



Special EU Programmes Body  
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE  
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

## PREPARING THE PEACE PLUS PROGRAMME

European Territorial Co-operation 2021–2027

### Stakeholder Engagement Survey – Questions

December 2019 to February 2020



Northern Ireland  
Executive

[www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)



Riailas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

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## Survey questions

**The purpose of this survey is to get input from stakeholders on potential funding themes for the PEACE PLUS Programme as well as feedback on delivery options as proposed by the draft regulations.**

PEACE PLUS is a new cross-border programme that will contribute to a more prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland. The programme will achieve this by funding peace-building activities, and by funding activities that contribute to the cross-border economic and territorial development of the region<sup>1</sup>. The combination of the PEACE and INTERREG type activities in a single programme is reflected in the name of the programme where “PLUS” stands for the inclusion of wider North/South economic, social and environmental activities of mutual interest.

We welcome responses regardless of whether you have been involved in INTERREG or PEACE before. We really appreciate your views.

The survey is composed of 5 sections. We recommend that you read the [“Part 2 of the Stakeholder Engagement Information Document”](#) before responding, as questions will refer to this.

With the exception of Section A, no section is compulsory; please respond to the questions in the other sections where you wish to do so. Please use Section E to make more general comments that you do not feel are covered in the rest of the survey and to attach reports to support your response where you believe this is relevant for the programme development.

Responses are subject to word limits. This is to encourage focused responses and ensure that responses can be effectively analysed by the SEUPB as part of the process to develop the new programme. We recommend that you include evidence to support your responses. For example, you may include links to supporting information as part of your response or you may add attachments in Section E.

### **Deadline for response**

The engagement process will run from **10 December 2019** until **17:00 on 25 February 2020**. The SEUPB welcomes early responses so that views, ideas and comments can contribute to ongoing developments and debates during the engagement process.

### **Other ways to get involved**

A number of stakeholder information events have been organised, at which members of the public and other key stakeholders will have the opportunity to express their views on the issues raised in this document. Information on the dates and locations for these meetings is available on the SEUPB’s website at <https://seupb.eu/peaceplus>.

- 1 Previously funded under INTERREG.

## Use of responses

**This survey requires you to provide your name and postal address. This is for verification purposes only and to prevent multiple responses from the same person or organisation. No anonymous responses will be considered.**

The SEUPB will publish a synopsis of the responses. If you are responding on behalf of an organization, we may publish your organisation's name, unless requested not to below. If you are responding as an individual, we may refer to the content of your response but not your name or address, nor will we publish anything which may identify you or other individuals.

Notwithstanding the above, the information you provide in your response to this survey, excluding personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Code of Practice (North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Ltd.). If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please contact [communications@seupb.eu](mailto:communications@seupb.eu), but be aware that, under the Code of Practice, we cannot guarantee confidentiality.

**I am responding on behalf of my organisation and I do not wish the details of the organisation to be published.**

## A. About you

### Q.A.1 Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual? \*

Please note, this question is compulsory

#### Organisation

If you chose

- **Organisation:** Please state your name and your organisation's name and address:  
C/o Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director  
Belfast City Council City and Neighbourhood Services Department  
The Cecil Ward Building 4-10 Linenhall Street  
Belfast, BT2 8BP.
- **Individual:** Please state your name and address: ( not applicable)

### Q.A.2 Which of the following best describes you? (Select as many as applicable)

- I am a stakeholder associated with the management of the PEACE or INTERREG programmes
- I receive or have previously received funding from the PEACE or INTERREG programmes (as a project partner or a subcontracted organisation)
- I have applied for funding from the PEACE or INTERREG programmes but my application was not accepted
- I have been a participant or beneficiary of a PEACE or INTERREG funded project
- I would like to get involved with this PEACE PLUS Programme
- Other. Please describe: [Click here to enter text.](#)

## **B (1). Thematic focus: Peace-building activities**

The PEACE PLUS programme will contribute to a more peaceful, prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland<sup>1</sup> by funding:

- **peace and reconciliation activities**, and
- activities that contribute to North/South **economic, social and environmental** development in the region, in areas of mutual interest.

### **Peace-building activities**

PEACE PLUS will fund Peace and Reconciliation under Policy Objective 4 of the draft EU regulation. This allows for funding to be awarded for the following:

- Actions to improve community and social cohesion,
- Improving employment opportunities,
- Increasing access to quality education,
- Reducing marginalisation through improved housing and services,
- Increasing access to quality health care in the region,
- Other peace building activities.

Thinking of the needs in your local area, we want your views on which actions are most relevant for achieving Peace and Reconciliation.

**To help you with your responses you may wish to view case studies** of the existing PEACE initiatives. These can be found here: <https://seupb.eu/case-studies>.

- 1 Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. Organisations from outside the programme area may be funded where this contributes to the programme objectives for the eligible region.



**Q.B.1** Below are a list of indicative actions for achieving Peace and Reconciliation. Please rate the relevance of each type of action as a means to achieve Peace and Reconciliation.

	Not at all relevant 1	2	3	4	5	6	Extremel y relevant 7	I don't know
Actions to improve community and social cohesion.					7			
Improving employment opportunities.					7			
Increasing access to quality education.					7			
Reducing marginalisation through improved housing and services.					7			
Increasing access to quality health care in the region.					7			
Other peace building activities.					7			

**Q.B.1i Please explain why you have given the rating above:** [Word limit 500 words]

Our Good Relations Strategy 2019 recognises that following years of conflict, our city has made great progress towards normality. However, despite this, there remain some fundamental key issues that continue to manifest themselves in division between communities, with low levels of trust and high levels of residential, educational, physical and social segregation in many areas. It also recognises the persistent issues around expressions of identity, which often result in community tensions and increased polarisation.

Belfast contains the highest number of interface areas in the region where segregation remains high. Inter-community tensions are reducing but continuing. There are around 85 built interface barriers in Belfast and even since 1994, 10 barriers have been erected and 12 have been heightened, lengthened or extended. Recent findings from consultations undertaken as part of the development of our PEACE IV Plan and our Good Relations Audit indicated that residents living near interfaces or ‘peace walls’ should be a key target group for engagement on good relations and peace building activities.

Three areas of concern were highlighted:

- environmental fears;
- lack of investment, regeneration or employability; and
- Disproportionate levels of poor health.

The perceived disparity in investment between the most affluent and most deprived communities continues to inhibit sharing and social cohesion. A lack of connectivity and the continued existence of physical barriers extend division across the city at certain points and gateways. The challenge remains that the most funded areas are still the most disadvantaged.

Belfast has also become a much more diverse city, with many people from overseas making Belfast their home. This increased diversity has brought with it many opportunities. However, it also presents

challenges for organisations and businesses to make sure our new communities are included and participate in the economic, civic, social and cultural life of the city. Equality and good relations are key to improving the quality of life for everyone in the city. Our vision is to shape Belfast so that its infrastructure, spaces and services meet the needs and ambitions of all people who live, work, invest, study and visit the city.

Since our last Strategy we have developed the Belfast Agenda, with a renewed emphasis on joining the dots between agencies and communities and a focus on better outcomes for residents. BREXIT has created uncertainty for many. Meanwhile, everyday life in Belfast continues to change as a result of, among other things, digitisation and globalisation.

However, many people within our society still think of Belfast in binary terms – of a society made up of two communities; catholic and protestant. In many ways this binary view and its influence on public service decision-making has accentuated division in our society by duplicating services and hampering the connectivity between people and communities. In the current economic climate, the challenge for civic leadership and public service delivery is the need to avoid binary decision-making which compounds division. This means shifting the dialogue to delivering on the Belfast Agenda in a way that involves people in an innovative city conversation on how services are delivered in a way that can foster sharing and build good relations.

Improved housing reduces marginalisation, helps improve our carbon emissions and reduces household running costs. This is an area of focus in the Belfast Climate Change Commission and draft

**Belfast (2030) vision (Belfast Agenda conversation)**

‘Good relations’ is a top priority. People said they would like to see issues addressed including removal of interfaces (or peace walls), concerns around symbols and expressing cultural identity and more shared space.

The following GR themes emerged when respondents were asked “what would you like Belfast to be like in 2030?”

- A peaceful and shared city.
- A welcoming, caring and compassionate city.
- A vibrant and culturally diverse city, where everyone is respected and treated equally.
- A clean, healthy and safe city where everyone has access to good housing, quality green spaces, services and facilities that enable them to be happy, safe and active.

resilient cities strategy.

As a council, we could further develop and deliver employment initiatives and influence access to quality education by working with employers and other stakeholders to influence skills development and employability to target young people and up skill others for jobs in our growth sectors - cyber, legal, fintech, Creative industries, Reg Tech, Med Tech etc.

**Q.B.1ii If there are other types of action not covered by the table in Q.B.1 that you think are relevant for achieving Peace and Reconciliation in your local area, please describe them below. [Word limit 1000 words]**

The current Belfast Resilience strategy which is out for consultation states “To put it starkly, Northern Ireland is not prepared for the impacts of climate change. As its capital city, the risks to Belfast are profound.”

Belfast is more vulnerable today because of its lack of preparedness, because of underinvestment in key aspects of its infrastructure, and because of its dependence on carbon. Each of these factors make resilience to climate change more challenging. The divisions in the city - spatial divisions and social ones - weaken its capacity to adapt to and respond to shocks, but importantly also absorb resources that could be spent preparing the city for the future.

The human side - the scale of mental ill-health, the prevalence of prescription drug taking, poverty and inequality across the city - require a particular and sustained focus. Individuals and communities are much more exposed to risk if they are less healthy and do not possess the additional financial capacity to respond when a shock occurs.

Belfast must learn to adapt more quickly to change. It must develop a city-wide collective approach to managing risks and must improve how it plans and acts for the long-term. This strategy contains several proposals to improve the governance and management of risk across the city.

A 2016 NICVA study on income inequality found that ‘it is possible to say that Belfast is the most unequal part of NI, as it has a high proportion of people in the bottom of the income distribution (25%) and a high proportion at the top (18%).’

Coupled with political polarization, inequality erodes a country’s social fabric in an economically damaging way: as cohesion and trust diminish, economic performance is likely to follow.

Climate change represents the biggest medium-term risk to the city of Belfast - to its people and its economy. Given our levels of economic resilience, the scale and nature of spatial division in the city, levels of fuel poverty and deprivation, Belfast’s resilience is dependent on how we prepare. A step change is now required across a range of city partners to develop comprehensive climate adaptation and mitigation.

As the Committee on Climate Change noted, ‘Low income households are particularly susceptible to climate change impacts, though they might also benefit the most from the positive implications of climate change. Northern Ireland has the highest proportion of properties at risk of flooding that are in deprived areas (27%).’ For this reason, it is critical that climate adaptation and mitigation targets are genuinely inclusive and aim to ensure the most vulnerable are protected, and that the economic benefits from decarbonisation are felt by those most impacted by fuel poverty. A core aim of any climate mitigation plan must be a significant reduction, or virtual elimination of fuel poverty.

Furthermore, given the level of interest in the issue of climate change by the city’s children and young people, it is critical that city-wide climate planning is participative and includes their voices and opinions on the future of their city.

However, the legacy of conflict has manifested in division, which continues to directly impact on the city and to undermine its urban resilience. Division between communities remains prevalent with low levels of trust and high levels of residential, educational, physical and social segregation in many areas. Belfast contains the highest number of interface areas in the region where segregation remains high.

Inter-community tensions are reducing but continuing. There are estimated to be around 97 security barriers and forms of defensive architecture across residential areas in Belfast. Many people within our society still think of Belfast in binary terms - of a society made up of two communities; Catholic and Protestant. In many ways this binary view and its influence on public service decision making has accentuated division in our society by duplicating services and hampering the connectivity between people and communities. (GR Strategy). Physical and psychological barriers between communities make travel around parts of the city difficult. This has resulted in people avoiding certain areas perceived to be unsafe.

It is not a coincidence that Belfast's Resilience Strategy and its Good Relations Strategy have both prioritised 'connectedness' as a major problem to be solved. If Belfast is to thrive in the face of unexpected challenges, it must do so as a united, socially cohesive city.

Business support/growth are critical as are skills and employment, work placements, alternative apprenticeships, social innovation and cooperatives.

**Q.B.1iii What are the main challenges and opportunities for greater Peace and Reconciliation (previously addressed under the PEACE programme)?** [Word limit 1000 words]

### **Embedding good relations at the core of the city's new strategies**

In the development of this Strategy, a range of stakeholders shared their views on how they believe it can help achieve the ambitions within the Belfast Agenda. Below is a summary of the key comments and messages from stakeholders.

#### ***Key outcomes that good community and race relations can bring to Belfast***

- Improved economic vitality
- Improved health and wellbeing
- A shared future for all
- More investment
- Better educated population
- Equality, integration and diversity
- More or greater social and labour mobility
- More inclusive spaces
- A sense of belonging to the city
- More intercultural city
- Cost savings - joined up services
- Confident and outward looking
- Entrepreneurial city population
- Improved image
- More visitors and spend
- Reduced fear of crime
- Less civic disturbance

#### ***Important actions that council could undertake to build good community and race relations in Belfast***

#### ***Biggest issues or barriers that hold us back from building good community and race relations in Belfast***

- Lack of integrated education and shared housing
- Poverty and deprivation
- Lack of hope and aspiration
- Spatial segregation
- Legacy of the troubles
- Sectarianism, racism and prejudice
- lack of ambition and personal aspiration
- Physical barriers
- Political leadership
- Ongoing hard good relations issues
- Duplication of service provision - costs
- Legacy issues - multi-dimensional and deep-rooted issues
- Cultural differences, myths and intolerance
- Lack of understanding of what is culturally acceptable
- Connect area-based planning to citywide planning policy
- Negative media coverage
- Polarised Politics
- Legal limitations of Section 75 legislation
- Perceived injustices

#### ***How good community and race relations can contribute to the delivery of the Belfast Agenda***

- Demonstrate strong political leadership
- Planning policy for shared communities
- Identify and work with agents of reform
- Take a systems-based approach
- Build strong, outward looking, hopeful communities
- Services realigned to needs versus geography
- Evidence, area-based, integrated, preventative, collaborative and challenge focused approach
- Demonstrate the economic case for good relations
- Develop shared spaces
- Drive forward inclusive growth
- Civic conversations
- Youth engagement
- Joined up working - long term funding
- Exploring the diversity of people and identities
- Positive media coverage
- Outcomes approach
- Have a comprehensive Good Relations Strategy
- Promoting a “common good” approach
- A “positive peace and systems thinking” approach
- Work with and upskill communities
- Need critical, evidence focused thinking
- Disrupt old approaches
- Need cross departmental approach
- Collective oversight and a focus on the bigger picture
- Collaborate, collecting and sharing data
- Agree a set of guiding principles
- Embrace change
- Civic conversations and understand differences
- Help with the development of LDP local policies
- Support a shared housing or living agenda
- Define inclusive growth  
Help the social economy to grow and contribute to good relations and inclusive growth

In addition, Belfast has undergone significant demographic and cultural change over the past decade. The scale of recent immigration has changed the map of diversity in Belfast but despite this change, levels of integration are not keeping pace with our city’s growing diversity. The increasing diversity of backgrounds and experiences has raised challenges around how best to support the integration of new communities and how to support capacity within receiving communities to respond to change positively.

The speed and scale of many new communities arriving into sometimes contested neighbourhoods, in Belfast, has presented challenges and anxieties, whether perceived or real, around limited resources, housing, education and the erosion of identity.

Struggles and perceptions around resources often result in hostility towards new groups, perceived to be culturally different. Such feelings are exacerbated by a lack of contact between communities and others by the lack of informed debate and information. Research conducted by Belfast City Council in 2018 highlighted a growing sense of vulnerability felt by people from the Muslim Faith living in Belfast and indeed a rising trend in hate crimes experienced by people from the Muslim community. The negative discourse around migration and a rise in hate has impacted on people’s willingness to mix.

There is a need for sustained contact between members of new and host communities to break down fears and anxieties and lead to greater understanding and meaningful contact.

The Belfast Agenda and community planning aim to improve the connection between all the tiers of Government and wider society, through partnership working, to jointly deliver better outcomes for everyone. The Belfast Agenda identifies long-term priorities for improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the city and the people who live here.

This brings about a real opportunity for Peace and Reconciliation to work in tandem with the objectives of the Belfast Agenda to bring about structured collaboration and partnerships focused on practical peace and reconciliation outcomes in the context of a wider regeneration agenda.

Peace PLUS represents an opportunity to address the biggest issues and barriers that are holding us back from building good community and race relations in the city.

**Q.B.1iv Please list any ideas for initiatives or projects that could address the challenges/opportunities identified in Q.B.1iii. [Word limit 1000 words]**

Health

- Recognise that Mental Health issues cross all barriers (religion, race, age, gender, social class, etc.) and support projects that address issues such as depression, addiction, isolation, suicide, etc. Mental Health focus on Young People and also most vulnerable age group 35-44.
- Encourage the use of the completed SSS Connected Open Spaces Network with the inclusion of a healthy living element that encourages activity – e.g. walking, cycling, running, at all levels of ability.
- With links to the first point, a community education element that looks at promoting healthy living through diet and lifestyle, e.g.
  - Promoting affordable healthy eating in disadvantaged areas
  - Community led projects that encourage and support local sports clubs to use BCC centres and facilities for fitness/sporting project, ranging from armchair aerobics to encouraging people to come back to a sport/activity.

Education, training and life-long learning

- Training programmes that offer worthwhile work-related qualifications that are recognised by employers and relevant to the current labour market
- Support for adult learners in getting back into education through partnership with the community, schools, colleges, universities, training organisations, etc., providing sign posting services, community based tutoring/support, etc.
- Support of vocational and professional qualifications

Socio-economic integration: marginalised communities, migrants, disadvantaged groups, people at risk of poverty, young people, Roma.

- Marginalised/deprived communities that are not necessarily the “normal” recognised deprived/disadvantaged communities/individuals/groups (e.g. in or around interfaces). For example, rural communities, individuals/groups in the less deprived wards/areas (Clarawood estate in Cherryvalley ward).
- Project targeted at the “the working poor” - not poor enough to be deprived but not wealthy enough to be comfortable.

Labour market, skills development and employment: access to employment, labour mobility



- Continued support of an “Active Travel” type project that will encourage people to move out of their communities to access employment (e.g. use of a local community bike scheme).
- Development of vocational training projects that will offer labour market related qualifications that will give local people access employment opportunities in their local communities (e.g. construction work, health sector, schools, hospitality, etc.)
- Training projects targeted at people currently in employment that offers vocational/professional qualifications that will help them progress within that organisation or sector (e.g. teaching assistants into teaching, carers into social work).

Entrepreneurship: self-employment, business start-up, social enterprises

- Community based and/or accessible facilities that will offer support, guidance and training. For example, business plan writing, financial management, interview / presentation skills, market research, etc.
- Encourage the training and support that will develop individuals as an adaptable product that can meet the needs and requirement of a diverse and ever changing labour market.

Equal and timely access to quality, sustainable and affordable services

- Support of community based facilities that offer affordable at cost services and/or support around education opportunities, employment, generalist advice, legal, health, etc., to groups/individuals.
- Promote a welcome and harmonious approach with these facilities that will encourage marginalised groups/individuals (e.g. isolated individuals, migrant groups, those with mental health issues, etc.).

Building Positive Relations

- Further development of transformative leadership aligns with changing environment/council structures / area working.
- Positive culture expression / promotes experience from other community.
- Project that promotes what we have in common, e.g. history, culture, diversity, etc. with events that have a shared theme or that encourage the community to experience and respect difference.
- Develop and support projects/programmes that recognise that young people, from all community backgrounds, are more accepting of difference and don't necessarily have the same issues as their parents.
- Inclusion of single identity work to address intra community relations and prepare for cross community work.
- Diversity / Inclusion projects due to changing demographics / social make up of areas.
- Initiatives that address segregation and division / encourage usage of existing community assets/focus on assisting the opening up / transformation of interfaces areas.

- Broaden the language around a 'shared' city to take cognisance of contested spaces and the potential positive impacts that could be delivered through major infrastructure projects such as the York St Interchange, PIV-funded Connected open Spaces project and Council's own 5 x identified 'transformational' sites.
- Look at areas with a wider lens – child friendly, meanwhile use, social economy projects.

#### Shared Education

- Continuation of projects/programmes that encourage young people to learn together and respect diversity and difference.
- Projects/programmes that encourage young people to have an influence on how their communities are developed. For example, schools used to promote capital builds and take on board what young people would like for their communities in the future.
- Projects that have less of a separation between school and community, with an emphasis on collaboration and complementarity. For example, sixth form pupils involved in community consultation events or even with their own events.

#### Children and Young People

- Marginalised youth with focus on wellbeing, soft skills development, youth leadership and democracy
- Play based projects / facilities at interface areas
- Skills/Learning Pathways for Young People
- Projects that focus less on PUL/CNR issues and more on what makes young people similar. For example employment, homelessness, climate change/environment, mental health, etc.

#### Dealing with the past; victims and survivors, mental health

- Projects that prioritise mental health needs and not as a secondary issue. Recognition that this is a community need with some areas being epicentres for some of the issues
- Ethical Remembering of historic events / conflict
- Projects that recognise that there are victims and survivors and providing the necessary support, but do not encourage communities to continually open old wounds.
- Initiatives that address segregation and division / encourage usage of existing community assets
- Community Cohesion and cultural identity, including marginalised communities
- Projects that prioritise what brings the communities together, rather than what divides. For example, mental health issues, employment, education, brexit, climate change etc.
- Looking beyond "The Troubles" and the issues that divide communities with a greater emphasis put on what communities share around local history, identity, culture, etc.
- Projects that include / support international best practice to encourage shared learning, experiences and reconciliation from other perspectives.
- Continuation of the support for projects that target communities (geographically and socially) that have become isolated and/or marginalised
- Practical programmes and project interventions which agencies and communities can undertake to become a more inclusive City to newcomers, economic migrants and refugees and asylum



seekers. Increase in hate crime- need for preventative programmes and to address rise in Islamophobia.

## **B (2). Thematic focus: North/South economic, social and environmental development of the region**

The PEACE PLUS programme will contribute to a more peaceful, prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland<sup>2</sup> by funding:

- **peace and reconciliation activities**, and
- activities that contribute to North/South **economic, social and environmental** development in the region in areas of mutual interest.

### **Wider economic, social and environmental development of the region**

PEACE PLUS can fund the wider economic, social and environmental development of the region by financing projects under all five Policy Objectives set out in the draft EU regulations. The process for selecting which of these Policy Objectives PEACE PLUS will focus on is still in progress. This is why we would like your views on which Policy Objectives would enable investment with the most impact for the economic, social and environmental development of the region.

**To help you with your responses you may wish to view case studies** of the existing INTERREG initiatives. These can be found here: <https://seupb.eu/case-studies>.

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- (2) Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. Organisations from outside the programme area may be funded where this contributes to the programme objectives for the eligible region.

**Q.B.2 Rate the relevance of Policy Objective 1: A SMARTER EUROPE**

- (i) Actions under this Policy Objective could include:**
- Measures to boost the innovation capacity of the region,
  - Measures to increase the uptake of advanced technology,
  - Actions to increase the growth and competitiveness of the SME sector,
  - Improvements to digital services.

Not at all relevant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Relevant
	7							

I don't know

**Q.B.2i Please explain why you have given the rating above:** [Word limit 500 words]

The “measures to increase the uptake of advanced technology” align to the councils focus on our growth sectors cyber, fintech, creative industries, tourism, etc. These are relevant to the whole of the City Deal area and fully aligned to Belfast Agenda and Smart Belfast Framework and a collaborative approach with other stakeholders to bring match funding could be explored.

The Smart Belfast framework is about harnessing innovation, technology and data science to contribute to the success of the Belfast Agenda. The framework outlines proposals which seek to foster conditions for greater collaborative innovations between public, commercial, academic and community organisations in Belfast. Further details are outlined in our Smart Belfast Framework 2017 to 2021 document at <https://smartbelfast.city/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Smart-Cities-Framework.pdf>

**Q.B.3 Rate the relevance of Policy Objective 2: A GREENER, LOWER CARBON EUROPE**

- (i) Actions under this Policy Objective could include:**
- Measures to improve energy efficiency,
  - Additional renewable energy production capacity,
  - Smart grids for improved energy management,
  - Improved disaster monitoring, warning or response systems,
  - Improved water and waste treatment,
  - Measures to improve biodiversity.

<b>Not at all relevant</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Extremely Relevant</b>
	7							

**I don't know**

**Q.B.3i Please explain why you have given the rating above:** [Word limit 500 words]

The development of a greener, lower carbon Europe is essential as we move towards a future where we will face growing challenges to infrastructure, economy, and community. A collective approach to developing new infrastructure and skills, and new approaches to how we do business will require both leadership and resources. Belfast has recently declared a climate emergency and has formed structures to drive the transition to a low carbon economy including the Belfast Resilience and Sustainability Board, the Belfast Climate Commission and the Belfast City Council All Party Working Group on the Climate Crisis. Belfast is beginning the process of developing a Belfast Climate Plan which will address mitigation and adaptation. Resourcing the transition process and the implementation of the city and regional plans will be a key factor in determining our success.

Belfast has produced a draft Belfast Resilience Strategy which is currently under consultation. The draft Strategy identifies risks to the city and how we can go about future proofing and protecting the city and its citizens. Climate resilience is a key issue and requires a collaborative approach that is both local and strategic, and resourced accordingly. Support for enhanced green and blue infrastructure, particularly in urban settings would be welcomed, and would align with emerging work streams around climate adaptation.

Research regarding this subject indicates that there is an increased risk that communities in divided and deprived areas will be adversely affected by climate change if they are not supported through the transition in order to avail of opportunities to grow and develop. We recommend support for programmes that will support collaboration and improved social cohesion, creating opportunities to build community resilience and to explore opportunities to develop social enterprise within and across communities in Belfast and in the border region. We encourage support for the development of cross border energy schemes and are particularly keen to see the development of social enterprise schemes in community ownership, private/public/community partnership and to develop all-Ireland solutions that enhance connections and relationships.

The Regional Community Resilience Group is a multi-agency province-wide group focused on developing community resilience. Community resilience plans are produced in conjunction with local communities which address practical measures, and enhanced coordination and communication with people in local areas. The community resilience plan model supports community cohesion and neighbourhood relations. We would welcome support for the development of this infrastructure.



**Q.B.4 Rate the relevance of Policy Objective 3: A MORE CONNECTED EUROPE**

**(i) This Policy Objective focuses on**  
 improving transport and ICT infrastructure in the eligible region.  
 Actions could include improvements to cross-border transport infrastructure.

Not at all relevant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely Relevant
	7							

I don't know

**Q.B.4i Please explain why you have given the rating above:** [Word limit 500 words]  
 Improving transport and ICT infrastructure are extremely relevant to Belfast Agenda and City Deal– we wish to see projects to promote/position Belfast as a super-connected city and one of the most connected regions in the EDU.

An improved transport infrastructure, particularly rail infrastructure, is required to support the potential for the Belfast-Dublin economic corridor to improve its function as the main axis of economic development on the island of Ireland, to enhance connectivity and support a growing population.

**Q.B.5 Rate the relevance of Policy Objective 4: A MORE SOCIAL EUROPE**

All of the PEACE elements for PEACE PLUS must be set within the context of this objective. However, this objective can also fund activities with a wider scope. **For this question, we would like to know how relevant Policy Objective 4 would be for the wider economic, social and environmental development of the region.** Actions that can be funded under the activities include:

- Actions to improve community and social cohesion,
- Improving employment opportunities,
- Increasing access to quality education,
- Reducing marginalisation through improved housing and services,
- Increasing access to quality health care in the region.

<b>Not at all relevant</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	<b>Extremely Relevant</b>
	7							

I don't know

**Q.B.5i Please explain why you have given the rating above.** [Word limit 500 words]

Agree with all of these. Extremely relevant to the Belfast and City Region and link to the Belfast Agenda

Further details are listed below

**Belfast Agenda - Belfast's first community plan**

Following an extensive period of engagement and consultation, we published our city's first community plan in November 2017 – the Belfast Agenda.

- [Download the Belfast Agenda document](#) - (PDF - 3.90MB)

The Belfast Agenda was created by a partnership of key city partners, residents and community organisations. It sets out our joint vision and long-term ambitions for Belfast's future, as well as outlining our priorities for action over the next four years.

Belfast has also become a much more diverse city, with many people from overseas making Belfast their home. This increased diversity has brought with it many opportunities. However, it also presents challenges for organisations and businesses to make sure our new communities are included and participate in the economic, civic, social and cultural life of the city. Equality and good relations are key to improving the quality of life for everyone in the city. Our vision is to shape Belfast so that its infrastructure, spaces and services meet the needs and ambitions of all people who live, work, invest, study and visit the city.



**Q.B.6 Rate the relevance of Policy Objective 5: A EUROPE CLOSER TO ITS CITIZENS**

**(i) Actions under this Policy Objective could include:**

- Activities to boost tourism,
- Measures to promote cultural heritage,
- Improving community facilities,
- Measures to improve security.

This Policy Objective covers urban, rural and coastal areas.

<b>Not at all relevant</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Extremely Relevant</b>
	7							

**I don't know**     

**Q.B.6i Please explain why you have given the rating above:** [Word limit 500 words]

The 4 action priorities here are extremely relevant to BCC, Belfast Agenda. Furthermore,

**One of the outcomes set out within our Good Relations Strategy is an intercultural city and respectful cultural expression within the rule of law**

Our cultural and political divisions still pose challenges for the city – manifested in physical barriers, flags, emblems, some murals, parades, protests and territoriality. Developing an environment of peaceful interaction and social stability is crucial to transforming Belfast and sustaining peace and prosperity in the city for our residents. It is essential to attracting new residents, students and investment that will help us prosper and grow and be creative and innovative. As we grow the city and as its population becomes more diverse, the place and value of all cultures and faiths must be affirmed. We recognise that the people of Belfast live out their identity through differing cultural expressions. However, many who live in the city also have a shared identity as residents of Belfast, and we will seek to support activity which promotes this. Diversity is an important aspect of our city's future success, and international experience demonstrates that the cities that are most successful are those that have embraced diversity.

Within our recent history, opposing political identities are expressed and manifest through cultural practices. Public expressions of culture are perceived as reflecting those identities and as such they can be contentious, serving to reinforce division in a particularly emotive way. Addressing the impact of the relationship between political identities and public expressions of culture requires positive and strong leadership, in a way that encourages positive cultural identity and its expression.

While our Strategy acknowledges the positive role that cultural activity plays within our society, we also aim to lead the task of transforming Belfast into a successful, shared society, in which good relations and inclusion can flourish and one where cultural expression can be celebrated and undertaken within a culture of lawfulness. The role of all those in positions of leadership is vital in this task.

We must also recognise that the forthcoming commemorations, unless planned and managed well, could create challenges. We will encourage a re-imagining of their significance and from this could come a sense of optimism associated with the positive potential of public and ethical remembering as a way to promote reconciliation between our communities.

Regarding respectful cultural expression, the Strategy will promote the following:

- The creation of an open, inclusive and mutually respectful society, which seeks to increase and deepen understanding of different and shared cultural identities
- A community in which everyone's public expressions of their cultural identity is respected and respectful
- A shared city where everyone should feel welcome and entitled to express their cultural identity, in a way that respects others and within the rule of law
- A city where the development of each person's cultural identity is seen as contributing to our collective cultural wealth
- To further develop a culture of lawfulness, in which everyone sees the mutual benefits of using public spaces for cultural activity
- Development of the capacity within communities to unlock barriers to participation in cultural activity

**Q.B.7 What are the main challenges and opportunities for the wider economic and territorial development of the programme area (previously addressed under the INTERREG programme)? [Word limit 1000 words]**

The wider challenges and opportunities for the cross border (former Interreg) activities are that

- We need as a whole city, partners and region need to align strategy and policy at national, regional and local levels in this funding round. We should align public, private and all funds to really make an impact in all thematic areas for greater impact
- Supporting cross border trade and addressing barriers to these (addressing potential BREXIT impacts)
- We should explore an InterTradeIreland model of funding, spatial plan for the Belfast-Dublin corridor
- Uncertainty exists over the potential impacts of BREXIT leading to potential deterrents to visitors and international tourists, admin cost burden on small import/export businesses, potential cash flows impacts on businesses claiming back VAT and/or tariffs, potential increase GB and EU supplier prices building passed onto NI businesses, difficulty in attracting /retaining labour both skilled and unskilled, continued long term levels of economic inactivity and % of population with low or no skills or qualifications, continued low productivity, entrepreneurship and innovation levels and income levels, continued reliance on public sector employment.

**Q.B.8 Please list any ideas for initiatives or projects that could address the challenges/opportunities identified in Q.B.7. [Word limit 1000 words]**

Ideas for initiatives or projects that could address the challenges/opportunities

**Local tourism development:** development of tourism products that are reflective of the new narrative for the city, recognising and acknowledging its recent history but working with partners to build a new story that can inspire and challenge, bringing new visitors to Belfast and building on our unique cultural heritage. This new product is likely to take the form of both iconic spaces (including the planned Destination Hub) and more locally-focused tourism products which will tell the stories of people across Belfast in a unique and authentic way. These activities have the potential to meet policy objectives four and five of the draft programme

**North-South economic corridor (including transport infrastructure):** research acknowledges that the Belfast-Dublin economic corridor is the main axis of economic development on the island of Ireland. With a population already in the region of 2 million people, projected to rise to 2.5million by 2040, the corridor has the potential to function much more coherently as an economic corridor than is currently the case. One of the underpinning factors required to support this growth is an improved transport infrastructure – particularly rail infrastructure. A high level business case on enhanced connectivity has indicated the economic return that could be secured from this investment. Further work is needed to build the business case and, subject to approval, secure the resources required to take forward this significant scheme. This activity would support all policy objectives in the draft programme

**Inclusive economic growth:** the eligible area has been adversely affected by the legacy of the conflict. This situation is particularly apparent in the main towns and city centres. Belfast has a

physical legacy of the conflict in the shape of the peace walls. Analysis shows that the areas adjacent to these walls demonstrate the highest levels of economic inactivity, poverty and disadvantage as well as associated health issues including significant instances of mental health problems. While economic growth in many of the urban locations within the eligible area has been relatively strong over the last decade, pockets of challenge remain. A number of Belfast's communities have felt only limited benefit from the economic growth. There is an opportunity to develop targeted employability initiatives, focusing on a number of key locations where the disadvantage is most prevalent. These employability initiatives will be linked to the key growth areas in the city, developing flexible pathways that have support from major employers and that provide individuals with opportunities to access sustainable employment opportunities. This will, in turn, support improvement of economic and social cohesion in these neighbourhoods. This activity would support policy objective four of the draft programme

- **Circular economy:** The circular economy can be broken down into a number of key strands:
  - Designing out waste – around 80% of environmental impacts are created at design stage
  - Keep materials in use for longer – repair, re-use, recycle, business models (lease/servitisation)
  - Working with Natural Systems – nutrient replacement, decomposition as a fuel/energy

Belfast City Council and Queen's University Belfast have recently launched a Climate Commission which will play a key role in place-based climate action necessary to achieve the UK Government's target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. Development of new approaches to the circular economy will be critical to meeting these targets. There are opportunities to develop a demonstrator project on publicly-owned land in an interface location in west Belfast. This will bring together the Council's recycling facilities with new approaches to developing the circular economy by creating an ecosystem of re-use facilities, driven by social economy providers. It can be supported by academic research and will offer opportunities for employment and skills development for local people. The knowledge and experience gained would be replicable in other locations. This activity would support policy objectives one, two, four and five of the draft programme.

## C. Increasing simplification and focus on results

In the current PEACE and INTERREG programming period, the SEUPB initiated a number of measures to reduce the administrative burden for applicants and to increase the result orientation of the programmes.

The draft regulations contain a number of provisions to further simplify the management and implementation of projects and make them more focused on results. The SEUPB is committed to continuing to address both of these goals and would like your views on which provisions would be most effective.

### Q.C.1i To what extent would the following measures further simplify management and implementation of projects?

#### *Greater use of flat rates*

*(i) Where costs are calculated through an automatic calculation. An example of a Flat Rate in the 2014-2020 programming period is the Flat Rate at which partners claim costs under the Budget Heading: "Office and Administration Costs". Projects do not claim actual costs related to Office and Administration (photocopying, electricity bills etc.). Instead the value of these costs are automatically calculated as 15% of eligible Staff Costs.*

Not at all beneficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely beneficial
	6							

I don't know

#### *Greater use of unit costs*

*(i) Where payments are tied to the delivery of pre-agreed outputs rather than based on the direct costs related to producing the output. An example of a Unit Cost in the 2014-2020 programming period is the Unit Cost for SMEs attending a project workshop. Under this Unit Cost, partners can claim a fee for each SME that attends a workshop, rather than the actual costs associated with the workshop.*

Not at all beneficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely beneficial
	4							

I don't know

**Q.C.1ii Please explain why you have given the ratings above. [Word limit 500 words]**

Administrative burden of the current programme remains high with a strong focus on compliance and administrative process as opposed to the outcomes focus.

Flat rates are beneficial in reducing the bureaucracy associated with project overheads and have been a welcome introduction in the current programme. However, the current rate of 15% does not necessarily meet the costs incurred by Lead Partners, in drawing support from wider services such as IT, Comms, HR, Finance, Legal support. As such, the rate should be reviewed.

Unit costs were not used in our PEACE IV delivery, and the use of unit costs would only be beneficial in certain circumstances and not applied across the entire programme. As such, there should be flexibility to adopt either a unit cost rate or actual cost basis for each specific project within a wider Local Action Plan.

Further clarity on how this approach will be applied in order to minimise financial risk to the Lead Partner is required, possibly addressed during the project development phase.

**Q.C.1iii Please detail any measures that would further simplify management and implementation of projects that are not listed above? [Word limit 500 words]**

Allocation of funding on an Outcomes Based Approach based on results. Consider the use of lump sums e.g. £10,000 financial allocation for the achievement of 100 young people who have improved relationships with the other community. A suitable management /change control process outlining appropriate tolerance levels would need to support this approach.

Greater flexibility within the process to amend costs to reflect changes in the market from time of application to contract award needs to be included in programme given that costs can change during this time period.

A simplified interpretation of the Public Contract Regulations applied to the programme would help reduce the threat of ineligible spend.

Clearer guidelines / templates for the application and processing procedures across all aspects of the programme would help reduce the complexity of the programme and provide a level playing field for all applicants.

An adaptive management / change control process to respond to changing / emerging needs. Clear and detailed application process / system as the current EMS system is cumbersome and requires duplicate information. Future programmes should allow for a training period on any new system for grants management.

**D. Other administrative and delivery arrangements**

For the current programmes, support to potential applicants is available in a number of forms, including through the SEUPB website and through events promoting calls for funding. The SEUPB would like to consider other ways of providing project development support during the new programming period.

**Q.D.1i Below is a list of examples of measures that could provide project development support. Using the scale below, please rate how beneficial each of the following examples would be while applying for funding.**

	Not at all beneficial 1	2	3	4	5	6	Extremely beneficial 7	I don't know
Expert assistance supporting project development					7			
Events, including networking events and project development workshops					5			
Additional materials published online, including manuals and instruction videos to support the development of projects					5			
Lump sum payments for preparation costs.					7			

**Q.D.1ii Please explain why you have given the ratings above.** [Word limit 500 words]

The application and assessment process for previous programmes was lengthy and cumbersome and support to assist with the development of the project would be beneficial.

Co-ordination of clarification questions from all assessors across all themes / projects is required given that during PEACE IV the same clarification question was asked several times during assessment process.

The current system EMS is cumbersome and has increased and duplicated application information and reporting.

**Q.D.1iii Please detail any measures you can suggest that would be beneficial to potential applicants during Project Development that are not listed above?** [Word limit 500 words]

Clearer guidelines / templates for the application and processing procedures across all aspects of the programme would help reduce the complexity of the programme and provide a level playing field for all applicants.

Suitable training / workshops tailored for each aspect. Workshops to date have combined both Interreg and Peace aspects. As such, some of the content has been not been relevant. Thereby provision of tailored workshops for each aspect / priority would be welcome.

Preliminary feedback session offering guidance and direction also.

A reduction in the timeframe from application to receipt of funding would be beneficial, given that many factors can change in the 2-3 year period of assessment of PEACE IV. Lengthy assessment and approval process has negatively impacted upon delivery timescales.

More of a focus on outcomes rather than compliance and administrative process.

Co-ordination with other PEACE Local Action Plans to reduce overlap / duplication and the opportunity to network and partner with other organisations/ councils would be welcome.

Cooperation/ Information Sharing with other funders and agencies. Provide mentors – i.e. attach successful previous applicants to new applicants to the PEACE PLUS programmes.

**Q.D.2 Should the current arrangements to source match-funding continue, or should some or all of match-funding be provided by the applicant (public or private)? Please explain your answer. If you would consider applying to PEACE PLUS, please state in your answer whether you would be willing to provide some or all match-funding?** [Word limit 500 words]



Building long term peace is a slow and challenging process that requires enduring commitment.

Match funding from the Irish and British Governments is critical to the success of the programme for all applicants. The Northern Ireland peace process is underpinned by the Good Friday Agreement and other further agreements between the two governments.

Whilst peace initiatives can be developed and delivered at a local level, the initiatives are often targeting the most vulnerable groups in society who are affected by disadvantage. Thereby providing free of charge opportunities for building a long term peace is vital.

In addition, public funding, particularly within the voluntary and community sectors, has been severely reduced in recent years which impacts any contribution / match funding by an applicant.

Significant in kind resources to the Programme are also provided by Councils as lead partners, such as line management, administration, HR, Finance Legal and Communications services. Whilst difficult to quantify, it is in effect is a form of match funding.

## E. Other comments

### **Q.E.1 Please make any additional comments about a future PEACE PLUS Programme that have not already been included in previous questions.** [Word limit 1000 words]

Belfast City Council Place and Economy Department welcome the breadth of the 5 EU Policy Objectives underpinning the PEACE PLUS programme and the amalgamation of the Peace and Interreg programmes as an opportunity to have a wider, greater impact throughout NI as a region and on a cross-border basis. We would welcome the continuation of local government representation on preparation and monitoring panels and committees. We wish to sustain the growth and success to date resulting from the previous programmes and retain experienced people.

We support the fact that cross-border stakeholders, e.g. universities, chambers of commerce, Innovation Centres etc. can still be project partners as long as the impact is in the eligible region.

Other actions relating to question B.1iv

- Further development of Open Space linkages west to east corridor and Belfast Hills.
- Maximising usage of Council parks, playing fields, greenways.
- Shared Spaces focus on respecting the environment and its biodiversity to ensure that future generations can enjoy healthy life

### **Q.E.2 If you know any reports that can inform the future PEACE PLUS programme development, please name the attached reports here and send the documents attached to the same email:**

Belfast City Council have referenced that reports below in their response to this survey.

Belfast Agenda <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/Communityplanning/BelfastAgenda.aspx>

Belfast City Council Good Relations Strategy  
<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/goodrelations/goodrelations-about.aspx>

Belfast Resilience Strategy  
[https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/chief-executives/rmclbelfast-resilience-strategy/supporting\\_documents/Final%20Version%20Uploaded%20and%20for%20Release.pdf](https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/chief-executives/rmclbelfast-resilience-strategy/supporting_documents/Final%20Version%20Uploaded%20and%20for%20Release.pdf)

Belfast Cultural Strategy  
<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/tourism-venues/culture/Cultural-Strategy.aspx>

The Smart Belfast Framework  
<https://smartbelfast.city/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Smart-Cities-Framework.pdf>

In addition the strategies and plans below can help inform the future PEACE PLUS programme development.



Belfast Draft -Inclusive Growth Strategy

[https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/chief-executives/inclusive-growth-strategy/user\\_uploads/446---inclusive-growth-nov2019-web-final--2.pdf](https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/chief-executives/inclusive-growth-strategy/user_uploads/446---inclusive-growth-nov2019-web-final--2.pdf)

Belfast City Council Corporate Plan

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/corporateplan/corporateplan.aspx>

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