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EUROFLASH 10

SPECIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE BORDER COUNTIES 1995 - 1999

On 26th July, the European Commission announced the details of the Operational Programme for this special Initiative. In this Euroflash we give an immediate and brief overview of the Sub-programmes, measures, delivery mechanisms and financial allocations. In addition, we identify some of the elements of most significance to the voluntary and community sector. There are, however, areas of this Initiative which are still to be developed, and NICVA will update this information as details emerge.

THE AIM OF THIS INITIATIVE IS:

"to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation by increasing economic development and employment, promoting urban and rural regeneration, developing cross-border co-operation and extending social inclusion."

This aim incorporates the five priorities already identified in the guidelines to the Initiative issued earlier this year.

The five priority areas are:-

- employment
- urban and rural regeneration
- cross-border development
- social inclusion
- productive investment and industrial development.

The Initiative will be operated through seven Sub-programmes, one for each of the priorities plus one specifically for Partnerships, and a Technical Assistance Sub-programme. Each Sub-programme consists of several measures, which focus on specific types of activities. A list of these is attached along with illustrative examples of eligible actions. Clearly, the Peace Initiative resembles some elements of the Physical and Social Environment Sub-Programme of the Single Programming Document. However, the focus of the Single Programming Document is on economic and social cohesion while that of the Peace Initiative is on "embedding the peace process and promoting reconciliation". Potential applicants therefore need to decide on the primary purpose of their project in deciding which to apply for. The Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) will be issuing a more comprehensive summary of the full document shortly. Of the total package of 300 million ECU (£252 million approx), 30% has been allocated to the social inclusion priority.

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 Measure 1 + Measure 2 + Measure 3 + Measure 4

Approximate Allocations NI

		MECU	£M (Approx)
Sub-Programme 1: Employment			
Measure 1	Boosting growth and retraining for peace	14.5	11.6
Measure 2	Action for jobs	18.5	14.8
Measure 3	Improving the accessibility and quality of training, education and employment services	8.4	6.7
Measure 4	Accompanying infrastructure and equipment support	8.4	6.7
Sub-Programme 2 (a): Urban Regeneration (Northern Ireland)			
Measure 1	Urban regeneration for Peace and Reconciliation - Belfast and Londonderry	13.5	10.8
Measure 2	Urban regeneration for Peace and Reconciliation - Region wide	11.8	9.4
Sub-Programme 2 (b): Rural Regeneration (Northern Ireland)			
Measure 1	Community based actions	6.3	5.0
Measure 2	Rural economic development	14.3	11.4
Measure 3	Fisheries and Aquaculture and water based tourism	6.0	4.8
Sub-Programme 3: Cross-Border			
Measure 1	Business and cultural linkages	9.1	7.3
Measure 2	Infrastructure	5.0	4.0
Measure 3	Co-operation between public bodies	8.3	6.6
Measure 4	Cross-Border reconciliation	8.5	6.8
Sub-Programme 4: Social Inclusion			
Measure 1	Developing grass roots capacities and promoting the inclusion women	11.8	9.4
Measure 2	Preventing exclusion	11.8	9.4
Measure 3	Promoting the inclusion of children and young people	16.8	13.4
Measure 4	Promoting the inclusion of vulnerable groups and improving the accessibility and quality of services aimed at these groups	13.3	10.6
Measure 5	Promoting pathways to reconciliation	5.0	4.0
Measure 6	Accompanying infrastructure and equipment support	17.7	14.2
Sub-Programme 5: Productive Investment/Industrial Development			
Measure 1	Investment promotion	31.5	25.2
Measure 2	New industrial development services	16.8	13.4
Measure 3	Trade development	6.1	4.9
Sub-Programme 6:	Partnerships	62.0	49.6
Sub-Programme 7:	Technical Assistance	5.0	4.0

Notes

1. EU funding is denominated in ECU, the European Currency Unit, 1 ECU = 80p (approx)
2. The amounts given above may vary with exchange rate fluctuations.
3. The above funding allocations are for a three year programme.

IMPLEMENTATION

There has been much speculation about the method of delivery of this Initiative. From the consultation process running from the end of 1994, it was clear that the overwhelming concern was that the monies and benefit should reach the most disadvantaged and excluded groups. The Commission has taken this as an opportunity to encourage the two governments to take a more innovative approach to disseminating funding. More than half the funding will be delivered via intermediary bodies and partnerships as the table shows. The rest will be administered by central government departments in the normal way.

% EU FUNDING OF THE PRIORITIES - BY IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

	<u>PRIORITIES</u>	<u>CENTRAL GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>INTERMEDIARY BODIES</u>	<u>PARTNERSHIPS (1)</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1	Employment	8.8%	5.1%	2.7%	16.6%
2	Urban and Rural Regeneration	13.5%	3.1%	2.8%	19.4%
3	Cross-Border Development	7.6%	7.4%	-	15.0%
4	Social Inclusion	7.0%	16.5%	6.5%	30%
5	Productive Investment and Industrial Development	3.4%	11.2%	2.7%	17.4%
6	Technical Assistance	1.6%	-	-	1.6%
	TOTAL	41.8%	43.5%	14.7%	100%

* These figures relate only to district partnerships in Northern Ireland.

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THE BALANCE OF THE REMAINING FUNDS HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED ALMOST EQUALLY ACROSS THE OTHER PRIORITIES. THIS RESULTS IN A SPREAD OF ALLOCATIONS AS FOLLOWS:-

<u>SUB-PROGRAMME</u>	<u>ALLOCATION (MECU)</u> <u>NORTHERN IRELAND</u>	<u>%</u>
Employment	37.39	15
Urban Regeneration	18.95	8
Rural Regeneration	18.95	8
Cross-Border Development	22.50	9
Social Inclusion	57.33	24
Productive Investment and Industrial Development	36.89	16
Partnerships	44.2	18
Technical Assistance	3.79	2
TOTAL	240.00	100

- * It should be noted that the above allocations are indicative and may be subject to change over the life of the Programme. It is essential to preserve flexibility with respect to the allocations so that the Initiative can be transparently responsive to developments unforeseen at this stage.

THE BORDER COUNTIES

An integral part of the Peace and Reconciliation Initiative is the support to be provided to the border counties in the South, recognising the strong social and economic links between these counties and Northern Ireland. Funding under the Initiative is set out below:-

<u>SUB-PROGRAMME</u>	<u>ALLOCATION (MECU)</u> <u>IRELAND</u>	<u>%</u>
Employment	4.38	7
Urban regeneration Rural Regeneration	12.0	20
Cross-Border Development	22.50	37
Social Inclusion	13.13	22
Productive Investment and Industrial Development	7.6	12
Technical Assistance	0.93	2
TOTAL	60.00	100

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The intermediary bodies have not been definitively decided upon at this stage though various organisations are mentioned, including NIVT, Rural Community Network (and the Rural Development Council), Youthnet and Co-operation North. The role of these "decentralised organisations" will be to process applications, select projects and administer the finances in relation to some of the measures. The DFP and the Commission will be working with potential bodies over the coming weeks, so there may still be an opportunity for the voluntary/community sector to pursue the idea of a consortium dealing with one or more measures of the programme.

There had been some speculation over the last few months about the role of area-based partnerships in the Initiative. By including a specific Sub-programme for partnerships, the need for co-operation between local Councils, community/voluntary representatives, and private/statutory agencies is recognised and catered for. These partnerships (maximum one per district council area) will be allocated 15% of the total funds. They may apply to a new Partnership Board - for projects under any of the five priorities (or all).

APPLICATION PROCESS

This cannot be fully clarified until the intermediary bodies have been established. However, the DFP is issuing an information pack containing a summary of the programme and an application form with guidance notes. Completed forms will be forwarded by the DFP to the relevant government department, or, if the measure is to be administered by an intermediary body, it will be held by DFP until that body is operational. This may take some time, up to four months possibly, and it may be that at that time the intermediary will still need further information specific to the measure for which it is responsible.

Those organisations and groups which have already sent project outlines to the Department of Finance and Personnel will automatically receive this information pack. Otherwise, a DFP Helpline is being established to handle requests for the packs:

Tel: 01232 526938

For further information please contact:-

NICVA
European Unit
127 Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 1SH Tel: 01232 321224

SUB PROGRAMME 1: EMPLOYMENT

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECT</u>	<u>APPLICATIONS THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Boosting growth and retraining for peace	Training; re-training; vocational education and guidance aimed at developing employment opportunities opened up by the peace process. Target areas will include; Tourism services; Small and medium sized enterprises; Womens Aid; Young people; Victims and Ex-prisoners; Workers facing redundancy.	Intermediary Body
Measure 2: Action for jobs	Employment initiatives; promotion of self-employment/ entrepreneurship; community businesses and co-operatives; work placement schemes	Government Departments
Measure 3: Improving the accessibility and quality of training, education and employment services	Guidance and counselling services; job placement centres; training for trainers; childcare attached to training/education/employment	Intermediary Body. Government Departments.
Measure 4: Accompanying infrastructure and equipment support	Childcare facilities; small business units; tourism facilities related to training; technical/further education facilities	Government Departments

SUB PROGRAMME 2(A): URBAN REGENERATION

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECTS</u>	<u>APPLICATION THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Urban Regeneration for Peace and Reconciliation - Belfast and Londonderry	Environmental improvement; provision of amenities; infrastructure projects providing employment; urban regeneration; tourism.	Department of the Environment Making Belfast Work Londonderry Initiative.
Measure 2: Urban Regeneration for Peace and Reconciliation - region wide	SAME AS FOR MEASURE 1 ABOVE Targets: disadvantaged rural areas	Department of the Environment.

SUB PROGRAMME 2(B): RURAL REGENERATION

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECT</u>	<u>APPLICATIONS THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Community-based actions	Social and economic activities that encourage participation of socially excluded groups eg provision of community facilities; improvement of the environment	Possibly Rural Community Network. Rural Development Council.

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Measure 2: Rural Economic Development	Job creation; developing the agri food sector; tourism	Department of Agriculture or other appointed Agency.
Measure 3(a): Water-based Tourism	Improvement of angling facilities; waterways and associated facilities contributing to economic and social regeneration in areas worst affected by violence	Department of Agriculture or other Agency
Measure 3(b): Fisheries and agriculture	Job creation; fish farms, agriculture facilities; new fisheries products.	Department of Agriculture or other Agency.

SUB PROGRAMME 3: CROSS-BORDER DEVELOPMENT

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECT</u>	<u>APPLICATIONS THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Business and cultural links	Joint venture companies; cross-border links/studies; materials procurement; cultural links eg music and cultural festivals; sporting/social activities. Target groups: SMEs, local communities.	Possibly Co-operation North in association with CBI (NI)/ IBEC
Measure 2: Infrastructure	Cross-border roads; energy interconnectors; road signs; tourism and amenities.	Public Bodies
Measure 3(a): Co-operation between Public Bodies (ERDF)	Co-operation between agencies North and South on environmental research and development between Health Boards and Health and Social Services Agencies, local authorities, education and training providers	Government Departments

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Measure 3(b): Co-operation between Public Bodies (ESF)	Co-operation between Health Boards. Co-operation between education and training providers.	Government Departments
Measure 3(c): Co-operation between Public Bodies (EAGGF)	Co-operation in forestry, and in animal/plant health	Government Departments
Measure 3(d): Co-operation between Public Bodies (FIFG)	Co-operation in fishing and agriculture	Government Departments
Measure 4: Cross-border Community Recociliation	Cross-border projects inemployment, training, women and young people. Study of international models of cross-border reconciliation. Transnational networks with other conflict resolution situations.	Intermediary Body

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SUB PROGRAMME 4: SOCIAL INCLUSION

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECT</u>	<u>APPLICATION THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Developing grass roots capacities and promoting the inclusion of women	Cross-community neighbourhood projects; community development and regeneration; volunteering; research and information on cross-community and social inclusion initiatives; community arts; partnerships; training for community participation/leadership; women's projects. Target groups: voluntary and community groups, women's groups, agencies involved in community development and area-based partnerships.	Mainly Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust
Measure 2: Preventing exclusion	Pre-school child care and education; play; education counselling for parents with young children; children with a disability; training; family resource centres. Targets: areas most affected by violence	Four area Early Years Committees
Measure 3: Promoting the inclusion of children and young people	Training/Education for disaffected young people; use of IT in educational provision; school - Industry links; cross-community programmes in schools; services to early school leavers; young unemployed, after-school activities, community education projects, cultural activities. Targets: areas most affected by the conflict	Department of Education and possibly Youthnet

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Measure 4: Promoting the inclusion of vulnerable groups and improving the accessibility and quality of services aimed at these groups	Advice/support services for victims and prisoners families; re-integration of ex-prisoners; employment and training; research and information.	Possibly Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and another Agency to handle projects in the field of rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-prisoners
Measure 5: Promoting pathways to reconciliation	Cross-community networks in areas affected by violence Target groups: community and voluntary groups, youth organisations, women's groups, the socially excluded.	Community Relations Council. Training Grants will be administered centrally
Measure 6: Accompanying infrastructure and equipment support from the ERDF	Cross-community facilities; pre-school provision; IT projects for marginalised young people; community-based youth facilities; support for integrated school places; additional Irish language school places; facilities for the re-integration of vulnerable groups, adaptation of facilities to improve access for disabled, neighbourhood facilities; purchase of essential equipment. Targets: interface areas; vulnerable groups including youth, victims of violence and prisoners.	Government Departments

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SUB PROGRAMME 5: PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENT/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

<u>MEASURE</u>	<u>TYPES OF PROJECTS</u>	<u>APPLICATION THROUGH</u>
Measure 1: Investment Promotion	Start-up finance for new businesses, especially in deprived areas providing reduced interest loans Targets: Small and medium sized enterprises	Authorised Banks ie AIB, Ulster Bank, Northern Bank, Bank of Ireland.
Measure 2: New Industrial Development Services	Provision of innovation facilities and services; supporting high technology start-up companies, mainly for SMEs; management information and control systems; commercial applications for telecommunications infrastructure; innovation in tourism services and in approaches to economic development.	IDB
Measure 3: Trade Development	Trade Development Projects	LEDU

SUB-PROGRAMME 6: DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS

Under this Sub-Programme, funding to the value of 44.21 mecu will be available to finance local development. Funding will be allocated on the basis of district council areas, and will vary according to population and weighted by levels of deprivation. Details of allocations for each District Council area will be published at a later date.

TYPES OF PROJECT

The types of project likely to attract funding through district partnerships are broadly the same as those listed in the various measures within the following Sub-Programmes listed above i.e..

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|---|---------------------|--|
| ■ | Sub-Programme 1 | employment |
| ■ | Sub-Programme 2 (a) | urban regeneration |
| ■ | Sub-Programme 2 (b) | rural regeneration |
| ■ | Sub-Programme 4 | social inclusion |
| ■ | Sub-Programme 5 | productive investment and industrial development |

APPLICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY

A district partnership within each council area will be invited to bid for funds allocated for their area by submitting a local action plan. This plan should outline proposals for action/projects and may reflect some or all of the measures across the various priorities.

To be considered eligible, a partnership must demonstrate that it is fully representative of interests within its area. The constitution of the partnership should comprise one third elected representatives from the Council, one third community/voluntary representatives and one third representatives from the private sector and other interests such as local statutory agencies. Agreed action plans must be submitted within nine months of the date of approval of the Programme.

The Partnership Sub-Programme will be administered by a Partnership Board, to be set up within three months, which have responsibility for assessing action plans, approve funding for projects and review progress in each council area. Again the membership of the Partnership Board will include representatives from the community/voluntary sector, local government, private sector and other interests.

SUB-PROGRAMME 7: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Measure 1 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be available through the Peace and Reconciliation Initiative to:-

- publicise and provide information on the Programme
- support the management, monitoring and evaluation of the Programme
- enable broad participation in the Programme, especially by local community and voluntary organisations. Assistance should be available for organisations to develop individual project proposals prior to final submission of applications for funding.

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CONTACTS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL SUB-PROGRAMMES IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE:-

Employment	Training & Employment Agency Clarendon House 9-21 Adelaide Street Belfast BT2 8TJ Tel: 01232 541648
Urban Regeneration (NI)	Department of the Environment Brookmount Buildings Fountain Street Belfast BT1 5EE Tel: 01232 547821
Rural Regeneration (NI)	Department of Agriculture (NI) Dundonald House Upper Newtownards Road Belfast BT4 3SB Tel: 01232 524331
Cross-Border Development	Department of Finance & Personnel Room C1 The Arches Centre 11-13 Bloomfield Avenue Belfast BT5 5HD Tel: 01232 526938
Social Inclusion	Department of Health & Social Services Social Inclusion Branch Annexe 3, Castle Buildings Stormont Belfast BT4 3RA Tel: 01232 522959
Productive Investment & Industrial Development	Department of Economic Development European Communities Branch Netherleigh Massey Avenue Belfast BT4 2JP Tel: 01232 529254
Partnerships	Department of the Environment (NI) Brookmount Buildings Fountain Street Belfast BT1 5EE Tel: 01232 547821 or 547870
Technical Assistance	Department of Finance & Personnel (as before)