health and care strategies, plans, projects and evidence bases	<b>ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL NOT BE PURSUED</b>	The intention is to pursue these through the development of a European funding proposal and for this work to be taken forward by the EIP-AHA Reference Site Collaborative Network.
<b>R3.6 (DHSSPS)</b>	Agree, where there are shared objectives and priorities, an eHealth MOU with at least 1 other EU Region by end March 2015	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	It was anticipated that an MOU would be agreed with the Republic of Ireland during 2014/15. However, while discussions have progressed and a draft MOU and Action Plan has been shared with officials in the Department of Health in Dublin, no formal agreement has as yet been signed off.
<b>R4.4 (OFMDFM)</b>	Secure formal commitment to maintain the NI Task Force in the new Commission	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	A significant amount of bilateral engagement has taken place by Ministers, MEP's and officials with the Commission on this point during the reporting period. Commissioner Crețu has stated that she is '90% certain' that President Juncker will give a formal commitment to maintain the Task Force, however at reporting date this commitment is not yet in place.
<b>R5.2 (DARD)</b>	Commission agreement to the competitiveness strand of the NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) by March 2015	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	The competitiveness strand of the (NIRDP) was submitted as part of the full draft programme sent to the European Commission on the 14 October 2014. The response was received from the Commission on the 31 March 2015. DARD will now work with the Commission to make the necessary amendments to the competitiveness strand of the NIRDP with approval expected in June/July. The target was substantially achieved by the 31 March deadline.
<b>R9.2 (DEL)</b>	Increase student inward mobility study placements by 7% within Higher Education	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	As the academic year is not yet over we do not have final confirmed figures. However, estimates from the HEIs and FECs indicate that 558 students have come to NI on Erasmus mobility study placements to date. This is down 7.7% on last year's figure of 605 and it is unlikely the target will be met. Officials will raise the issue at the Erasmus+ country panel meeting and consult with HEIs on potential actions.
<b>R9.3</b>	Increase staff inward mobility by	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY</b>	Staff inward mobility figures for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are not yet available so we

<b>(DEL)</b>	7% within Higher Education	<b>ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL NOT BE PURSUED</b>	cannot report the % change at present. The British Council will not have the 2013/14 incoming figures until a few months after the Erasmus Final Report is completed. As a result the 2013/14 incoming numbers (taken as a result of the outgoing Final Reports of other National Agencies) will not be known to us until later this summer and 2014/15 figures won't be known until the following year. Not all HEIs currently collect this info centrally so we are unable to obtain an estimate from HEIs. However, going forward, HEIs have agreed to consider how to collect this info for future years.
<b>R15.1 (DARD)</b>	Achieve approval of the NIRDP by 31 March 2015	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	The draft NIRDP was submitted to the European Commission for approval on the 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2014. The delay in programme approval is due to the delay in the European Commission responding to the content of the draft programme. The response was received from the Commission on the 31 March. DARD will now work with the Commission to make the necessary amendments to the programme with approval expected in June/July. The target was substantially achieved by the 31 March deadline.
<b>BP4.2 (ALL DEPTS)</b>	Objectives/targets for 2014-15 are delivered by end March 2015	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	<p>The 5 targets not achieved were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R1.7 - EU Capacity Building Fund implemented in 2014-15 and utilised by end of 2015-16 (Subject to funding);</li> <li>• R2.9- Identify examples of best practice from Northern Ireland and apply for these to be included on SIP/EPIC Knowledge Platforms (once launched) at least twice before March 2015;</li> <li>• R3.6 - Agree, where there are shared objectives and priorities, an eHealth MOU with at least 1 other EU Region by end March 2015 ;</li> <li>• R.9.2 - Increase student inward mobility study placements by 7% within Higher Education; and</li> <li>• BP11.2 - Complete CIP benchmarking by October 2014.</li> </ul> <p>Exception reports for each of these targets are set out under the individual targets.</p>
<b>BP4.3 (OFMDFM/ DEL)</b>	2015-16 priorities document is completed in line with BTWG timescales	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL</b>	OFMDFM continues to liaise with Departments. We are targeting the production of a finalised set of priorities being sent for Executive approval in autumn 2015.



		BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT	
<b>BP11.2 (DETI)</b>	Complete CIP benchmarking by October 2014	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<p>OFMDFM commissioned NISRA to undertake this workstream as part of a wider study to assess the feasibility of benchmarking NI's performance across a number of competitive funds, including CIP. NISRA reviewed the Financial Transparency System (FTS) managed by DG Budget. Its aim is to publish information on beneficiaries of EU funds but it is important to note that presenting regional data is not a stated requirement for this system. The European Commission sent the following response in relation to using the FTS for regional comparisons:</p> <p><i>"The FTS is unfortunately not designed for regional comparisons. In accordance with Article 35 of the Financial Regulation, the locality of a beneficiary of EU funds under direct management is expressed as its address. While you can infer the region of origin based on the city, indicating the region is not part of the obligations in the address. The beneficiary's region is only indicated as a substitute to the full address when the latter is a natural person, so as to avoid divulging private addresses.</i></p> <p>NISRA also explored the possibility of using other sources of competitive EU funding financial information however after review they were unable to identify any source of financial data at a regional level which could be used for the type of benchmarking required.</p>
<b>BP13.2 (ALL DEPTS)</b>	Environment and Climate Change group priorities for 2015-16 are agreed by 31 March 2015	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	OFMDFM continues to liaise with Departments and are targeting the production of a finalised set of priorities being sent for Executive approval in autumn 2015.
<b>BP14.1 (DHSSPS)</b>	Along with other EU Regions to contribute to the achievement of targets and actions in EIP-AHA	<b>SUBSTANTIVELY ACHIEVED – OUTSTANDING</b>	Some slippage in NI contribution to A2 and A3 Actions Groups due to organisational moves within the HSC – this has resulted in NI not being represented on these Action Groups for a significant part of 2014/15. A new

	action plans	<b>PROGRESS WILL BE DELIVERED BEYOND THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS REPORT</b>	representative was nominated to the A3 Action Group during the latter part of 2014 and an A2 representative is expected to be identified in the coming weeks. Contribution to other action plans achieved.
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**Programme for Government – Definitions of RAG Ratings**

The following criteria have been applied in proposing a RAG rating:

RAG Rating	Definition
Green	Target Fully Achieved
Green/Amber	Target Substantively Achieved – Outstanding progress will be delivered beyond the time period of the report
Amber	Target Substantively Achieved – Outstanding progress will not be pursued
Red	Not Achieved



**Cover Key:**

1. Gondolas, Venice; 2. Town Hall, Krakow; 3. Sagrada Família, Barcelona; 4. Waterfront Hall, Belfast;  
5. Eiffel Tower, Paris; 6. Circle of Thanksgiving, Belfast; 7. Atomium, Heysel, Brussels; 8. Windmill, Netherlands;  
9. Brandenburg Gate, Berlin ; 10. The Parthenon, Athens; 11. The Little Mermaid, Copenhagen.

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Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister  
European Policy and Co-ordination Unit  
Room E5.12, Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3SR  
Email: [info.europe@ofmdfmi.gov.uk](mailto:info.europe@ofmdfmi.gov.uk)  
Telephone: (028) 9052 3125